

TAAAC ACTION REPORT

Your Professional Organization

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

April 2015

Good Budget News from the House of Delegates... ...Not so Much yet from the Arundel Center

The budget action taken by Maryland's House of Delegates restored most of the \$144M cut to education contained in Governor Hogan's budget. Within that \$144M was a cut to the Anne Arundel County Schools of \$9,583,522, a sizable chunk of money to an already cash-strapped school system in a revenue capped county. The House action was very good news. It restored \$8,960,542 or more than 93% of the pending reduction.

Things are a little different in Anne Arundel County. County Executive Steve Schuh held three Town Hall meetings showcasing his five point plan toward making Anne Arundel County the best place to live, work, and start a business. The plan is intended to:

- *Reduce taxes and fees to create jobs.*
- ***Improve the quality of education by accelerating school construction.***
- *Enhance public safety by increasing staff.*
- *Reform all county government departments.*
- *Create a cleaner environment and healthier waterways by repairing failing storm pipes and other infrastructure.*

Conspicuous in its absence is the recruitment and retention of high quality teaching staff to fill those efficiently constructed schools. TAAAC members have been participating in postcard and email drives to encourage Mr. Schuh to fund the school budget, a necessary component to his five-point plan and his ultimate goal. On the date of this writing, the email campaign alone has generated over 1,000 emails to the County Executive and Council.

On the date of this newsletter's distribution, Mr. Schuh will have the FY2016 budget on his desk for about three more weeks. Readers who have not yet reached out to encourage him to do the right thing for public local education should take the time to do so. See how to do it easily and keep current on the Funding campaign at <http://www.taaaconline.org/fund-our-schools.html>.

Mr. Schuh will be presenting his budget to the County Council on May 1, 2015. The Council will follow by holding public hearings as noted below:

- **Wednesday, May 6, 2015 at North County High school
7 pm in the school auditorium**
- **Monday, May 11, 2015 at Annapolis High school
7 pm in the school auditorium**

TAAAC is asking all available members to attend the May 11th hearing.



Richard Benfer

New Kindergarten Curriculum Coming

I was lucky enough to attend various meetings regarding the new Kindergarten Curriculum to be implemented in 2015-2016 school year. The first meeting I found myself delving into the new curriculum with Kindergarten Teachers from around the county along with their principals. Many reviewed the new documents through Blackboard on desktop computers at Carver Staff Development Center. Some were using chrome books and some, like me, were using hand-held devices. The format is set up so that it can be viewed using various types of hardware. The new curriculum was celebrated by everyone that I talked with. It does not, “Throw the Baby out with the Bath Water,” as one teacher remarked. The new web-based document streamlines current curriculum into a logical flow.

The format boasts many tangible resources which have all been inventoried at schools. Nothing is suggested for use that isn't already available in buildings. Other resources listed are live links that open

COMMENTARY

in a new window while browsing. This diminishes the issue of not being able to find your way back to the main page. Some resources also are adaptable for printing to meet the needs of diverse learners when appropriate. The curriculum provides easy navigation to many profession-

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al development resources including guides for teachers. These built in PD opportunities are great for new teachers or those who want to brush up on various strategies like guided reading, shared reading, or any other of a number of choices. This format allows teachers to access the PD on their own terms and when they have time. The format also has links to cultural arts curriculums so that those teachers can see what is going on during a particular unit within the grade level.

The template for the Kindergarten Curriculum will also be evident with the upcoming First Grade Curriculum which is in development now. The ASI (Academic and Strategic Initiatives) office will be pro-

viding support to K & 1 Teachers this spring with substitute days to review the new formats. TAAAC has been a partner in the process by providing names to the ASI office as reviewers of the curriculum. In the past it seemed like anything new was introduced in August (aka, Open Court Training) and implemented the following week when students arrived. This roll out is more carefully thought out. K-1 teachers will have much more time with the new format before any implementation. This is a welcomed revision to how things have been done in the past.

The new web-based format for curriculum documents will eventually provide support to grades 2-5 as well. Like anything else, it will take time to get the format written for all elementary grades, but it will be worth the wait.

ASI/TAAAC Advisory Group Website Goes Live

The ASI/TAAAC Advisory Group has been working together on a monthly basis discussing many issues, both concerns and celebrations. The group has spent time discussing problems that occur within our system and ways to solve them. The ASI team from the board has been instrumental in making our voices heard and changes are taking place. Any major shifts in thinking and change take time and our work is no different.

