

# TAAAC ACTION REPORT



Your Professional Organization

Volume 45, Number 5



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

January 2013

## Progress Made in AACPS Teacher Rating

Shortly before the winter break and a mere four business days before the statutory deadline, representatives of TAAAC and the AACPS tentatively agreed on a new evaluation tool that will comply with the changes in Maryland Law and State Board Regulation driven by *Race to the Top* while avoiding some of the pitfalls of the model constructed by the Maryland State Department of Education. Those pitfalls include dependence on information that could be as much as three years old and far too much emphasis on standardized test scores. As most readers are probably aware, new rating tools for teacher and principal evaluation and rating must be implemented by law by the onset of the 2013-14 school year.

Local education agencies (LEA's) throughout Maryland had until December 26<sup>th</sup> to submit a local tool agreed upon by the employer and the employee organization. If none was submitted or if there was not agreement between the two parties, the LEA would default to the MSDE. On the morning of December 17, the two parties reached agreement on a local evaluation process.

It is far from perfect and it probably would not look the same if it weren't for the intrusion of dubious but mandatory components of RTTT. As interpreted here in Maryland, 50% of the evaluation will be based on *student growth*. Another 50% will be based upon *professional practice*.

Presuming the plan meets MSDE approval, student growth and professional practice will be measured as explained below.

*Student growth*, which must total 50% of the rating under current state guidelines, will be a numeric score determined by the following formula; and that formula will vary a bit between elementary/middle and high school levels.

In elementary and middle schools, student growth will be measured by:

- Student Learning Objectives (SLO's) – 25% of total rating
- School Wide Index (SWI) – 25%, of total rating, apportioned below;
  - Student achievement (MSA Scores) – 45% of SWI
  - Closing the gap (MSA Scored) – 45% of SWI
  - Student attendance – 10% of SWI

In high schools student growth will be measured by:

- Student Learning Objectives (SLO's) – 25% of total rating
- School Wide Index (SWI), – 25% of total rating, apportioned below;
  - Student achievement (HSA Scores) – 20% of SWI
  - Closing the gap (HSA Scores) – 20% of SWI
  - Student attendance – 10% of SWI
  - Career readiness, measured by four-year graduation rate – 30% of SWI
  - College readiness, measured by a “3” on AP exam, “4” on IB or UM Completer

The other half of the teacher rating will look relatively familiar. It is the 50% attributable to *Professional Practice* and will be based primarily on observations. The four domains are; *planning for learning, teaching for learning, quality learning environment, and professional behaviors*. More on *Professional Practice* will follow.

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**Richard Benfer**

## COMMENTARY

Political Education (COPE) began making preparations for this election. TAAAC, being the largest public employee union in the county, has a leadership role. We have actively attended various COPE meetings to join members of other public unions to take action.

County Council anti-union Legislation has been passed and looks to continue in the future. The only way that this can be stopped is by putting labor friendly people in those positions, individuals like Jamie Benoit from District 4, Chris Trumbauer from District 6 and Peter Smith from District 1. All three are staunch working family supporters, and after December's meeting all three have met with the Anne Arundel County COPE.

### YOUR ACTIVISM NEEDED

In recent months there has been increased hostility toward the school system by certain members of the Anne Arundel County Council. To make matters worse, County Leadership has begun an assault on county employee unions and their benefits. With all the attacks in Wisconsin, Idaho, Iowa, and Michigan it feels as if the bad ideas from the Midwest are heading east. Citizens often forget that people go into public service to help people. What attracted them more was not the high salary, but the benefits both for healthcare and retirement. We need to preserve these much needed benefits for our public employees, secure adequate funding of the county services and school system, and bring about an attitude change toward public sector unions.

