

TAAAC ACTION REPORT

Your Professional Organization

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Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County, An MSEA/NEA Affiliate

April 2013

TAAAC Building Representative Retreat a Huge Success



Peter Smith, District One Representative

Forty people attended the Association Representative Retreat on March 1-2, 2013 on Kent Island. After checking in to the Hilton Garden Inn, the representatives had a fantastic dinner meeting at *Bridges*. Peter Smith, the District One Representative, gave an emotional speech about the importance of education and the power that one teacher can give to a person. Mr. Smith spoke of one teacher who changed his life and gave him the direction to become a Marine and eventual Representative. Sean Johnson, the Director of Government Relations for MSEA, then spoke about the importance of lobbying to get what you need in education laws.

Saturday was a full day. After introductions from TAAAC President Richard Benfer, Executive Director Bill Jones spoke about the long and successful history of bargaining in AACPS. He detailed the strange and difficult structure that allows only for negotiations with the School Board but funding from the County Executive, which has led to many of the salary and step issues over the past four years. Kristy Anderson, General Counsel from MSEA, had an interactive discussion with the participants on their rights and responsibilities as building representatives.

After lunch, there was a presentation on the power of Faculty Advisory Councils (FAC). The representatives learned that even though the principal has the final say, the contract guarantees and even requires them to give advice and concerns to the administration. They also learned about the importance of faculty meetings and attempting to get on the agenda with both a "TAAAC Report" and an "FAC Report." The final activity of the day revolved around President Benfer's presentation on "BAT" teams in the buildings, which is when the building representative builds a team of people to help her/him communicate with staff and create more input and involvement from the staff.

Congratulations to the following Representatives and Board Members, who are now certified in ***Representative Training 101***: Beth Kreunen, Robin Beers, Darlene Doane, Kathleen Coon, Grace Matthews, Robyn Smit, Russell Leone, Michael Barnett, Donzella Parker Bert, Cate Weeda, Betsy Brininger, Tamara Thumbtzen, Pam Bukowski, Gail Tucker, Debra Curdts, Sarah Peterson, Lisa Rodvien, Jason Fahie, Sandra Durant, Colleen Benda, Leona Puglia, Kathleen Johnson, Wendy Gibson, Melissa Sisk, Julie Keegstra, Valery Weekley, Kate Miller, Janine Horn, Sharon Moesel, Martin Noga, Brenda Wilson, Stephanie Phillips, Enid Collison-Lee, Chris Kreunen, Ken Baughman, and Helen Wilkerson.



Bill Jones

Fair Share Passes the House of Delegates (96-43)

House Bill 667 (cross filed as Senate Bill 422) made it through the House of Delegates in a big way. When/if it makes it through the Senate the bill may make *fair share* fees a mandatory topic for negotiations for bargaining units across Maryland's public schools, for professionally certified, para-professional, and blue-collared employees alike.

Here in Anne Arundel County, we are familiar with fair fees (also called *representation, service, or agency* fees) because we have had one since November 8 of 2006. In the 2004 session of the General Assembly we were successful in passing a carve-out in state law for Anne Arundel County that enabled (as opposed to mandating) negotiations on a fairshare fee. Prior to passing that enabling legislation our fair share fee would have been illegal. In 2006, we managed to negotiate fair share language and memorialized it in the Negotiated Agreement. Since that time, virtually every new entry into our bargaining unit has been sharing the cost of doing the business that

COMMENTARY

TAAAC does, and each year our longstanding problem of *free-riders* is a bit more diminished.

“MSEA carries nearly 20,000 free-riders statewide. You, my TAAAC Action report readers, are help to pay for them. Successful passage of HB667 (or its companion bill, SB422) will go a long way toward providing a remedy for the recalcitrance of free-riders. There’s a reason why it’s called fairshare.”

Even though we have succeeded locally in our work to ensure that the cost of our advocacy is shared widely, the statewide bill is hardly meaningless. The largest share of membership dues TAAAC members pay go to the Maryland State Education Association, and that organization continues to suffer the drain of resources that free-riders cause. State law requires employee organizations to represent every employee in the bargaining unit in *salaries, wages, hours, and other conditions of employment* without regard to membership. When an employee chooses not to join, that employee still receives representation in their salaries, wages...etc. They just don't pay for it. Members do. Worse yet, the absence of any contribution from free-riders puts upward pressure on membership dues while at the same time weak-

ening the organization's influence. According to the most recent current membership count I reviewed, MSEA carries nearly 20,000 free-riders statewide. You, my TAAAC Action report readers, are help to pay for them. Successful passage of HB667 (or its companion bill, SB422) will go a long way toward providing a remedy for the recalcitrance of free-riders. There's a reason why it's called *fairshare*.

