

TAAAC ACTION REPORT

Your Professional Organization

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

June 2013

MSEA Anti-Bullying Program

Throughout this year bullying reports have been given more media time. Many reports talk about how people have become more empowered to take a stand and not put up with the bully. As educators it is our job to ensure that students have the tools and strategies needed to combat the verbal and physical assault of a bully. To that end, TAAAC has partnered with MSEA to bring their Anti-Bullying Programs to some of our schools. MSEA developed a packaged assembly available to Maryland schools interested in a creative presentation to fight bullying. The hour-long program offers suggestions on ways to prevent bullying, establishes a forum for dialogue, and invites students and faculty to take a personal pledge to prevent bullying. The initiative centers around the celebrity support of hip-hop artist Tray Chaney, who wrote an original song and produced a video entitled—*Mike Bully...Stand Up for Our Future*. MSEA financed the production and has rights to use both products in the anti-bullying campaign.

Though the assembly is structured to include specific components, schools may tailor portions of the program to satisfy needs of a specific student population or to include elements of an anti-bullying program that may already be in place at the school.

Our TAAAC President and MSEA Director, Richard Benfer, did some outreach to elementary and some middle schools to assess interest in this program. Eighteen schools responded to the outreach. The response from so many schools requesting the program and/or more information about the program is fantastic. Debra Garner, MSEA staff liaison to the Bullying Program, called it a “Great Problem to have.” Since the response was so good, TAAAC/MSEA was not able to bring the program to all the schools that made the request. At this point in time some of the schools will be visited in May/June and others in the fall.

Additionally, TAAAC President Richard Benfer has secured materials from the “Stop Bullying Now!” campaign for the schools that made a request for the program. The resource kit contains information compiled by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Health Resources and Services Administration. The information includes Tip Sheets for educators on how to deal with bullying situations. Also there is a video with twelve Webisodes that target youth from ages 9-13 and two Webisodes that engage young children from ages 5-8. The Video also includes discussion questions, Public Service Announcements, and Video Workshops. The principals in the schools that responded initially will receive all the materials mentioned. TAAAC and MSEA are hoping to expand the outreach into Middle and High Schools in the coming school year. If you think your school may have an interest, please email Richard Benfer for more information at rbenfer@mseanea.org.

HAVE A WONDERFUL SUMMER!



Richard Benfer

COMMENTARY

It has been a very busy year for us all. The new common core curriculum, the ubiquitous new programs, the lack of adequate curricular documents to implement the new standards, the anxiety of a new teacher evaluation system, and the looming PARCC assessment have all been a challenge for many. Additionally with TAAAC community outreach, Instructional Professional Development (IPD) initiatives, and a challenging bargaining year there hasn't been much time to breathe.

The common core curriculum is being rethought by many states across the country. The common core may not be a bad thing. But rolling it out without proper curricular support could make it one. We need resources that are at our disposal in order to prepare for lessons. Having to spend hours researching online to find materials is not acceptable. Many of the documents received by our educators have not been very useful without further extensive research. If our school system leaders need a resource to look to, all they need to do is look at Howard County. The resources they have developed and purchased are now in daily support of their educators. I have been assured that our lack of support will be remedied.

The new teacher evaluation has caused great angst among all educators. TAAAC and the BOE have met numerous times and reached three agreements. Two of the agreements were basically rejected by MSDE. We have made every effort to ensure fairness and equity within a system that clearly does not offer fairness and equity. Student Learning Objectives (SLO's) hold many possibilities for educators to enhance their knowledge of their students. The lack of developed banks of SLO's leaves one questioning the validity of this activity due to the inordinate amount of time needed to write the SLO, meet and confer, implement the SLO and evaluate its effectiveness. All these initiatives should be implemented more slowly and in measurable parts. As it stands, all the initiatives are being implemented at the same time. In addition, students will continue to take MSA which is not aligned with the common core curriculum.