***“We can change the course of this anti-union attitude, but we need the members of TAAAC and the various other unions to participate in this. We can't be successful without your support.”***

Though the committee has only been established for a little over a year, they have made tremendous strides. First, the established COPE is made up of many different labor unions, including TAAAC, all working towards one goal, to elect politicians who will represent and work for working families not against them. This represents tremendous unity for our unions. One of the major actions of COPE will be to take back the County Executive Seat. From that position the present County Executive John Leopold has consistently pushed and gotten passed anti-union, anti-working family legislation. In order to stem that tide and turn this county around, we need to take back the County Executive seat. This will not be easy, but it is very doable.

At November's meeting Mr. Trumbauer met with the Committee and told us that Jerry Walker, Rep. from District 7, has introduced a bill to limit the number of unions allowed in Anne Arundel County. Mr. Trumbauer felt that there would be more anti-union legislation pending. This is another example, on top of Bill 86-11, prohibiting Anne Arundel County from participating in a Project Labor Agreement, which is evidence of how the County Council is steadily taking away the rights of union members and citizens of this great county.

With all the union attacks on county employees, it is only a matter of time until it spills over to the school system bargaining units. Now more than ever we need to be united and stand strong. We can change the course of this anti-union attitude, but we need the members of TAAAC and the various other unions to participate in this. We can't be successful without your support.

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### TAAAC Action Report

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**Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County**  
2521 Riva Road, Suite L 7  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(410) 224-3330 (410) 841-6022  
(301) 261-8309 FAX (410) 841-5117  
[www.taaaconline.org](http://www.taaaconline.org)

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Ken Baughman, Vice President  
Colleen Benda, Secretary-Treasurer

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## **From Contentia this month . . . *ARE YOU IN DANGER OF FALLING OFF THE TENURE TRACK?***

### **Timeline for Termination of Non-tenured Unit I Members**

If your teaching performance as evidenced by ratings is unsatisfactory or not fully satisfactory, principals will be directed to forward your name to the appropriate regional assistant superintendent by **March 1**.

These recommendations will be reviewed and, if upheld, you will receive a letter **during the month of March** advising you that unless your performance improves significantly, a recommendation to terminate your employment at the close of the school year will be made to the Superintendent.

If your work continues to be unsatisfactory, then **on or before April 20**, Human Resources will advise you in writing that a recommendation for termination will be made to the Superintendent.

You must be notified in writing prior to **May 1** of employment termination.

Please note that the employment for teachers on a provisional contract expires on June 30 unless they are rehired for the following year.

### **What Should You Do?**

Don't wait. If your ratings are less than satisfactory or you've been placed on a Plan of Action, you should contact your UniServ Director as soon as possible to discuss your situation. Should you receive a letter in March advising you of possible termination, contact your UniServ Director **immediately**.

Your UniServ Director will discuss your situation with you and advise you of your rights and best course of action. You should have copies of all observations and ratings.

Your conversations will be kept strictly confidential.

## **MSEA Minority Leadership Training Program**

MSEA recently held their Minority Leadership Training Program at the Harbourtowne Conference Center in St. Michaels. Several TAAAC members were on hand to learn and have a dialogue about forging equity, diversity and success within their school and their lives. Offerings included sessions on cultural competence, equity rubrics, overcoming inequity and talks on the historic perspective around equity issues. They also had an Equity Panel that included *Leticia Smith-Evans, J.D., Ph.D., NAACP Legal Defense & Education Fund* and *Brenda Shum, J.D., Director of the Educational Opportunities Project at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law*. Participants felt the experience enriched their perspective on equity issues. TAAAC is looking forward to send other members who are interested to these types of trainings. Watch for future trainings so you can take advantage of these professional development opportunities.

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All of the above is tentative. The AACPS model will be presented in advance of the deadline to be assessed by the MSDE for compliance with the applicable law and regulation as they interpret it. A determination should be made shortly after the winter break.

