

TAAAC ACTION REPORT

Your Professional Organization

“Empowered Educators, Successful Students, Connected Communities”

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

March 2020

NEA, MSEA, and TAAAC – One Membership, Three Strong Associations

As a member of the Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County (TAAAC), you also have membership in two other strong professional organizations: The National Education Association (NEA) and the Maryland State Education Association (MSEA). With this membership comes support and benefits. This is the first in a series of articles that will focus on what membership brings to you. Read on for reminders of what NEA, MSEA, and TAAAC do to ensure your needs are heard and considered by the decision-makers.

Educator Voice

One of the most notable things that all three organizations do for its members is ensuring educator voice is heard and included on the national, state, and local level. The NEA’s Board of Directors is made up of members like you who meet four times per year. These members were elected by their peers. Currently, TAAAC’s President Russell Leone holds one of four seats for Maryland. As part of their charge, the Maryland Directors visit with our Senators and Congressmen to discuss federal bills and the impact they will have on our schools, educators, and students. Some recent topics have included food insecurity, school modernization & infrastructure, health care, gun violence prevention, and social security.

This work also occurs on the state level as MSEA members work in conjunction with our government relations team to lobby our state representatives. This work continues year-round but is most notably seen during the legislative session. This year a major focus has been supporting the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future and securing a new funding formula for education. TAAAC members play a role in this as a team visits Annapolis every Monday during session.

Educator voice does not stop with lobbying efforts. On the state and county level, MSEA and TAAAC secure appointments of teachers and educators to a variety of workgroups and taskforces. These members bring their knowledge to groups that advise on topics like the school calendar, gun violence, and early childhood education. TAAAC even has members serving on state legislators’ education cabinets.

Of course, a main part of the educator voice that TAAAC provides for you is in bargaining. TAAAC negotiates a contract for all Unit 1 employees. This undertaking is done with great care and with a view of what is best for all Unit 1. TAAAC’s role in the contract negotiation does not end when an agreement is reached. TAAAC is here to ensure that the agreement is carried out with fidelity and to provide support to members when there is concern about its implementation.

In addition, TAAAC Leadership meets regularly with Dr. Arlotto and other members of the Board to raise concerns and share successes around items related to curriculum, workload, and assessments.

All this work is done so that you can focus on what you do best: securing a safe, engaging, and challenging learning environment for the students of Anne Arundel County. Leadership and your colleagues who volunteer their time on your behalf also want to hear from you. You should always feel free to share your concerns, questions, or ideas with your Building Representative, the TAAAC Board of Directors, or with President Russell Leone directly.

Commentary



Kenneth N. Page

Building Union Power

There is generally broad agreement around the ideas of union power and what it practically means: Mobilizing rank and file members into action towards ensuring the interests of workers are extended, protected and heard, leading to material improvements in wages and work conditions. The debate heats up a bit more when organizations of employees—unions—try to determine whether they prefer a service/representational or organizing model to reach their goals of Union Power.

Typically, the **service or representational model** involves relying more on hired staff to handle most

of the work and business of the union while focusing on issues like representing the membership in grievance meetings, hearings, and arbitrations.

The **organizing model** asks the union’s leadership and members to collectively do more both in the workplace and community to move the organization forward towards their goals. The driving force in building power is engaging members in every work location.

TAAAC leadership understands the importance of both models and has decided to pull the best elements from each toward a hybrid.

TAAAC has long been outstanding at the servicing aspects of our work. Over the past year, TAAAC Leadership has laid the foundation for moving to more organizing and in the coming months, will investigate enhancing the organizing components of our union by attracting and engaging broader sectors of the membership to “Union work.”

TAAAC has witnessed the fruits of member organizing in our political outreach, with the election of a County Executive who both listens and is sensitive to educator concerns. Now, it’s time to set our collective intention to engage our leaders and members to do just a bit more each day. This is how we can establish TAAAC members as an even more formidable voice for quality public education in our County.

Furthermore, to best position TAAAC to make decisions around this hybrid model, we’ll first determine if we can increase member activism by studying the number of building representatives and the impact of active Faculty Councils at each of our schools and buildings. Unit 1 TAAAC membership density at each location will be another important measuring metric. The culling of this information will support informed conversations among members and leadership on how best to plan going forward.

