Board of Ed Ratifies FY16 Collective Bargaining Agreement with TAAAC

On the evening of October 1st, following about two-and-a-half hours of testimony, the Anne Arundel County Board of Education voted to ratify the fiscal year 2016 Negotiated Agreement between the Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County and the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County. The vote was unanimous, yet still controversial. At the conclusion of testimony and questions, Board President Stacy Korbelak gave a concise statement describing the timeline of events that led to the difficult settlement, and reminded Board members and the audience that the Board did not have the opportunity or authority to make changes in the Agreement. There were only two ways to vote, aye or nay.

The Agreement was initially presented by Melisa Rawles, Director of Employee and Labor Relations, followed by Richard Benfer and Bill Jones. Then testimony was given by scores of teachers, students, and parents. Some was taken from other elected TAAAC leaders including Secretary-Treasurer Russell Leone, and Directors Kristina Korona and Sharon Moesel.

Some of the most notable testimony was given by the County Executive's Education Liaison and former BOE member; notable, yes, but not in a positive way. She spewed more misinformation than should be allowed by any appointed public official. Here are examples:

From the Liaison: “Teachers have lost only four years of steps, not five and-a-half as we keep hearing tonight.”

FACT: Unit 1 AACPS employees were given no steps in FY2010, FY2011, FY2012, FY2013, or in FY2016. They did receive a step halfway through FY2014, and a full step in FY2015. That makes one and one-half steps in seven years. The arithmetic isn't complicated. She kept hearing “five and-a-half” because that's the correct number.

From the Liaison: While speaking of the County Executive's high priority public education, she references, “historic 17 million dollar increase to public education....”

FACT: There was nothing “historic” about the 17 million dollar allocation. Here are some comparisons from not too long ago: $39.9M (FY2009), $62.9M (FY2007), $55M (FY2006).

From the Liaison: “Teachers pay a mere 7% of their pension costs and the taxpayers pay the remaining 93.”

FACT: Teachers pay far more than 7% of their pension costs. Their contribution is not even calculated as a proportion of pension costs. What they pay is 7% of their salaries toward the costs of the pension system. Further, taxpayers pay far less than 93%...
Changing the conversation about the Board of Education budget from “What It Costs!” to “What Can We Invest!” will be very important going into this FY17 budget cycle. People need to understand that the Board of Education presents a budget that fulfills the needs of a growing county with a student population increasing in both number and diversity. The successes we have built have been largely based on shoestring budgets that have been supplemented by poaching reserves and picking the pockets of employees. No one disputes the importance of strong curriculum and instruction choices for kids in the classroom. Making those decisions is what we do best. Being fully funded to do our jobs spells success for not only the students but for the educators as well. We can no longer continue to work #beyondthebell. Educator working conditions are Student learning conditions."

This would have allowed the Board of Education to fulfill its obligation to the citizens of our county to provide quality educators to deliver top-notch curriculum and instruction to the students we serve. The Board of Education knows what it needs to run our successful school system, so at that time I was glad to hear the “soon to be decision-maker” (County Executive Schuh) making that commitment to our Public Schools in Anne Arundel County.

What happened was the school system budget was not funded fully. The County Executive kept his election promise to cut taxes in a county that is the 4th wealthiest in the state that collects proportionately less than every surrounding county. Our property tax revenue is artificially capped by a 1992 voter referendum and our local income tax is the third lowest in Maryland. Only Talbot and Worcester are lower. All around us, counties are taking advantage of the economic improvement of recent years to provide improvements in funding for schools and other starving public services. Ours chooses to further reduce already scant public revenue by lowering what is already a comparatively low tax burden. Employees again have been left to balance the budget on their backs by foregoing steps once again (5½ years behind). Additionally many lost challenge school stipends, which was a double hit.

Meanwhile during this past summer while bargaining continued and impasse ultimately declared, the school system was hiring new teachers. Over 700 new teachers hired. That is the largest number in my memory. The school year started and the workload cycle has continued to climb with no relief in sight. Many of the issues folks are having are shared directly with the Superintendent at our monthly meeting, with the executive leadership of the school system during ASI/TAAAC Advisory, and with the board president directly. Issues have been addressed to take care of some inequities. Keeping an open dialogue.

