

# TAAAC ACTION REPORT

Your Professional Organization

“Empowered Educators, Successful Students, Connected Communities”

Vol. 53, Number 7

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

June 2021

## We are stronger together

### Apply for a part-time summer organizer position!

Throughout the pandemic, educators made their voices heard to support the safety and success of their students. Hundreds of educators, students, families, and community members participated in our fall and spring car caravans to ensure all were protected from COVID-19 as in-person instruction continued. At Board of Education meetings, County Council, and other events, both in person and virtual, we were able to prioritize work that most directly benefit students.

But our work does not stop here.

Following the decision by the Board of Education in May, more students are entering buildings in the final weeks of school, again disrupting learning and teaching patterns. It is up to each of us to hold our administrations accountable as well as speak up for our students and colleagues.

#### [Will you commit to supporting your peers as the school year ends?](#)

The most important way we can support each other is through direct conversations, both in person and virtually. TAAAC is offering paid, part-time summer organizer positions to do just that. By taking this step to support fellow organizers, we can better understand what they need to feel respected, safe, and treated as a professional in school buildings and virtual classrooms.

The 8-week program will include trainings and mentorship from existing educator leaders across Anne Arundel County. Conversations will prioritize identifying issues and building leadership within our schools and feeder systems. Through grant funding, the program will pay \$30 per hour for each member organizer position.

#### [Click here to apply.](#)

If you know an educator who might be interested in applying or have any questions, reach out to [Amanda Menas](#) or [Kenneth Page](#). Interviews will be conducted June 7-21.

The success of the union depends on each of us. Taking this step to support fellow educators grows the power of all members!

# Commentary



Russell Leone

As we wrap up another school year, the tendency is to look back and reflect. TAAAC has much to celebrate even in challenging times and these are highlighted elsewhere in this issue. In this space, I want to take time to look forward.

Summer is the time educators often find time to recharge. Some do this by stepping away from education settings completely and focus on self or family. Others continue recharge in working in a different setting or taking a vacation. And still others find their source in teaching in a different setting. Whatever choice you make, I hope you use this summer to grant yourself the time you weren't afforded last summer.

Also, looking to the fall, we know that school reopening will be different and bring with it new challenges and new spaces where we need to continue to be diligent in protecting and building on what we worked so hard for this year. While I can't begin to tell you what late August will hold in the schools, I do know that it will require leaning on each other, holding decision makers ac-

countable, and protecting our SAFE schools.

Across the county, schools will start where colleagues may be seeing each other in-person for the first time, not in just a couple of months as in the past, but for some over a year. Some of us will meet colleagues, who have interacted on screens, for the first time in-person. As I look forward, I think how will we support each other at that stage of this process and coming out of a pandemic. Those we have known for years may have experienced events and changes we may never really know.

TAAAC Leadership is thinking about (and planning) ways that our

Association will continue providing meaningful support to you. I was originally going to write TAAAC is here to support you. But I don't think that would convey the intended message. Because the truth is TAAAC is your colleague in the classroom next to you. TAAAC is the school psychologist down the hall. TAAAC is the music teacher, the department chair, the speech and language pathologist, the ESOL educator, and the list goes on and on.

TAAAC support depends on all of us. Looking ahead, we must be unified and need to work together to ensure our hard work of this past year is not lost and will make us stronger.

**TAAAC**  
**100 YEARS STRONG!**

1970s TAAAC Executive Director Joe Parlett starts a regional assistant program. TAAAC members are temporarily hired part time to contact feeder systems and increase TAAAC visibility in schools. This work continues today by our Board of Directors.

*Celebrating 100 years of advocacy for educators and students.*

## TAAAC Action Report

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## From Contentia this month . . . *End of the year reminders . . .*

### **Early Release Days (June 17 & 18)**

*“The two days of early release time for students, scheduled immediately prior to the end of each semester will be utilized to provide self-directed work time for teachers at all levels.” (Article 11N)*

Don't feel obligated to attend any “housekeeping” meetings at your school on June 17 & 18 after the students are dismissed. That is YOUR time to do what you need to complete report cards and end of the year work.

