2016 Legislative Breakfast

The 3rd Annual TAAAC Legislative Breakfast took place on January 9, 2016, at Union Jacks in Annapolis. With over 80 attendees and 20 guests, it was very well attended. House Speaker Mike Busch was the Keynote Speaker and reinforced his commitment on the state level for full support of school funding. Del. Pam Beidle and Del. Seth Howard were on hand to answer questions that the audience posed to them. Having both parties represented clearly demonstrates that education is not a partisan issue. County Councilman Jerry Walker addressed the group as well, and reminded folks of the support that he and Councilmen Trumbauer, Smith, and Pruski have shown toward educators in our county. Their 4 votes will be very important when the Council receives the County Executive’s Budget. I heard from many members in attendance about the valuable conversations they had with legislators, councilmen, and Board members. We all are in the same boat advocating for the education of our students and in turn advocating for our Association. We look forward to continuing the conversations started at the breakfast at our weekly lobby night meetings. The next one will be held on February 8, 2016, at 4:30 PM, at Stan & Joe’s in Annapolis. We look forward to seeing you there.
Anne Arundel County Public Schools is the second largest employer in Anne Arundel County. With the countless stories I hear of folks going other places to make more money, it is clear that we are now approaching a crisis situation. According to MSDE data, many AACPS educators left to take jobs in other counties: in 2010/11 – 18; in 2011/12 – 21; in 2012/13 – 31; in 2013/14 – 67. There is no 2014/15 data out yet, but we have already had 67 separations from service since the beginning of the year, and we are still processing new educators on a weekly basis. If this upward trend continues we could bleed many more highly qualified educators. We cannot continue to lose our workforce at this rate to other counties that appear to respect their educators more than Anne Arundel County does.

Students are not assembly line parts. They cannot be tossed out like nuts and bolts and recycled when they do not meet standards. We educate every student that walks through our door. They all have different needs and that requires staffing to meet those needs. The teaching staff has been underfunded for several years now by not being able to hire the number of educators needed to meet the growing student populations, by not providing adequate step increases that are memorialized in contract language, and by not providing adequate COLAs to help keep up with the rising cost of living. Just as students need a hierarchy of needs met before they are able to learn, educators have similar needs. If a teacher is pre-occupied by how he or she is going to feed their own family or pay a utility bill, or by the demands of the second job needed to make those payments; then time, energy and attention are taken away from planning and delivering quality instruction to enhance student learning. Some improvement has been made. The last three years we have seen 3% in COLAs and 2 steps. With restructuring of the scale and the offset of higher deductions in other areas, our educators haven’t seen the increases as significant.

Educators in our county are highly skilled, dedicated, and highly sought after by other education systems around the state and country. Data shows that many educators in our system could do much better in terms of pay (from thousands to tens of thousands) than they do here in Anne Arundel. Many of our ranks labeled as “Millennials” have no problem taking advantage of better opportunities elsewhere in our state. All educators in our county work hard and deserve to be recognized by putting competitive pay back in their wallets rather than the annual lip service and “pat on the back.” Likewise, all of our students deserve the recruitment and retention of the most highly qualified teachers, few of whom will spend a career in what’s becoming the lowest paying school district in the Baltimore-Washington Metropolitan Area.

Richard Benfer

TAAAC Action Report

Page 2
Do you ever . . .

   Badmouth your employer, your supervisors, fellow employees, parents, or students?

   Discuss student work?

   Post pictures of students or student work?

   Post pictures of yourself or others in “unprofessional” situations?

   Allow students or parents to “friend” you?

   Text or call students?

   Email students without copying a parent or administration?

Then STOP!

You must assume that anything you post or text or tweet will exist forever. There is no privacy on the internet. Even those you trust may pass your posts on to others who may take offense. Anne Arundel County Public Schools monitors internet and social network activities just as they monitor employee involvement with law enforcement.

Protect yourself! Don’t take any chances that may lead to discipline, suspension, or loss of your employment. You do not have the First Amendment right of freedom of speech when it comes to your employer and your employment.

Every time you post something inappropriate you put your job at risk!

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**TAAAC and MSEA Elections**

**It’s time to VOTE!**

It’s time to elect our President, Vice President, five Members to our Board of Directors, and NEA Delegates.