(Continued on page 3)
From Contentia this month . . . Teacher and Principal Evaluation (TPE)

There are some notions out in our education community that we are evaluated using a newly implemented teacher evaluation model. The discussions involve that portion of Teacher and Principal Evaluation (TPE) model that applies to teachers, and it is not really that new. As it regards teachers, the TPE has two primary components. One, Professional Practices, assesses performance primarily by observations and closely resembles the rating and observation process of years gone by. The other, Student Growth, assesses teacher performance by measuring growth in student achievement. Student growth is currently measured by students’ progress toward identified Student Learning Objectives (SLO’s) which are used as an alternative (hopefully, a superior one) to standardized test scores.

We are in the third year using SLO’s, so I would no longer characterize there use as “new.” The evolving use of SLO’s may be seen as new each year as they are implemented differently throughout the system. On the AACPS Intranet site there is a section on the “Teaching and Learning Cycle.” Most questions can be answered by logging on and reviewing the documents regarding the TPE. The actual TPE overview is 79 pages and cannot be summarized effectively in this brief commentary. It is divided up by Overview, Professional Practices, Student Growth, and an Appendix.

The main differences in the current teacher evaluation model compared to those prior to the Education Reform Act are that educators are now evaluated annually and a portion of the evaluation is based on student growth. But for SLO’s we could have found ourselves evaluated by how well our students scored on standardized tests. MSEA and TAAAC are not in favor of that and have been working to educate the General Assembly of the futility of such a measure. Meanwhile we have SLO’s. The hope is to be able to do an SLO successfully enough to show that the need for standardized test scores in teacher evaluation is unnecessary.

If you have questions about the TPE, check the AACPS Employee Intranet and look under “Teaching and Learning Cycle.” You will most likely find your answer to your question there. Your principal and performance coach (if you have one) should be able to help you as well. If you can’t get your question answered, please call the TAAAC office and speak to the TAAAC/MSEA UniServ Director assigned to your school.

(continued from page 2)

with the executive level at the central office is key to getting change. Albeit most of which is a very slow process.

The Board of Education President, Stacy Korbelak, made it very clear last year that she sees TAAAC and the other union counterparts as partners in the process, and has been dedicated to having an open dialog to discuss issues when appropriate. Educators shape the future and it is time to roll up our sleeves, get out to our elected officials, and educate them about the top notch education students receive in our schools, and the need for maintaining it. Remember that education in Anne Arundel County and all of Maryland is top notch not in spite of our dedicated educators and support professionals, but due to their unwavering dedication to the over 80,000 students we serve. We need the County Executive to share in that dedication.

P.R.O.F.I.T.S.

An emerging group of Parents supporting educators in our county is organizing to help improve educator compensation. Visit the P.R.O.F.I.T.S. (Parents Rallying Officials for Increased Teacher Salaries) Facebook page and like it.

https://www.facebook.com/Parents-Rallying-Officials-For-Increased-Teacher-Salaries-898866436835211/
October 22, 2015

To: Bill Jones

From: Kristy K. Anderson

RE: Work to Rule

You have expressed concerns about possible disciplinary action for a teacher’s role or participation in a work to rule.

TAAAC/MSEA/NEA were created to mobilize workplace employees—to increase individual power by many acting as one. Collective actions like working to rule, appearing at board of education budget meetings, contacting county and state lawmakers, and networking with community organizations are proven to make a difference. Change, however, requires collective action through a recognized body, such as TAAAC.

Successful work to rule campaigns require commitment, communication, and courage. While TAAAC can provide specific information, here’s a basic guide on dos and don’ts:

- Adhere to the contract. Attend all required meetings, but nothing more.
- If you have already committed to a voluntary activity, decline requests to do so by administration.
- If you have already committed to an activity verbally or by signing a contract, ask to be released from the duty. If you are not released, report to the activity.
- If you perform a certain voluntary activity year after year, without a specific agreement, immediately inform the administration before the activity begins that you will not perform the activity for that year.
- If an administrator directs you to perform an otherwise voluntary activity, perform the activity and immediately contact your union.
- Finally, and most importantly, do not engage or involve students in a work to rule action. To involve students through a simple conversation whether in the hall or during class time may be deemed disruptive to the work place and subject to disciplinary action.