## General Assembly Reconvenes

Our elected state legislators return to work on January 9, 2013, at 12:00 PM, when Maryland's General Assembly reconvenes. Our state affiliate, MSEA, already has some legislative priorities including matters related to school funding, retirement security, and a statewide agency fee. TAAAC may be exploring the potential for an elected school board on a local level. TAAAC leadership and its member/volunteers will be assisting in the lobbying effort to support bills that serve the interests of public education and public educators, and oppose those that would harm public education and public educators. It is likely that there will be occasions that TAR readers are asked to make contact with legislators on specific bills. Names and contact information of the members of the Anne Arundel County Delegation are shown below. Feel free to clip this page and save for your reference.

### Maryland Senate

#### District 21 —

**James C. Rosapepe**  
James Senate Office Building, Room 314  
11 Bladen Street, Annapolis, MD 21401  
Off: 410-841-3141 Fax: 410-841-3195

#### District 30 —

**John C. Astle**  
51 Fleet Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401  
Off: 410-841-3578 H: 410-263-3053

#### District 31 —

**Bryan Simonaire**  
7661 Berry Drive  
Pasadena, MD 21122  
Off: 410-841-3047 Fax: 410-841-3586

#### District 32 —

**James E. DeGrange, Sr.**  
205 Second Avenue, S.W.  
Glen Burnie, MD 21061  
Off: 410-841-3593 H: 410-766-2762

#### District 33 —

**Edward R. Reilly**  
James Senate Office Building, Room 321  
11 Bladen Street, Annapolis, MD 21401  
Off: 410-841-3568 Fax: 410-841-3589

### Maryland House of Delegates

#### District 21 —

**Barbara A. Frush**  
3019 Chapel View Drive  
Beltsville, MD 20705  
Off: 410-841-3114 H: 301-572-4042

#### Benjamin S. Barnes

House Office Building, Room 209  
6 Bladen Street, Annapolis, MD 21401  
Off: 410-841-3046 H: N/A

#### Joseline Pena-Melnyk

House Office Building, Room 209  
6 Bladen Street, Annapolis, MD 21401  
Off: 410-841-3502 H: N/A

#### District 30 —

**Michael E. Busch (House Speaker)**  
207 McKendree Ave.  
Annapolis, MD 21401  
Off: 410-841-3800 H: 410-263-8829

#### Herb McMillan

House Office Building, Room 209  
6 Bladen Street, Annapolis, MD 21401  
Off: 410-841-3211 H: N/A

#### Ronald A. George

House Office Building, Room 216  
6 Bladen Street, Annapolis, MD 21401  
Off: 410-841-3439 H: N/A

#### District 31 —

**Nicholaus R. Kipke**  
P.O. Box 862  
Pasadena, MD 21123  
Off: 410-841-3421 H: 410-591-9535

### Maryland House of Delegates

#### Donald H. Dwyer, Jr.

P.O. Box 667  
Glen Burnie, MD 21060  
Off: 410-841-3047 H: 410-768-0945

#### Steven R. Schuh

House Office Building, Room 156  
6 Bladen Street, Annapolis, MD 21401  
Off: 410-841-3206 H: N/A

#### District 32 —

**Ted Sophocleus**  
6584 Brentwood Road  
Linthicum, MD 21090  
Off: 410-841-3372 H: 410-850-4978

#### Mary Ann Love

7961 Crowns Way  
Glen Burnie, MD 21061  
Off: 410-841-3511 H: 410-761-9963

#### Pamela Beidle

620 Fairmount Road  
Linthicum, MD 21090  
Off: 410-841-3370 H: 410-859-0796

#### District 33 —

**Tony McConkey**  
207 Cypress Creek Road  
Severna Park, MD 21146  
Off: 410-841-3406 H: 410-544-6424

#### Cathleen M. Vitale

House Office Building, Room 163  
6 Bladen Street, Annapolis, MD 21401  
Off: 410-841-3510 H: N/A

#### Robert A. Costa

5712 Nutwell Sudley Road  
Deale, MD 20751  
Off: 410-841-3551 H: 410-867-2007

# Negotiated Agreement Provisions of Interest

The following provisions of the current collective bargaining agreement became topics of conversation recently and it appeared that too few TAAAC members were aware of their existence.