All voting will occur online. Voting will begin at 9 am on January 25, 2016, and close at 5 pm on February 19, 2016. Members should visit the TAAAC or MSEA websites at [www.marylandeducators.org](http://www.marylandeducators.org) or [taaaconline.org/elections](http://taaaconline.org/elections) to access their ballot and vote in the TAAAC and MSEA elections. Members can access the MSEA websites from any location where they have an unrestricted internet connection. Members will need their MSEA membership number and the last four digits of their social security number to vote. Any member who does not know their membership number can obtain it by calling the TAAAC office during normal business hours at 410-224-3330.
**Educator Expense Deduction**

If you are an eligible educator, you can deduct up to $250 ($500 if married filing jointly and both spouses are educators, but not more than $250 each) of any unreimbursed expenses (otherwise deductible as a trade or business expense). Qualified expenses are amounts you paid or incurred for books, supplies, computer equipment (including related software and services), other equipment, and supplementary materials that you use in the classroom. For courses in health and physical education, expenses for supplies are qualified expenses only if related to athletics. This deduction is for expenses paid or incurred during the tax year. You claim the deduction on line 23 of **Form 1040** or on line 16 of **Form 1040A**.

You are an eligible educator if, for the tax year:

- You are a kindergarten through grade 12:
  - Teacher
  - Instructor
  - Counselor, Principal, or
  - Aide, and

- You work at least 900 hours a school year in a school that provides elementary or secondary education as determined under state law.

Qualified expenses are deductible only to the extent the amount of such expenses exceed the following amounts for the tax year:

- The interest on qualified U.S. savings bonds that you excluded from income because you paid qualified higher education expenses,
- Any distribution from a qualified tuition program that you excluded from income,
- Any tax-free withdrawals from your Coverdell education savings accounts,
- Any reimbursed expenses not reported to you on box 1 of your **Form W-2**.

For additional information regarding educator expense deductions, see **Publication 529, Miscellaneous Deductions**, and **Publication 17, Your Federal Income Tax for Individuals**.

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**The Big Dig!**

TAAAC wants to thank the hard work of the employees of AFSME Local 1693. All their hard work and determination to get schools cleaned up after the snowstorm, and make sure it was safe for all other employees to get the school safely is truly appreciated.

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**Grade-In Coming Up!**

Join TAAAC at Annapolis Mall Food Court on Friday, February 19, 2016 from 3 PM to 6 PM. Our grade-in will help bring public awareness to the amount of work that educators across our system put in after contractual work hours. Come and join colleagues and friends and make an impact now.
Welcome New Members

Taylor Bosset
Edward Carey
Lynn Cottle
Kristina Dalton
Joanna Good
Daniel Graham
Kate Hampson
Laura Hans
Jerry Harris
Brittany King
Jenifer Lavell
Jody Lizama
Meredith McClure-Scott
Jacqueline Murphy
Kathleen O’Neill
Juliana Sachs
D’nia Walker
Lauren White

TAAAC Special Education Task Force

We invite you to join us at the TAAAC office on Monday, March 7, 2016, from 5 – 6 PM to discuss Adult Services for SPED and how they support our students in a quickly changing world with Providence Center Manager, Aimee Buller.

Please RSVP to Mark Mench at mmench@mseanea.org, or https://taaac.wufoo.com/forms/taaac-special-education-task-force-2016/
For more information, please call the TAAAC office at 410-224-3330.

Sick Leave Bank Update

The following is a short report on the Sick Leave Bank regarding enrollments, cancelations, denials, and grants. As of our last meeting on December 21, 2015, which covers from July 1, 2015, we have had the following occur:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrollments</td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancelled membership</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denials</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied and then granted</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total number of days granted were 551.5 days or 4,136.25 hours.

TAX PREPARATION

Bob Pellicoro, who has served TAAAC members for the past 27 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 2015 Income Tax Returns preparation. Please call the TAAAC office to schedule an appointment for one of the following dates:

March 8, 2016 – 10 AM – 6 PM
March 10, 2016 – 10 AM – 6 PM
March 14, 2016 – 10 AM – 6 PM

Foundation to Help Local Students

One of TAAAC’s functions is to assist local students in continuing their education. TAAAC does so through its Foundation for Educational Excellence which gives competitive scholarships to college bound young people.

The Foundation provides seven scholarships to local public high school students each year which are funded by members, outside donors, and occasional fundraising events. In addition, there are two memorial scholarships funded through direct donations: the Robin Coleman Award for Science and Technology, and the Samuel and Bessie Chao Memorial Book Award. Applications are distributed through all public high school counselors. The forms were sent out on February 3 for the 2016 scholarship awards. For more information, contact your school counseling department or call the TAAAC office.
NOMINATIONS OPEN

The TAAAC Nominating Committee is accepting nominations for Credentials and Nominating Committees.