As educators, time is valuable. If done correctly, collective action, like working to rule, can be a powerful tool for TAAAC’s negotiations team at the bargaining table.

If there are more specific questions, please let me know.
AFLAC PAYS CASH FOR:

- Illness
- Maternity
- Hospital Stay
- Cancer
- Accident
- Wellness (doctor visits)

To find out how you and your family can be covered contact:

**Suzanne Herrmann**
301 – 985 – 2020
suzanne_herrmann@us.aflac.com

**Cynthia Eckhardt**
301 – 381 – 6559
cynthia.eckhardt@employee-plans.com

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**INTEGRATED FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS, INC.**
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2015-16 TAAAC Financial Workshops
Presented By Bill Bush, CFP®, CPA

- January 28, 2016: Understanding your Retirement
- February 25, 2016: Saving & Investing

All workshops are being held at Severna Park Middle School. For more details, call Bill at (410) 480-0007 or email at William.bush@lpl.com.

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Contact Us
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Kristin Hoffensetz
Jens Johansen
Destinee Jones
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Shelby Koehler
Jacob Listorti
Shannon Maury
Julianna Meinhardt
Victoria Mitchell
Kristine Nellenbach
Sara Newfeld
Michael O’Donnell
Rita Ortiz
Diane Schulkowski
Stephanie Weber
Lynne Weise
Dawn Wetherby
Gail Wilkins
Amy Williams
Robert Wolsin

MSEA/TAAAC
Newest
Emerging Leader

Robert Mauro

MSEA Convention had many highlights. For one of our own TAAAC Members and Convention delegates, Robert Mauro, the convention brought not only exciting bylaws, new business, and PAC raffles, but he was honored at the Saturday Luncheon for his completion of the Emerging Leaders Academy. This is the same program TAAAC’s current executive team had gone through in the past. Richard Benfer, Pam Bukowski, and Russell Leone are all alum of the MSEA Emerging Leaders Academy.

Rob spent the last year completing tasks to build on his leadership skills. He attended several meetings throughout the year to hone those skills and educate himself on the leadership process of our local (TAAAC), state (MSEA), and national (NEA) associations. Rob is an asset to our organization and we are very proud of his accomplishments.

MSEA is in the process of revamping their program and TAAAC has identified leaders who are interested in the upcoming academy, or whatever they wind up calling it. Not much is accomplished without members like these who are committed to make time and put forth effort to strengthen our association. Congratulations to all Emerging Leader Alumni and particularly Robert Mauro.
Ways to Make an Impact Now!

√ Mark your calendar for the following dates:

- **BOE Budget Hearing**
  - January 5, 2016, 7PM@Old Mill HS
- **BOE Budget Hearing**
  - January 7, 2016, 7PM@BOE
- **Legislative Breakfast**
  - January 9, 2016, 9AM@Union Jacks
- **Primary Election Day**
  - April 26, 2016
- **County Executive Budget Presentation**
  - May 2, 2016, 11AM@Arundel Center
- **County Council Budget Hearing**
  - May 9, 2016, 7PM@North County HS
- **County Council Budget Hearing**
  - May 12, 2016, 7PM@Annapolis HS

√ Every time you take home work, grade papers in the evening, stay late, or go beyond your contracted work hours… let everyone know: Post or tweet comments and photos using #beyondthebell

√ Send an email to the Anne Arundel County Executive and Council Members that tells your story and illustrates the person impact of not funding our contracts (emails found at [www.aacounty.org](http://www.aacounty.org))

√ Volunteer to be part of the Action Task Force – Contact bjones@mseanea.org. Help craft activities to increase understanding and awareness of critical contract issues.

√ Like us on Facebook – [https://www.facebook.com/taaaconline](https://www.facebook.com/taaaconline)

√ Follow us on Twitter - [https://twitter.com/TAAACTweets](https://twitter.com/TAAACTweets)

√ Look for QR codes to scan with your smart device in this issue

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Did You Know?