Friends of Anne Arundel educators stood with school employees across the state for fairness and equity included Ben Barnes (D), Barbara Frush (D), and Joselyn Pena-Melnyk (D) from District 21; Michael Busch (D) from District 30; Nic Kipke (R) from District 31; Mary Ann Love (D), Pam Beidle (D), and Ted Sophocleus (D) from District 32, and Bob Costa (R) from District 33A. They cast a very important vote and should be recognized for doing so.



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and Managing Editor
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From Contentia this month . . . *Requirements and Obligations Outside of School Hours*

With spring comes graduation, honors banquets, and a host of other important school activities that are normally held outside of regular work hours. If you feel that you would like to volunteer to assist or attend evening activities, feel free. However, please do not take the job of someone in the Support Association (SAAAAC) who would normally be paid overtime to work the activity.

In general, if an activity is help outside of normal work hours, you do not have to go; even if the faculty votes to change your school's hours for that day. You have the power to show up during your regular hours and work a regular day.

In addition, you **do not have to give an excuse or reason** to not attend an after-hours activity. All you are required to do is notify the person in charge without explanation. TAAAC recommends e-mail so you have a record of that notification.

Article 2, Section R:

“Unit I educators who attend and assist with graduation exercises outside the established workweek will receive one-half day of early release time. The day shall be mutually agreed upon between the educator and principal and may occur before the graduation date.”

Nothing in this passage makes attendance at (evening) graduation mandatory. Of course, the teacher choosing not to attend graduation will be required to come to school for the regular duty day. If graduation is held during the school day, attendance can be mandated.

Article 11, Section F:

“Because of the close cooperation necessary between parents and teachers, Unit I members shall be encouraged to attend meetings of Parent-Teacher Associations. Attendance at Back-to-School Night or one such similar evening activity as directed by the principal shall be required each year. This meeting shall not be considered part of the required workweek.”

It is clear that the normal work hours for a teacher are the hours around which students normally attend school. The BOE cannot arbitrarily change those work hours to suit their needs. Further, the contract is specific to “one” evening activity, which for most buildings is the “Back-to-School Night” held during the fall semester.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Ricky Asarte
Margaret Benshaw
Dori Bethouille
Melissa Brice
Ashley Hollandsworth**

Weingarten Rights

You have the right to request union representation whenever an administrator questions you regarding a matter that may result in your being disciplined, suspended or terminated.

If called in for such questioning, please respond, "If this discussion may lead to my being disciplined or terminated, I request that my MSEA UniServ Director be present. Without representation, I choose not to answer any questions."

Then call TAAAC!

NOMINATIONS OPEN

The TAAAC Nominating Committee is accepting nominations for **Board of Directors**.

Nominations will close at the ARC meeting on Wednesday, May 1, 2013.

Name _____

Address _____

School _____

Phone (H) _____ (W) _____

Email _____

I would like to place my name in nomination for the following position(s):

**Board of Directors
(2-year Term)**

NOMINATIONS OPEN

The TAAAC Nominating Committee is accepting nominations for **Sick Leave Bank and AACPS Calendar (Elem.)**.

Nominations will close at the ARC meeting on Wednesday, May 1, 2013.

Name _____

Address _____

School _____

Phone (H) _____ (W) _____

Email _____

I would like to place my name in nomination for the following position(s):

Sick Leave Bank

AACPS Calendar (Elem.)

NOMINATIONS OPEN

The TAAAC Nominating Committee is accepting nominations for **MSEA Delegate**.

Nominations will close at the ARC meeting on Wednesday, June 5, 2013.

Name _____

Address _____

School _____

Phone (H) _____ (W) _____

Email _____

I would like to place my name in nomination for the following position(s):

MSEA Delegate

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Beth Tfiloh Camps seeks head counselors and instructors of sports, campcraft, singing, nature, art, and swimming. The Owings Mills day camp runs Monday-Friday from 9 AM-4 PM for 8 weeks (June 24-August 16). Visit our website at www.btcamps.org or phone 410-517-3451. **YOUR CHILD ATTENDS FREE!**

Teachers needed. Use your skills to help families solve their financial problems! Part-time and flexible hours. Earn what you're worth! For more information, call Justin 301-642-0079.

ATTENTION!

Are You Paying Too Much

If your employment status has changed and you have an annual salary under \$39,097 and/or are working .6 or less, please contact the TAAAC office so that your membership dues can be adjusted accordingly.

The role of a labor union is to ensure that the balance is not tipped in favor of the employer when employees do not receive wages and benefits commensurate with their contribution.

*William Burrus, vice president,
American Postal Workers Union
(APWU)*