Nominations will be accepted until the Wednesday, February 3, 2016 ARC Meeting.

Name ____________________________________________
Address ___________________________________________
School _____________________________________________
Phone (H) __________________  (W) ___________________
Personal Email ______________________________________

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

☐ Credentials Committee
☐ Nominating Committee

Job Opportunities

Anchor’s The Way!

Anchor Aquatics is now accepting applications and is training for summer 2016! Positions include Lifeguard/Pool Operator, Pool Managers, and Area Supervisors. We offer a work friendly environment, full and part-time positions, competitive pay, flexible schedules, and training. Jobs available in Chester and Grasonville! Please contact our office or visit our website for further information: 410-956-0744, 410-798-0486, www.anchoraquatics.com.

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

January ARC Attendance

The following schools, departments, and affiliates were not represented at the January 6, 2015 Association Representative Council Meeting.

Affiliates– Counselors, EMAAAC, PPW’s, Psychologists, Reading Teachers, SLAAAC;

TAAAC Town Hall Announced

Members are welcome to join TAAAC leaders at Hellas on Tuesday, February 23rd, from 6PM to 8PM for TAAAC’s first Town Hall. There will be a brief presentation of what TAAAC is and does, time for questions and answers; then a kick-off of TAAAC’s organizing effort for the spring budget process. Food and beverages will be provided.
TOY Semifinalist

TAAAC Congratulates nine educators from all levels of the public school system who were named as semifinalists for the 2015-16 Anne Arundel County Public Schools Teacher of the Year award by AACPS and the Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Chamber of Commerce. The semifinalists are:

* Melissa Major, Bodkin Elementary School
* Melissa Quigley, Broadneck High School
* Carol Bak, Chesapeake High School
* Kathleen Soares, Crofton Middle School
* Mary Ann Perret, Davidsonville Elementary School
* Katrina Griffin, North County High School
* Sharon Mattoon, Solley Elementary School
* Alexis Pogonowski, Southern High School
* Kate Tedesco, Tracey’s Elementary School

The semifinalists will be among 39 public school and three independent school educators to be honored at the 30th annual Excellence in Education banquet at the BWI Marriott in Linthicum on April 25, 2016. In addition to naming the 2016 Anne Arundel County Public Schools Teacher of the Year, who will represent Anne Arundel County in the statewide competition later this year, the Anne Arundel County Independent Schools Teacher of the Year will also be announced at this event.

TAAAC Events Calendar

February 2016

1 – Sick Leave Bank @ TAAAC Office
1 – Government Relations – 5:00 PM @ Stan & Joe’s
3 – Daytime Board of Education Meeting – 10:00 AM @ BOE
3 – ARC – 5:00 PM @ Severna Park Middle
3 – Middle School Concerns – Following ARC Mtg.
5 & 6 – SPARKS/Reignite – Doubletree, Annapolis
8 – Government Relations – 4:30 PM @ Stan & Joe’s
9 – Nominating Committee – 4:45 PM @ TAAAC Office
10 – High School Concerns – 3:40 PM @ TAAAC Office
10 – Minority Affairs/Human Relations – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC Office
11 – Bylaws Committee – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC Office
16 – Sick Leave Bank @ TAAAC Office
16 – Elementary Concerns – 4:45 PM @ TAAAC Office
17 – Public Relations – 5:00 PM @ TAAAC Office
17 – TAAAC Executive Team @ TAAAC Office
17 – Daytime Board of Education Meeting – 10:00 AM @ BOE
18 – TAAAC ASI @ TAAAC Office
22 – Government Relations – 5:00 PM @ Stan & Joe’s
24 – TAAAC BOD – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC Office
25 – Integrated Financial Solutions Workshop – 4:45 PM @ SPMS
29 – Sick Leave Bank @ TAAAC Office
29 – Government Relations – 5:00 PM @ Stan & Joe’s

*Please Note*

March 2, 2016 – ARC
5:00 PM @ Severna Park Middle

Established Collaborative Efforts between TAAAC & SAAAC

- Legislative Lobby Nights
- Legislative Breakfast
- MSEA/NEA Conventions
- Member Benefits
- Representation on the MSEA BOD
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
Phone: 301 – 985 – 2020
suzanne_herrmann@us.aflac.com

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

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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