If you are a currently working at a district school you may qualify for special forgiveness programs not available to the general public. The Teacher Forgiveness program was introduced by President Obama and is designed to help teachers eliminate their student loan debt while continuing their careers as educators. Participation in the program will reduce your principal, and after ten years, any balance that remains is totally forgiven.

(800) 508-1626
9:00am - 6:00pm EST Weekdays
[www.aessuccess.org](http://www.aessuccess.org)

American Education Services will help you through the application process, determine your eligibility and prepare all necessary documents. Even if you aren’t a teacher you may still qualify for some form of forgiveness, all it takes is a phone call to find out how much you can save.
NOMINATIONS OPEN

The TAAAC Nominating Committee is accepting nominations for President, Vice President, Board of Directors (5), and NEA Delegates (34).

Nomination forms must be received at the TAAAC office by 5 PM on Thursday, December 10, 2015.

Name ________________________________
Address ______________________________
_____________________________________
School _______________________________
Phone (H) ____________  (W) ___________
Personal Email ________________________

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

☐ President
☐ Vice President
☐ Board of Director
☐ NEA Delegate

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

LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE

✓ Offering discounted long-term care insurance to TAAAC members and their spouses/partners.

✓ Helping members protect their hard-earned assets.

✓ Giving members a way to remain in control of their healthcare choices.

✓ Providing members with peace-of-mind.

For a no obligation consult and quote, contact:
Michael Markowitz – 410-455-0680
Mike.Markowitz@acsiapartners.com

TAACAC Events Calendar

November 2015

4  Daytime Board of Education Meeting – 10:00 AM @ BOE
4  ARC – 5:00 PM @ Severn River Middle
4  Middle School Concerns – Following ARC Mtg.
9  Public Relations – 5:00 PM @ TAAAC Office
9  Sick Leave Bank @ TAAAC Office
10 Community Outreach – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC Office
11 High School Concerns – 3:40 PM @ TAAAC Office
11 TAAAC Executive Team @ TAAAC Office
12 Minority Affairs/Human Relations – 4:40 PM @ TAAAC Office
16 Government Relations – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC Office
16 Instructional Professional Development – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC Office
18 TAAAC BOD – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC Office
18 Evening Board of Education Meeting – 7:00 PM @ BOE
19 TAAAC ASI – 3:30 PM @ TAAAC Office
19 Membership – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC Office
23 Sick Leave Bank @ TAAAC Office

*Please Note*

December 2 – ARC – 5:00 PM @ Severn River Middle

(continued from the front page)

of the pension costs. The dollar amount by the county (taxpayers) is the result of actuarial calculation of the outstanding long-term liabilities less projected participant contributions and investment return. The liaison, whether intentional or otherwise, treated the Maryland’s defined benefit teachers’ pension plan as if it were a defined contribution, then made a specious and misleading comparison between the two.

Interested readers can view the entirety of the meeting at the following link; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zt8H6cpioCw&feature=youtu.be. All of the testimony is worth hearing, but those without sufficient time can jump to some highlights. Those interested in seeing only that testimony related to the ratification, should begin at 1:59:18 for the presentations of Melisa Rawles, Richard Benfer and Bill Jones. The comments made by the County Executive’s Education Liaison begin at 2:44:04, and to the see the impression she made on one of our colleagues, check out Mr. Sullivan at 3:59.55.
New Action Task Force Seeking Volunteers

TAAAC is seeking volunteers to participate in an Action Task Force. The intent of the Action Task Force is to create and develop means and activities for member participation aimed to stem the persistently inadequate annual funding for public education and public educators. To build the Task Force we need a pool of interested members from which we can select participants that reflect the various segments of the bargaining unit.

The Task Force will be provided with staff and governance assistance, a meeting venue, and a budget. It will determine its own meeting schedule once its first meeting occurs.

Members interested in participating should email the following information to Bill Jones at BJones@mseanea.org, or you may complete the following form and return it to the TAAAC office via Basket Mail as soon as possible.