BLUEPRINT RALLY



Rob and Mary Kay Connerton



(L-R) Russell Leone, Kaitlyn and Brendan Maltese, Kate Snyder, Erin Lorenz, Allison Heintz, and Geoff Turk



Mike Kovacs and Family

TAAAC Action Report

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From Contentia this month . . . *Working Outside of Your Contractual Day*

A group of four teachers have filed a grievance over being forced to stay past their contractual workday. In this case, four elementary teachers wait for a late bus as they watch over students with special needs that require their presence to ensure their safety.

Despite asking in writing to administration for relief; none was forthcoming. In addition, TAAAC contacted the Transportation Office and asked for a new bus schedule that never came.

Remember, a contract is something BOTH sides agree to live with. If your rights are violated, you can file a grievance and get paid (per diem) for your time.

Required Work Hours: “The Board recognizes that *additional time for planning for the delivery of instruction may be necessary outside of the required workweek.*” Anything else must be on AACPS time. Asking you to read or watch something and report back at a future meeting is NOT allowed. You could file and get paid for that time.

Duty-Free Lunch: “Scheduling in each school shall provide for a *duty-free lunch period* for each Unit I member of no less than twenty-five (25) minutes.” Lunch detention while you eat is NOT a duty-free lunch.

Planning Time:

- a) 410 total minutes of planning for everyone
- b) Elementary school teachers get 225 minutes of individual planning time (no meetings), 210 of which must be during the student day
- c) Secondary school teachers get 210 minutes of individual planning time during the student day.

Your individual planning time is yours – duty free to plan for instruction.

The point is that as Unit I employees of AACSP, you don’t have to just “take it” when something new is piled on your plate. If a situation meets the following criteria we can fight to get you paid and change/eliminate the extra work for future years:

- 1) It does not involved planning for instruction
- 2) You must work outside the contractual workday either at home, during lunch or planning time or before/after school to complete the directive

What to do if asked to work outside the workday

You ask in writing for a solution to the problem before you begin to track the extra time and file the grievance. If you ask for a sub day to complete a directive and your administrator provides it, good! No grievance would be required. However, if you don’t point out the problem ahead of time and ask for relief than you cannot successfully grieve it later.

If a situation presents itself, please call TAAAC at 410-224-3330 and talk to your UniServ Director. You most certainly **can** make a difference --- if you are willing to work with TAAAC to take action.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

TAAAC, MSEA, and NEA are your professional organizations. If someone asks what are the benefits of membership, see this chart below. For more information on these and others, visit www.taaaconline.org or contact your building rep or the TAAAC office.

TAAAC, MSEA, NEA MEMBER	POTENTIAL MEMBER
You vote to support or reject your employment contract. You can be part of the TAAAC member-led negotiating team or committee.	You have no vote on the issues that affect your salaries and wages, working conditions, or profession
Legal assistance by attorneys who specialize in education issues on non-contractual issues such as appeals of suspension or discharge	No legal assistance
Professional assistance and representation on non-contractual work-related issues	No assistance or representation
\$1,000,000 professional liability protection from NEA	No liability coverage
First year members receive NEA's complimentary \$15,000 Life insurance free	No complimentary coverage
Access to exclusive discounts on car purchases, home financing, restaurants and more	Not available
Member only events to network with colleagues	Not eligible for member-only events
Access to TAAAC, MSEA, and NEA leadership training and professional development on education issues such as Common Core, closing opportunity gaps, classroom management, restorative practices, your contract, etc.	No access
You're one of more than 6,000 members in Anne Arundel County and 74,000 educators in the state working together on common policy goals to improve public education and education professions	
You're able to join the leadership team at TAAAC and MSEA as a school representative, delegate to the local, state, or national representative assembly, or local or state governance	You are unable to take part in the decision-making where educator-driven policies are debated and set
Access to legislators during lobby nights and at member only events, such as the TAAAC Legislative breakfast	You must arrange your own meetings and contact with legislators

