

TAAAC ACTION REPORT

Your Professional Organization

“Empowered Educators, Successful Students, Connected Communities”

Vol. 53, Number 4

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

March 2021

Commentary By Russell Leone

I approached writing this cover article as a traditional news-type story. I struggled. I realized how overwhelmed my brain is with all the changing factors in our work. I didn't know what I should focus on because there is so much. Then it hit me. This is what so many of us are feeling. We have new information and different things to adjust or plan almost daily. Focus doesn't come easy as we navigate this school year. So instead of writing an article about all the things we have accomplished and have yet to do, I want to acknowledge the space we are in.

As of this publication, many of our colleagues have returned to school buildings. Thousands have even welcomed back students to the physical classrooms. More will see their students in the coming weeks. This is yet another step in the ever-changing landscape of the 2020-2021 school year. With every step there are loads of emotions: anxiety, joy, fatigue, stress, excitement. We are excited and happy to have students with us again, but battle with the awkward feelings as we must enforce social distancing. Those working with hybrid groups experience stress as they are teaching in two formats simultaneously. There is frustration when we see the differences in demands of our individual roles compared to others. However, we must keep in mind that we will continue do what is best to support our students who are experiencing these same emotions for different reasons.

There remains anxiety by many of our colleagues around health and safety. We must collectively honor that and do what we can to ease this, even if we do not share this trepidation. No matter what the school system has already put in place, it is not always consistent from building to building or even room to room. To that end, I hope that you are utilizing the safety checklists TAAAC Leadership has provided on page 4 to monitor your own space. While vaccines are still rolling out, TAAAC members across the county are engaged in a Work to Rule for Safety. Please use this time to only be in your school buildings the required time needed so that you can minimize any exposure you have to those outside your home circle.

There are no easy answers to the teaching and learning challenges of today. There aren't even good solutions to the flaws in this hybrid model. Just as in the fall when we started virtual synchronous, this shift to hybrid elevated the stress and uncertainty. TAAAC members did amazing work for students and it got better (not optimal, but better). TAAAC Leadership will continue to support you on issues impacting your workload and environment. You must utilize your system of support at the building level as well. Have open and honest conversations with your building representatives, your Faculty Advisory Council, and administration whenever possible to address the concerns in your building.

As always, stay well and be healthy.

Board of Education Adds Additional Funding Request



At the February 16 meeting, Board of Education members voted to add an additional \$11.87 million to the salaries and wages for Unit 1 and Unit 2 employees. The amendment passed in a 6-2 vote, supported by President Melissa Ellis, Vice-President Dana Schallheim, Candace Antwine, Robert Silkworth, Drake Smith, and Joanna Tobin. If fully funded, this total could address all of the reasons members are on a step that does not match their years of experience. This is a huge victory for TAAAC that resulted in many years of members and leadership educating Board of Ed members about the factors that contributed to these inequities. We will still need to lobby the County Executive and County Council to ensure the funding is placed in the final Anne Arundel County budget.

Commentary



Kenneth N. Page

In the coming weeks, we will need to rely on one another even more than we have since last year when the word coronavirus first became part of our daily reality.

The loose nature of the AACPS safety guide, daily changes to plans, the still-emerging science around both the virus, and questions about the efficacy of vaccinations against new and more aggressive strains of COVID, squarely place the burden of health and selfcare with us at the school- and building-level.

Watch TAAAC's Safe Schools Training and the associated Work-to-Rule (SAFELY) virtual presentations, which provide tools to mitigate exposure to the Coronavirus. We must hold the Central office to the substance of 18 E of our Collective Bargaining Agreement promising us a safe work environment.

This past year, we have proven collectively that we are up to this challenge.

We must reach into the experiences of the past year when we successful-

ly stopped the Central Office's rush back to school. Just like now, there were local and national pressures to rush educators back into buildings before it was truly safe, and this Union of Educators was able to disrupt the fall return-to-school mandate by our actions and the actions of our community allies.

There have been some who cynically point out one shortcoming or another, but the facts, when considering the political make-up of Anne Arundel County, reveal the true capacity of our Union. We have shown that we are not victims or complainers – though we are pointing out how dangerous this environment is – but that we are witnesses and

actors with a say in our workplace realities.

There is no AACPS force that can blunt the push we started in March of 2020 toward the safe and secure schools our students and the broader community deserve. We will continue to demand no less every day by making our unified voices heard throughout our school system.