Name _________________________________  School or Worksite _______________________________

Work phone ___________________  Mobile phone (or Home phone if no mobile) ___________________

Personal email ________________________________

Grade level, Subject area, or Special area _____________________________________________________

Brief description of past activism (optional) ___________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________

Please act promptly if interested. TAAAC’s Board of Directors will meet on October 28th. The Superintendent will be making his budget proposal to the Board on December 16th. The Task Force will need to start its work very soon.

BJ’s Wholesale Club

For Renewing or Applying - TAAAC members get $10 off the $50 annual membership fee or $20 off the Rewards Fee, PLUS 15 months = 3 months FREE! A Free household card is included. You can renew ahead of time. For the application, contact Joyce Turpin at jturpin@bjs.com. Be sure to put “TAAAC” in the subject line.
FREE! NEA Complimentary Life Insurance! Visit www.neamb.com/complimentary

SOCIAL SECURITY NO. (Last 4 digits are required) OR EMPLOYEE ID NUMBER

**Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County**
**Maryland State Education Association**
**National Education Association**
**2015-2016 ENROLLMENT FORM**

**TAAAC**
**LOCAL ASSOCIATION**
**WORK LOCATION**
**POSITION**
**SUBJECT**

Members are automatically opted in to MSEA's members-only and other newsletters. You may opt out at any time by clicking the unsubscribe link found in every email. How would you like to receive your MSEA ActionLine magazine? □ Print □ Digital copy (email)

**ETHNICITY (Optional)** □ American Indian/Alaska Native □ Asian □ Black □ Caucasian (not Hispanic origin) □ Hispanic □ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander □ Multi-Ethnic □ Other □ Unknown

**DATE OF BIRTH** **HIRE DATE**

Check your salary level for dues computation:

- [ ] Over $41,482
- [ ] $20,741 - $41,482
- [ ] Below $20,741

**Method of payment:**

- [ ] Payroll deduction (Sign and date below.)
- [ ] Cash / Check

**Payroll Deduction Authorization**

I authorize continuing payment or deduction of dues in the sum determined by my local affiliate, the Maryland State Education Association (MSEA), and the National Education Association (NEA) each year, unless I revoke this authorization in writing to my local affiliate by such time as is designated in my local affiliate's collective bargaining agreement or my local affiliate's policy. In case of my resignation or termination, the board of education shall deduct the balance of my yearly dues from my final paycheck.

Dues payments are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. Dues payments (or a portion) may be deductible as a miscellaneous itemized deduction.

**Signature:** ________________________________________________________________________

**Fund for Children and Public Education Contribution Voluntary Authorization**

Yes! I want to see our elected officials stand up for public education and my students. I hereby authorize the following contribution to the Political Action Committee of NEA, MSEA, and my Local Association to build a strong voice for educators:

- TOTAL PAC PAYROLL DEDUCTION PER PAY PERIOD: $12.00 $6.00 $3.00 $1.00

The NEA, MSEA and applicable local Funds for Children and Public Education collect voluntary contributions from Association members and use those contributions for political purposes, including but not limited to making contributions and expenditures on behalf of friends of public education who are candidates for federal, state, or local office. I understand that I am making a joint contribution and that one-third of my contribution will go to the NEA Fund, one-third to the MSEA Fund and one-third to the local account. Contributions to the Fund are voluntary; making a contribution is neither a condition of employment nor membership in the Association, and members have the right to refuse to contribute without suffering any reprisal. A member may contribute more or less than the suggested amount, or not contribute, without affecting his/her membership status, rights, or benefits in NEA, MSEA, or any of MSEA's affiliates.

Contributions to the Fund are not deductible as charitable contributions for Federal or State income tax purposes. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation, and name of employer for each individual whose contributions aggregate in excess of $200 in a calendar year. Only U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents may contribute to the Fund. All donations from persons other than members of NEA and its affiliates, and their immediate families, will be returned forthwith.

With full knowledge of this information, I agree that my authorization for political action pledges as indicated by the check mark herein and my authorization for payroll deductions, shall continue in force from year to year unless revoked or modified by me giving written notice to my local association.