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Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County	Officers	Board of Directors		Editors
2521 Riva Road, Suite L7 Annapolis, Maryland 21401 (410) 224-3330 (410) 841-6022 (301) 261-8309 FAX (410) 841-5117 www.taaaconline.org	Richard Benfer, President Pamela Bukowski, Vice President Colleen Walker, Secretary-Treasurer	Russell Leone Grace Matthews James Vaughn Elizabeth Brininger Sharon Moesel	Jacqueline Lubniewki Diana Peckham Jason Fahie Kristina Korona Martin Sears	Bill Jones, Executive Director and Managing Editor Roxanne L. Beach, Editor

From Contentia this month . . . *Your Rights and Responsibilities for Student Discipline*

At TAAAC we often get calls regarding the lack of follow through for teacher discipline referrals. We are told that referrals “disappear” and are never followed up by administration. Students are sent out from class for gross insubordination and are sent right back by administration or security. What can be done? The answer for teachers is to enforce the rules that are already on the books; Article 10 of the Negotiated Agreement -

“Unit I members shall have the authority and shall exercise the responsibility for the control of pupils...the member will have support from the principal or appropriate administrator in the reasonable disciplining of the student. (Article 10, A)”

“A student who refuses to obey a reasonable request of a teacher may be excluded from class and shall be retained in the office for the remainder of the instructional period. (Article 10, B)”

“If a student’s disruptive behavior results in action less than suspension, the principal shall confer with the teacher who referred the student to the principal before returning the student to the teacher’s classroom. (COMAR, 13A.08.01.11.B.6)”

To summarize, as Unit I members you have the right to exclude a student from class and the administration is obligated to follow up with you before returning the student to your classroom after the day of the referral. The meaning of the word “confer” is communication by any means, telephone, electronic or in person.

The discipline assigned by the administration is at their discretion; they don’t have to suspend or assign a punishment other than following the guidelines above. However, by insisting that the above procedures are followed, there is certainly an expectation that the referral itself will be processed and not “put in the drawer.”

The professional judgment of the Unit One employee must be respected. However, there are some hints that will help your referrals to be dealt with in a professional manner:

- 1) Be specific and detailed. Writing “classroom disruption” at the top of a referral and expecting much action is not realistic. Take the time to give both the background (“It was the sixth time he had thrown a pencil across the room”) and specifics of the event that occurred. The more detail you put on your referral, the more likely you are to have a professional response.
- 2) Note any contacts and other means you have attempted with the student prior to the referral.
- 3) Ask for administrative contact before return to classroom; remind them you know the rules.

Congratulations to the following schools for increasing the percentage of members in their building who voted in the TAAAC elections in 2015 over 2014. GREAT JOB!

School	2014	2015	%Points Increased
Waugh Chapel	2.78%	93.75%	90.97
Ferndale Early Childhood	10%	100%	90.00
Severna Park	12%	95.83%	83.83
Park	19.44%	100%	80.56
Severn River Middle	8.33%	55.56%	47.23
Linthicum	3.33%	40.63%	37.30
Arundel Middle	6.45%	40.63%	34.18
Chesapeake Science Point	3.23%	36.36%	33.13
Bates Middle	15.19%	45.68%	30.49
Southern High	25.86%	55.17%	29.31
Meade Heights	13.79%	38.71%	24.92
Belle Grove	39.13%	64%	24.87
Mayo	9.09%	33.33%	24.24
Lake Shore	25%	47.83%	22.83
Hilltop	23.21%	44.07%	20.86

TAAAC Foundation for Educational Excellence Children's Fund

TAAAC-FEE Children's Fund provides grants of up to \$100 to be used to provide needy Anne Arundel County Public School students with such things as warm clothing (hats, coats, mittens) or eyeglasses. These grants have enjoyed tremendous response over the course of the past couple decades. Requests have fallen off a bit this past year and the Foundation's officers wish to remind TAAAC members of its existence and availability. The request for a grant for a needy student must be made by a TAAAC member. All grants will be kept confidential.

TAAAC-FEE is a lawfully registered 501(c)3 non-profit charitable corporation and will happily accept contributions from any interested parties. TAAAC-FEE is also seeking volunteers to sit on its Boards of Directors. Its Board meets only a couple times a year. Its programs include the above described Children's Fund, a Scholarship Fund, and a nearly new Grant in Need fund for Unit 1 employees in distress. Interested members should contact Bill Jones at BJones@mseanea.org.

Competitive Compensation / School Start Time

At its March 11th meeting, the TAAAC Board of Directors adopted the following resolution in answer to the effort to fund an earlier school start time at the cost of other unmet priorities.