Please work safely and support our most vulnerable by following all mitigation guidelines, reporting any safety issues at your schools or buildings, and remembering that as more TAAAC members join their voice with our collective chorus, the safer we all will be.

1921-2021
Join the Special Events Committee to plan our celebration coming this fall.

TAAAC 100 YEARS STRONG!

Meeting Dates:
March 25, April 22, & May 27 @ 5:00
Contact: Keith Wright KWright@mseanea.org

TAAAC Action Report

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From Contentia this month . . . Classroom Safety Back in School

Once you return to school, there are important classroom safety issues that might arise on a daily basis. The form's purpose is to get the issue(s) addressed quickly if you have a problem to be solved.

Our goal at TAAAC is building local power, so please consider using your building rep. or FAC to solve any problems in your room. It is important to know your local leadership is empowered to have the teeth to solve problems quickly and without TAAAC running interference. It puts your administration on immediate notice and prevents problems from occurring.

That being said, feel free to reach out to TAAAC UniServ regarding individual issues as well. Not every building has a functional FAC or building rep. and we are here for you. Take a look at the form on page 4 and use it to walk your workspace when you return. If your issues are not addressed, we are here for you.

Click here for printable copy

<https://taaaconline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/TAAAC-Daily-Safety-Form.pdf>

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. For more information, contact your school counseling department or call the TAAAC office.

To obtain information on how to apply and print an applications, please use the following links:

<https://taaaconline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Scholarship-Application.pdf>

https://taaaconline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Scholarship_-_Application-Information-2021.pdf



TAAAC DAILY SAFETY FORM

Please check your workspace(s). If any of these things don't seem right, please indicate and explain, then give this to your building representative and/or Principal. If your concerns are not addressed, please contact TAAAC at 410 222-3330 or reach out to your UniServ Director or Executive Director, Ken Page: kpage@mseanea.org

Name (this is so we can follow-up with you in case any information provided is unclear or if further verification is needed)	
Your personal email, phone number or both (this is so we can follow-up with you in case any information provided is unclear or if further verification is needed)	
Name of AACPS Building	
Your Room Number / Workspace Area	
The date you are reporting this to your Building Rep/ Principal	

In each area, check yes or no.

Area of Concern	Yes	No
My PPE supplies need to be refilled.		
I have a safe, appropriate place to eat lunch and plan.		
My room needs to be cleaned/wasn't cleaned as scheduled.		
Masks are being worn according to building/AACPS policy and follow-up is being done by building administration.		
The number of people in the room is appropriate to the size of the room/number of desks.		
There is appropriate air flow in the room.		
If you answered "no" to any of the questions, or have a different issue, please write a short explanation:		

WORK TO RULE

HYBRID EDITION

KEYS TO SUCCESS—WORK 37.5 HOURS

- ✦ **ONLY WORK IN THE BUILDING ON M, T, TH, & FRI FOR THE MINIMUM HOURS REQUIRED & STAY HOME ON WEDNESDAY**

EXAMPLE – ENTER AT 8 AM & LEAVE AT 4
TUTOR STUDENTS AND CALL OR EMAIL PARENTS WITHIN THE CONFINES OF THE WORKDAY- WEEKENDS & EVENINGS ARE YOUR OWN TO SHARE WITH YOUR FAMILY
NO OTHER EVENTS ARE REQUIRED UNLESS YOU HAVE A PAID EXTRACURRICULAR CONTRACT
- ✦ **ENJOY YOUR 25 MINUTES OF DUTY-FREE LUNCH**

BE SURE THERE IS A SAFE PLACE TO HAVE YOUR TIME OUTSIDE OF YOUR CLASSROOM TAKE A BREAK AND RELAX
- ✦ **ONLY TAKE HOME WORK THAT IS REQUIRED TO PLAN FOR INSTRUCTION**

PERFORM YOUR NORMAL DUTIES DURING THE TEACHER WORKDAY, BUT DON'T VOLUNTEER FOR ANY ADDITIONAL DUTIES, TASKS OR PROJECTS

SUPPORT COLLEAGUES BY SHARING RESOURCES WHEN POSSIBLE

WORK ON GRADES, DATA, TESTING, AND SLOS DURING TEACHER WORKDAY ONLY
- ✦ **USE ALL OF YOUR INDIVIDUAL PLANNING TIME – 210 MIN.**

NO MORE THAN 20 MINUTES OF DUTIES PER DAY OR A TOTAL OF 100 MINUTES PER WEEK

Reach out to your Uniserv Director if you have questions

NOMINATIONS OPEN

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

Nominations will be accepted until the April 14, 2021 RA meeting. Nominations will also be taken at the RA that evening.