During this year I had the opportunity to visit 33 schools with Dr. Maxwell, visited another 21 schools either at lunch or in the morning or afternoon. The MSEA UniServ Directors and our Executive Director have also been busy visiting schools. We have visited to help alleviate concerns and answer questions regarding the contract. Hopefully this has been helpful.

Additionally, to help get answers to the many questions that have come up about the issues above, I have met with Dr. Maxwell monthly and have been in contact with various executive

team members to resolve some snags before they become issues. The Superintendent and I have not always agreed, but we continue to keep the lines of communication open regardless. The building of this collaboration takes time and energy that I am committed to continuing.

With the help of the Anne Arundel County Council of PTA's President, Pam Bukowski, we have made strides in our community outreach to bring a different perspective on TAAAC and its role in the community. We have to continue to build a positive relationship with the communities we serve to assure support for our needs when they arise.

This year we raised our market share (that portion of Unit 1 employees who are dues paying TAAAC members) considerably and are closing in on 90%. Currently we have 5,523 members and 95 fee payers. Thanks to our Membership Committee and our AR's efforts, we have moved many educators from fee payers to members. The member benefits alone can save members much of their dues dollars. We also had the first health care premium holiday in 20 years this past December with another coming in December 2013. With the hopeful ratification of our contract we will see the first step increase since 2009. With 1% in July 2013 and a full step in January 2014, most educators will be making 5% more in January 2014 than they are now. We will also see the first full-year COLA since 2009.

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From Contentia this month . . . *Some End of the Year Advice*

At TAAAC there are issues that often appear at the end of the school year. It is important to be aware of both your rights and responsibilities to complete 2012-13:

Early Release Days (June 11-14)

“The four days of early release time for students, scheduled immediately prior to the end of each semester will be utilized to provide self-directed work time for teachers at all levels. (Article 11, N)”

Don't feel obligated to attend any “housekeeping” meetings at your school from June 11-14 after the kids are sent home. That is YOUR time to do what you need to complete report cards and end of the year work.

Excessed Teachers

“...If excessed teachers have not received a new assignment by the last duty day for teachers, they will have priority over applicants and teachers requesting voluntary transfers (Article 12, C)”

Unit 1 employees who are excessed are the priority, the opposite of what many people think. If you are in this situation, contact the Human Resource Office at the BOE to remind them of who you are, where you would prefer to go, and how you can be reached.

Moving and Packing

Often at the conclusion of the year you are required to pack up and move some class items. If that is the case, these are the rules:

1. You are required to pack and label all items to be moved.
2. You are NOT required to move anything once it is packed and labeled.

Have the office send a custodial staff member to complete the movement of your boxes.

Personal Days

“...Personal Business Leave shall not be taken...at the beginning or the end of the school year. (Article 8, A)”

The last five duty days constitute the “*end of the school year.*” If you have an emergency, you would require permission from your Principal to take a Personal Day during the last five duty days for teachers (June 11-17).

SAVE THE DATE – CELEBRATE EDUCATORS EVENT

For the first time in many years, TAAAC is sponsoring a **Celebrate Educators** picnic for all TAAAC members and their families. Mark your calendars for **Friday, August 23, 2013**. That is the final day of the back to school week without the children. Join us to celebrate a new year together.

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We cannot do this work without active members, and there is much more work to do. You may consider joining a TAAAC committee.

Joining a committee is a great way to get involved. Some may want to

become a Rep at their school. We have a Rep training that will take place in September that will prepare you to be an effective advocate. You may also consider getting into the leadership of the Association. Each year we elect leaders from the membership to chart the course.

With the many challenges we have faced this year, I feel we have made the most strides possible with the fiscal conditions that still exist. As things improve, be assured that the TAAAC leadership in governance and staff will take every opportunity to make further improvements.

Tentative Agreement for Fiscal Year 2014 Settlement Summary

The following summarizes the changes to the Negotiated Agreement shared by TAAAC and the BOE set to expire on June 30, 2013. It is not all-inclusive but rather identifies some of the more significant modifications made. A comprehensive summary can be reviewed at www.taaaconline.org.