RESOLUTION recognizing the low level of fiscal resources allocated to the Anne Arundel County Public Schools by the Anne Arundel County operating budget and acknowledging the critical importance of high quality educators delivering and supporting instruction.

WHEREAS, the County budget has allocated only the stated-mandated minimum level of funding (Maintenance of Effort) to the Anne Arundel County Public Schools since 2009.

WHEREAS, Section 4-101(a) of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland explicitly states "...education matters that affect counties shall be under the control of a board of education in each county."

WHEREAS, Section 4-108(2) of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland explicitly requires the Board of Education to: "Maintain throughout its county a reasonably uniform system of public schools that is designed to provide quality education and equal education opportunity for all children."

WHEREAS, class sizes, unfunded mandates, accountability measures, and testing have drastically increased educators' workloads, driving greater numbers of educators to leave the career.

WHEREAS, compensation for Anne Arundel County public school educators has fallen behind that of colleagues with comparable years of experience in neighboring counties, diminishing the competitive position of the Anne Arundel County Public Schools in the recruitment of high quality teacher candidates and retention of currently employed highly qualified teachers.

WHEREAS, Anne Arundel County's professional school counselors, pupil personnel workers, school psychologists, social workers and other related service providers carry caseloads two and three times greater than those recommended by their respective professional associations, leaving their student populations underserved.

WHEREAS, it is widely recognized that the most critical component in classroom instruction is the presence of highly qualified, enthusiastic, talented and inspired educators to present and support that instruction.

WHEREAS, the Board of Education acknowledges the importance of a quality workforce in Goal III of its adopted strategic plan by: "attracting and retaining a quality work force that demonstrates a commitment to providing a positive learning environment, values diversity, and reflects the diversity of the county and the relative labor market."

RESOLVED by the Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County that adequate funding to provide compensation, working conditions, and support to ensure the ability of the Board of Education to recruit and maintain the continued employment of a high quality staff of public school educators should not be redirected to support a rush to change school start times.

Link up with TAAAC on Social Media



Please scan the code to follow us on Twitter



Please scan the code and Like us on Facebook

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Emily Bailey
Joan Beckner
Shanta Callen
Emily Crawford
Michael Francis
Christine Healy
Andrea M^cClenahan
Candace Milcarzyk
Kelli Myrick
Sara Thomas
Lindsey Thompson

NEA Director Run-Off Election



A run-off election for NEA Director will take place in May. Russell Leone is seeking your support to bring a voice of Anne Arundel educators to the state and national level. Russell is an elementary teacher and currently serves on the TAAAC board of directors. He has actively served to represent our members on several committees, including Nominating, Academics & Strategic Initiatives, SLO cadre, and PTA. He will need your support to win the seat of NEA director. Look for run-off election information coming in early May.

TAAAC Meeting Calendar

April 2015

- April 6** – Government Relations Lobbying – 5:00 PM @ Stan & Joe’s, West St.
- April 8** – Daytime Board of Education Meeting – 10:00 AM @ BOE
- April 8** – ARC – 5:00 PM @ Severna Park Middle
- April 9** – TAAAC/BOE Negotiations @ TAAAC
- April 9** – Membership Committee – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC
- April 13** – Sick Leave Bank @ TAAAC
- April 13** – Government Relations – Lobbying – 5:00 PM @ Stan & Joe’s, West St.
- April 14** – TAAAC BOD – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC
- April 14** – Nominating Committee – 4:45 PM @ TAAAC
- April 15** – Teacher of the Year Banquet
- April 16** – TAAAC ASI @ TAAAC
- April 21** – Special Events Committee – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC
- April 22** – IPD Committee – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC
- April 22** – TAAAC Executive Team @ TAAAC
- April 22** – Evening Board of Education Meeting – 7:00 PM @ BOE
- April 27** – Sick Leave Bank @ TAAAC
- April 27** – Public Relations – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC
- April 29** – High School Concerns Committee – 3:30 PM @ TAAAC
- April 30** – TAAAC Wellness Task Force – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC
- May 1 & 2** – TAAAC IPD SPARKS & Re-Ignite @ Doubletree Annapolis

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. If called in for a meeting only to find that it is your conduct or performance (other than routine job counseling) that is the focus of questioning or discussion, ask to suspend the meeting long enough to get Union representation.

If faced with such circumstances and required to remain in the meeting but denied the right to representation, you are under no obligation to speak. Simply take notes...

Then call TAAAC!