Please use the following link to complete the official nomination form online: <https://taaaconline.org/nominations-open/>

NOMINATIONS OPEN

The Nominating Committee is currently accepting nominations for an additional position on the Board of **Directors**, per the current Bylaws change. The term for this position will begin after the election, which will be conducted at the RA on April 14, 2021. The term will end on July 31, 2022.

Nominations will be accepted until the April 14, 2021 Representative Assembly Meeting. Nominations will also be taken at the RA that evening.

Please use the following link to complete the official nomination form online: <https://taaaconline.org/nominations-open-bod/>

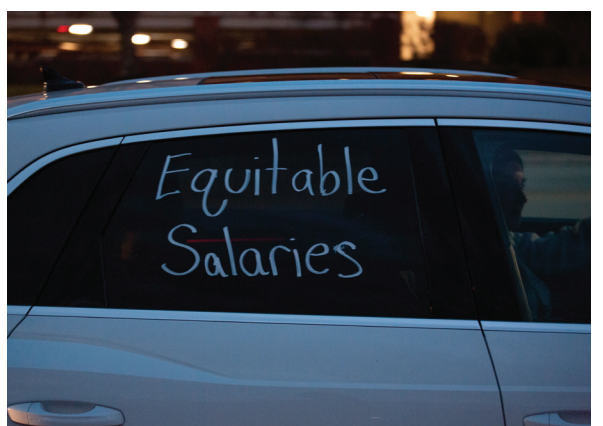
NOMINATIONS OPEN

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

Nominations will be accepted until the May 12, 2021 RA meeting. Nominations will also be taken at the RA that evening.

Please use the following link to complete the official nomination form online: <https://taaaconline.org/nominations-open-slb-cal/>

February 16 Car Caravan



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Gretchen E. Blanten
Haley M. Butterfass
Kristen A. Cole
Beverly R. Crest
Claire Dillon
Jessica P. Jackman
Tmia Morris
Anitra Scott
Timothy Shu
Valerie Stinchcomb
Chris Wallace
Armand Wallace



TicketsatWork.com

TicketsatWork.com is back and updated with new deals for the new year. Start off 2021 on the right foot with great savings on workout gear and fitness programs, healthy meal plan deliveries, new electronics and appliances, and more!

For more information, please use the following link

<https://taaaonline.org/theme-parks-and-more/>

If you haven't signed up yet, click the above link and enter our company code: TAAAC

Job Opportunities

American Pool

NOW HIRING: Pool Managers and Lifeguards For Summer, 2021!! American Pool is currently hiring applicants for lifeguard jobs for the summer pool season. We staff about 40 pools in the Anne Arundel County area and you just have to be 15 years or older by the start of this summer to apply! We offer discounted training, flexible scheduling, and a starting rate of 11.75 or higher!

NOW DOING VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS: All you have to do is Text SWIM to 25000 to apply and schedule your interview with us! You could also reach us at 410-363-6800 or aprecruit@americanpool.com.

ANCHOR AQUATICS

NOW HIRING: Pool Supervisors for Summer, 2021!!

Anchor Aquatics is a locally family owned company offering the highest quality commercial swimming pool management and service. Anchor Aquatics has been providing quality service for over 50 years and has an outstanding reputation for safe and clean aquatic environments. We pride ourselves in being professional, responsive, and approachable. Anchor Aquatics values their customers and employees and our goal is to provide the highest quality service to clients while maintaining a friendly working atmosphere for employees.

- Free Pool Operator, Lifeguard, Management, and Customer Service training!!
- Competitive Pay!!
- Outdoor work environment!!

Also hiring Lifeguards, Pool Operators and Pool Managers!

NOW INTERVIEWING:

Contact us at anhcoraquatics@anchoraquatics.com or call (410)956-0744!

You can also apply online at www.anchoraquatics.com.

Spend Summer in the Sun:

Ace Aquatics, Inc. is accepting applications for summer job openings as swimming pool field supervisors and swimming pool managers. No Experience Necessary, free training

Supervisors start in April part time and swim club managers start May 1st part time.

For more information, call Noelle Navarro at; (410) 761-7665,

Or, e-mail to: noelle@aceaquaticsinc.com