The first regarded advance notice required for sick leave. Note that the time to give the telephone or computer notice is not related to the student but rather the teacher arrival time.

**Article 5F. Advance notification of absence for eligibility**

*When Unit I members are to be absent from school they shall notify the principal or designee as soon as possible. Members shall not be eligible for sick leave unless they have notified the principal or designee of their impending absence at least one hour prior to the time they are required to report for duty, except that principals shall waive this requirement if they adjudge the situation to be one which prevented members from complying.*

The second was generated by a discussion concerning educators who may want to separate from service during the year but are fearful of the penalties. The fear, at least for tenured personnel, is unwarranted. Unlike every other district in Maryland, AACPS educators can separate during the school year with 30-days notice.

**Article 17B. Failure to give advance notice**

*Unit I members who resign during the school year must provide thirty (30) days written notice. Failure to provide the thirty (30) days advance written notice with the exceptions listed below, shall result in the following:*

*References will not be provided to prospective employers. However, verification of employment experience shall be given, upon request.*

*A request may be made to the Maryland State Department of Education for a suspension of the Unit I member's professional certificate.*

Continued language not excerpted here lists several exigent circumstances in which the penalties for giving less than 30-days notices may be waived.

As any question arise involving terms and conditions of employment, members should not hesitate to phone the TAAAC office where those questions can be answered by folks who know the answers.

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In light of all this, our activism will begin with the Superintendent's proposed budget for FY14. During the budget cycle, which began in December when the Superintendent unveiled his FY14 budget, we will need folks to turn out at various hearings on the budget. The time line for this begins January 8, 2013 at 7:00 PM, at Old Mill High School. Your Vice-President, Ken Baughman, is scheduled to speak on behalf of TAAAC about the Superintendent's budget.

On January 10, 2013 at 7:00 PM, at the Board of Education on Riva Road, your President, Richard Benfer, will speak about the Superintendent's budget. Any show of support by members during these two meetings is encouraged.

Later in the spring the County Executive will get the Superintendent's budget and we are sure an ax will fall on it. After that the County Council will take a stab at the budget. In light of recent egregious comments by some

County Council members we are going to be lucky to get Maintenance of Effort.

Unfortunately MOE was designed to be a floor for funding, but now it appears it has turned into a ceiling. More information when those public hearings will take place will follow in the coming months. *We are TAAAC*, and only through the power of our members are we successful. Please look for calls to action in the coming months during the budget cycle and for the start of the 2014 election cycle.

## NOMINATIONS OPEN

The TAAAC Nominating Committee is accepting nominations for **Secretary-Treasurer, Board of Directors, and NEA Delegates.**

Nomination forms must be received at the TAAAC office by 5:30 PM on Monday, January 08, 2013.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

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

- Secretary-Treasurer**
- Board of Director**
- NEA Delegate**

[Have you been a delegate before? YES or NO]

# Happy New Year!

## TAX PREPARATION

Bob Pellicoro, who has served TAAAC members for the past 25 years is easing into retirement from tax preparation. In order to give member clients time to make other arrangements he will accommodate his long-time TAAAC clients for their 2012 Income Tax Returns preparation. Please call the TAAAC office to schedule an appointment for one of the following dates:

- March 7, 2013 – 10 AM – 6 PM
- March 11, 2013 – 10 AM – 6 PM
- March 13, 2013 – 10 AM – 6 PM

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- Megan Aird
- Susannah Beals-Simon
- Lynn Cottle
- Angela Lovell
- Susan Sanger
- Drew Tuck

## 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](http://www.btcamps.org) or phone 410-517-3451. **YOUR CHILD ATTENDS FREE!**

### Spend Summer in the Sun

DRD Pool Service Inc. is accepting applications for summer job openings as swimming pool field supervisors and swimming pool managers. No Experience Necessary, free training.

For more information, call Noelle Navarro at 1-888-785-7665 or, e-mail to:

[n\\_navarro@drdpools.com](mailto:n_navarro@drdpools.com)

## 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.