Article 2 Unit I Members Rights Privileges and Responsibilities ***(new provision)***

Unit I members have the right to confidentiality in disciplinary actions and job counseling. AACPS administrators and supervisors shall ensure that such actions are taken outside of the presence, view, or hearing range of colleagues, students, parents, members of the public, and other administrators who do not have a role in the action. In the event that an investigation is conducted, the existence of the investigation shall not be revealed to any person without a need to know. Nothing herein prohibits an administrator or supervisor from taking immediate action in an emergency situation.

Article 3 Salary and Other Compensation

- 1% across the Board increase for all Unit I employees effective on July 1, 2013.
- One full salary step on January 22, 2014, regardless of current experience step.
- Newly created Step 26, and paid at a rate 2% higher than Step 25.
- Agree to begin work early in fiscal year 2014 (FY14) to restructure Unit I salary scales for implementation in fiscal year 2015 (FY15).
- “Challenged school” stipend payments of \$1,500 based on assignment and \$1,500 based on performance will be modified to \$2,000 and \$1,000, respectively.
- The basis for the performance stipend will be the attainment of Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO).
- Increased flexibility will be given to the Superintendent to add or remove schools from the challenged school list. Factors to be considered include; AMO status, state assessment data, free and reduced meals (FARMS), Title I status, staff and student turnover, and *other cogent indicators*.
- The challenged school list must be published and distributed to Unit I employees by April 1st of each year. In the event that the publication and distribution is completed later than April 1, Unit I employees assigned to any school that is removed from the list for the coming year will have the option of being placed on the *excess list*.

Article 5 Sick Leave Bank

An employee who repeatedly receives SLB grants must have a physician attest that the employee is actively seeking and receiving treatment from a medical provider for the condition. The waiting period for a sick leave bank grant will be ten (10) days.

Article 8 Other leaves

Bereavement Leave: One calendar day will be added to currently allowable leave for bereavement.

Article 11 Work Time and Work Load

For FY14, the work year shall be reduced by one duty day from 191 to 190. There will be no reduction in annual salary. Other work year lengths are similarly reduced.

Article 12 Assignment and Transfer

For any position that becomes vacant by July 15 (a change from *July 1*), the principal must interview at least three (3) candidates....

If teachers returning from leave of absence have not received a new assignment by August 1 (a change from the *last duty day for teachers*), they will have priority over applicants and teachers requesting voluntary transfers.

Article 15 Substitute Coverage

When an uncovered vacancy causes a class of students to be divided up and shared with other teachers, the receiving teachers will each receive one hour of compensatory leave for each school day in which the incidence occurs. Utilization of that leave will be arranged between the teachers and principal or supervisor.

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Article 16 Evaluation and Rating of Professional Staff

Major components for rating were modified to *student growth* and *professional practice* in conformance with new Maryland law and Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) regulations. Timelines were also adjusted and a three-year evaluation cycle was constructed. Formal observations require notice of at least five duty days.

Ratings will be due prior to the last day for teachers. Non-tenured Unit 1 employees whose contracts are being recommended for non-renewal shall receive written warning from the school/worksite administration by April 15.

Department chairpersons may conduct observations of teachers and participate in the evaluation process under specified restrictions including the need for 2/3rds approval vote from the impacted department. The term “Instructional Leader” was defined and it will involve Unit 1 employees assisting colleagues with writing, monitoring and scoring SLO’s.

(Note: There was much work done concerning evaluation and rating. It is worth reviewing the comprehensive summary on www.taaaconline.org.)

Annapolis High School MOU

The Annapolis High School Memorandum of Understanding will continue its current terms and conditions for one year contingent upon funding of the tentative salary package.

Unit I employees at Annapolis will have the opportunity to voluntarily place themselves on the excess list through use of a declaration of intent (DOI).