NLRB v. WEINGARTEN, INC., 420 U.S. 251 (1975)

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One difference however, that started last year, is that upper management is listening. To that end, Dr. McMahon has developed a web page for our group to share concerns, questions, and positive comments regarding issues educators face on a daily basis. Members of the group post questions either anonymously or provide their name and school for immediate feedback. The questions are vetted to the correct department. The questions are then posted to the web page along with the answer. The ASI/TAAAC Advisory views this process as a partnership that can only benefit educators and ultimately the students we teach. Now that all the bugs are worked out, the website is open to all educators across the system. The link to the web page will be housed on the AACPS Employee Intranet. The TAAAC website will also have a link that will take members to the AACPS Intranet log in screen. Look for information coming from your TAAAC rep and principal about the web page and how it can be used as a tool to help solve problems and get questions answered in a timely fashion.

NOMINATIONS OPEN

The Nominating Committee is currently accepting nominations for **MSEA Delegates**. Nominations will be accepted until the June 3 Association Representative Council Meeting.

Name _____

Address _____

School _____

Phone (H) _____ (W) _____

Personal Email _____

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

MSEA Delegate

TAAAC Special Ed Task Force

The Special Education Task Force welcomed the Director of Special Education Bobbi Pedrick to TAAAC on March 16, 2015 to give members the opportunity to have direct communication on matters related to the job and working conditions. Members “in the trenches” brought to light areas of concern that otherwise might have gone unaddressed. Both Ms. Pedrick and the members benefited from the open dialogue and ability to share ideas for concern and improvement.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Spend Summer in the Sun

DRD Pool Service, Inc. is accepting resumes for summer job openings as swimming pool field supervisors and swimming pool managers (Full or Part Time). No Experience Necessary. For more information, email Noelle Navarro at n_navarro@drdpools.com

Tutorrific!

Tutor in homes throughout Howard County (Elkridge, Columbia, etc.) A great way to make extra money! Make your own schedule. Please send an email and/or resume to Deborah Markowitz at tutorific@comcast.net

Anchor's The Way!

Anchor Aquatics is training and hiring for summer 2015 for the positions of Pool Manager, Area Supervisor, Lifeguard and Pool Operator for Annapolis and surrounding areas. Attend our Open House on Saturday, January 3 from 10 am – 2 pm at 605 Admiral Drive, Annapolis 21401. You can apply, interview and get a **prize**. Ask about our FREE Training (\$350 value). Contact 410-956-0744 or go online at www.anchoraquatics.com.

NOMINATIONS OPEN

The Nominating Committee is currently accepting nominations for the **Sick Leave Bank Approval Committee** and the **AACPS Calendar Committee (Secondary)**. Nominations will be accepted until the May 6 Association Representative Council Meeting.

Name _____

Address _____

School _____

Phone (H) _____ (W) _____

Personal Email _____

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

Sick Leave Bank Approval Committee

AACPS Calendar Committee (Secondary)

March ARC Attendance

The following schools, departments, and affiliates were not represented at the March 4, 2015 Association Representative Council Meeting.

Affiliates – Coaches, Counselors, EBOTA, Psychologists, Reading Teachers, SLAAAC, Social Workers; **Departments** – Riva Road; **Elementary** – Annapolis, Arnold, Bodkin, Broadneck, Brock Bridge, Brooklyn Park, C & I Resource Ctr. @ Point Pleasant, Community Based Servs., Crofton, Crofton Meadows, Davidsonville, Deale, Eastport, Folger McKinsey, Fort Smallwood, Freetown, Georgetown East, Germantown, Glendale Annex, Glendale/Glendale Level V, Hillsmere, Hilltop, Jacobsville, Jessup, Jones, Lake Shore, Lothian, Manor View, Marley, Mayo, Millersville, Mills-Parole, Nantucket, Oakwood, Odenton, Overlook, Pasadena, Pershing Hill, Piney Orchard, Point Pleasant, Quartfield, Rolling Knolls, Seven Oaks, Severn, Severna Park, Shady Side, South Shore, Sunset, Tracey's, Van Bokkelen, West Meade, Windsor Farm, Woodside; **Secondary** – Arundel Senior, Brooklyn Park Middle, Chesapeake Bay Middle Resource Ctr., Chesapeake Senior, Corkran Middle, Glen Burnie Senior, Northeast Senior, Old Mill Middle N., Severna Park Middle, South River Senior, Southern Middle; **Specials** – Arlington Echo, Center of Applied Tech. N., Center of Applied Tech. S., Chesapeake Science Point, Infants & Toddlers Program, J. Albert Adams Academy, Marley Glen, Mary Moss Academy, Monarch Academy Glen Burnie, Monarch – Laurel, Phoenix Academy, **Staff Development** – Carver.