TAAAC Events Calendar

March

- 12 – Mills/King Award Ceremony – 6 PM @ Firemark Building, Millersville
- 19 – TAAAC/ASI – 3:34 PM @ TAAAC
- 23 – Government Relations – 5 PM @ MSEA
- 23 – Negotiating Committee – 5 PM @ TAAAC
- 26 – Special Events Committee – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC
- 30 – Government Relations – 5 PM @ MSEA

April

- 2 –Early Career Educator Social location TBD
- 6 – SLB @ TAAAC
- 6 – Government Relations – 5 PM @ MSEA
- 9-13 – SPRING BREAK – All Schools and Central Offices Closed. TAAAC Closed
- 15 – RA Meeting – 5 PM@ Severn River Middle Meeting prior to RA: Elementary, Middle and High School Concerns Committees
- 16 – TAAAC/ASI – 3:45 PM @ TAAAC
- 16 – Membership – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC
- 20 – SLB @ TAAAC
- 21 – TAAAC-FEE Scholarship Mtg. – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC

Visit www.taaaconline.org

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Ross Chakrian	Beth Gormley
Shavon Daniels	Kinsey Gray
Elisa Dejean	Deanna Lengfelder
Joseph Digiacinto	Liam McNally
Alexa Edwards	Kimberly Panchigar
Alexandra Gilbert	Emily Ritchie
Isaiah Goobey	Jakara Tucker
Glenn Goodwin	Emily Wilson

NOMINATIONS OPEN

The TAAAC Nominating Committee is accepting nominations for **Credentials Committee** and the **Nominating Committee**.

Nominations will be accepted until the April 15, 2020 RA meeting.

Name _____

Address _____

School _____

Phone (C) _____ (W) _____

Personal Email _____

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

Credentials Committee

Nominating Committee

NOMINATIONS OPEN

The TAAAC Nominating Committee is accepting nominations for **Sick Leave Bank Approval Committee** and the **AACPS Calendar Committee (Elementary)**.

Nominations will be accepted until the May 13, 2020 RA meeting.

Name _____

Address _____

School _____

Phone (C) _____ (W) _____

Personal Email _____

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

Sick Leave Bank Approval

**AACPS Calendar Committee
(Elementary)**

Farewell Mark Beytin, Hello Jephtha Nguherimo

The month of March brings more new changes within the TAAAC staff. After 12 years working with you, the members, Uniserv Director Mark Beytin has decided to take advantage of his well-earned retirement. Mark came to us in 2008 following a successful career in the classroom and as President of the Teachers Association of Baltimore County (TABCO). In addition, Mark worked as Uniserv Director on the Eastern Shore before moving to TAAAC. In his time with us, Mark not only represented countless members in issues around workload, school environment, and evaluations, but also in our member advocacy work. Mark worked closely with our Government Relations team to organize members to meet with legislators. He was instrumental in establishing our annual TAAAC Legislative Breakfast so that even more members could have more personal interactions with members of the State Legislature, County Council, and Board of Education. Mark also advised our Membership Committee and led the charge that saw membership numbers grow to over 90% of the market share. Mark greeted new hires and informed them about the benefits and support that TAAAC provides. As Mark begins his second retirement with his wife Abby, TAAAC wishes him the best and thanks him for his dedication to our members.

With Mark's departure, TAAAC also welcomes Jephtha Nguherimo. Jephtha comes to us from Howard County Education Association (HCEA). Jephtha holds degrees in Political Economy and Labor Studies. Jephtha has over 20 years of experience working with MSEA in the role of Uniserv Director. He brings with him a wealth of knowledge and ideas around organizing and supporting members. Jephtha will continue to serve the work locations previously handled by Mark Beytin.



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 eight scholarships to local public high school students each year which are funded by members, outside donors, and occasional fundraising events. One of these is funded by TAAAC-R. In addition, there are two memorial scholarships funded through direct donations: The Robin Coleman Award for Computer Science and/or 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 12 for the 2020 scholarship awards. For more information, contact your school counseling department or call the TAAAC office.

SAVE THE DATE

COUNTY COUNCIL BUDGET HEARING

Join us at
North County High School
May 7, 2020
at 7:00 p.m.