Article 24 Duration of Agreement

This Agreement will take effect on July 1, 2013 and expire on June 30, 2015. It will reopen for limited negotiations on items to be implemented in the 2014-15 school year. The topics are limited to *Salary* and two “*wild-card*” topics to be determined by each party at its discretion.

TAAAC Foundation for Educational Excellence Scholarship Winners receive their certificates



Winners of this year’s TAAAC-FEE Scholarship Fund awards are: Daniele Alexander of Northeast HS, Taylor Ashworth of Chesapeake HS, Nicholas Crawford of Annapolis HS, Sara Rae Jones of Northeast HS, Selina Matulonis of Northeast HS, and Susan Tarabishi of Meade HS. The winner of the Robin Coleman Memorial Scholarship was Anuoluwapo Olubode of Meade HS. Christopher Farrow of South River HS was the recipient of the textbook award in memory of Samuel and Bessie Chao.

MAY ARC ATTENDANCE

The following schools, departments, and affiliates were not represented at the May 1, 2013 Association Representative Council Meeting.

Affiliates — Coaches Association, Counselors, SLAAAC;

Departments — Riva Road;

Elementary — Annapolis, Benfield, Bodkin, Cape St. Claire, Crofton, Crofton Meadows, Deale, Eastport, Edgewater, Fort Smallwood, Four Seasons, George Cromwell, Germantown, Glen Burnie Park, Glendale/Glendale Level V, Hillsmere, Jacobsville, Lothian, Manor View, Mayo, Millersville, Nantucket, North Glen, Oak Hill, Oakwood, Odenton, Overlook, Piney Orchard, Point Pleasant, Seven Oaks, Severna Park, Solley, South Shore, Van Bokkelen, West Meade, Woodside;

Secondary — Annapolis Mid., Arundel Sr., Brooklyn Park Mid., Chesapeake Bay Mid. Res. Ctr., Marley Mid., Meade Mid., Northeast Sr., Old Mill Mid. N., Severna Park Mid., South River Sr., Southern Mid.;

Specials – Arlington Echo, Center of Applied Tech. North, Chesapeake Science Point, Infants & Toddlers Program, J. Albert Adams Academy, Mary E. Moss Academy, Staff Development - Carver.

**WELCOME
NEW MEMBERS**

Mary Kort
Barbara Segnatelli

SPECIAL SERVICES

BJ's Discount for Renewing or Signing up!

Get **\$10 off** the \$50 membership fee or **\$20 off** the \$100 Rewards membership fee and 15 months = **3 months FREE!** FREE second card is included. Offer ends June 28, 2013.

Renew ahead of time and the 15 months will be added to the end of your current membership. If you would like to take advantage of this opportunity, email the BJ's rep at jturpin@bjs.com. List TAAAC in the subject line.

Hershey Park Tickets

Discounted tickets are available online NOW through the company link and using your promo code:

Company Link – <http://tinyurl.com/annetk2013>

Promo Code – **51421**

Tickets may also be purchased at the TAAAC office.

Six Flags Tickets

Discounted tickets are NOW available online. To access tickets, please go to sixflags.com/PartnerLogin or click the link below, then log into the site with the user name and password:

Special Ticket Link –

<https://shop.accesso.com/clients/sixflags/affiliate/index.php?m=17962>

User Name – **TAAACAM**

Password (Numeric & Case Sensitive) – **SixFlags5**

For more information about any of our services, please call the TAAAC Office.

Sick Leave Bank Open Enrollment/Cancellation

Unit I employees that would like to join the TAAAC Sick Leave Bank may do so during the Open Enrollment Period, which is July 1 through September 30. New Unit I employees may join within the first 30 days after their effective date of employment.

Unit I employees who wish to cancel their participation in the TAAAC Sick Leave Bank must do so by June 30 or risk the irretrievable loss of their one-day contribution.

Your Association Representative has been provided with a list of SLB members for their work location.

Those interested in enrollment/cancellation may call the TAAAC office to obtain the proper forms.