### **Personal Business Leave Days**

*“...Personal Business Leave shall not be taken...at the beginning or the end of the school year.” (Article 8A)*

The last five duty days constitute the “*end of the school year.*” If circumstances require your absence, the restriction may be waived by the principal.

### **Excess Positions**

Since principals have received their tentative student enrollment numbers for next year, most teachers have already been notified of positions being excessed from schools. It is important to understand that excessing is based on seniority in the county—not seniority within a school. Additionally, it is important to stay in contact with the Human Resources staffing specialists to find the best possible match for you within the system. Excessed teachers are encouraged, but cannot be required, to participate in the voluntary transfer process since this is a proactive approach to finding a suitable position. If excessed teachers have not received their new assignments by the last duty day for teachers, they will have priority over new applicants and teachers requesting voluntary transfers.

An excess can create an opportunity for some teachers. If your principal is required to excess a staff member or members, and you want to leave the building, you may volunteer to be excessed. Volunteering to be excessed places you in the involuntary transfer process and you will be assigned to a different position next year at another building. Note that you may still interview for a voluntary transfer; however, if you are unsuccessful in securing your own assignment for next year, you will be placed by Human Resources. If you are tenured, or non-tenured invited back for another year, you will be guaranteed a position within the county.

Finally, be cautious if faced with a decision between accepting a part time position and being excessed, be cautious of accepting the part time position unless you are prepared and willing to earn part time salary and benefits for what might be a few years. The road back to full time usually requires success in the voluntary transfer process. Guarantees of a quick return are rare and lack adequate recourse in the event of a renegeing.

Regardless of the specifics associated with any particular excessing or reduction scenario, members are always free to call TAAAC so that we can help guide you through the process and your options.

*(Continued on page 4)*

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### **Notification of Assignment**

*“Principals shall make available to school-based Unit I members a copy of the school’s proposed roster of the tentative assignments and tentative schedules for the next school year by June 1 annually.*

*Non-school-based Unit I members shall be notified of their tentative assignment for the next school year by their appropriate department administrator by June 1 annually. The reporting date for 10-month Unit I members shall be included with the above information.” (Article 12E)*

## **TAAAC FEE Scholarship Winners**

The TAAAC Foundation for Educational Excellence, a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, organized and run by active and retired TAAAC members was founded a few decades ago. It serves as TAAAC’s philanthropic arm and serves local public-school students in two ways:

- Its Children’s Fund provides prescription eyeglasses, winter coats to students in need, and the backpack program.
- Its Scholarship fund provides scholarship for which AACP’s students earn through competition.

While the Children’s Fund operates throughout the year, attention is drawn to the Scholarship Fund each spring.

The Scholarship Committee of FEE met on May 17, 2021, at 5:00 PM to select the 2021 winners. We had 29 valid applications for ten scholarships. The committee selected the following recipients for the 2021 Scholarships:

Joelia Garcia – Old Mill High

Olivia Wells – Arundel High

Paige Tuley – Chesapeake High

Rafee Ahnaf Mirza – Chesapeake Science Point

Jesudasimi Akinkuowo – North County High

Donovan Dorsey – Arundel High

Collin Ryan – Severna Park High – *Robin Coleman Scholarship*

Allison Ballard – Broadneck High – *Samuel & Bessie Chao Book Scholarship*

Austin Greenlee – Broadneck High – *Samuel & Bessie Chao Book Scholarship*

DaeVionna Leonard – Annapolis High – *TAAAC-Retired Scholarship*

Applications were received from the following high schools: Annapolis (1), Arundel (5), Broadneck (2), Chesapeake (2), Chesapeake Science Point (2), Glen Burnie (2), Meade (1), North County (4), Northeast (2), Old Mill (1), South River (1), and Southern (1).

Congratulations to all the winners and best of luck on their college endeavors!

# TAAAC ALL-MEMBER MEETING

A TAAAC all-member Zoom Meeting is scheduled for 5 p.m. June 17<sup>th</sup> consistent with an earlier New Business Item (NBI), adopted by the Representative Assembly. TAAAC leadership looks to provide substantive end of the school year updates, take member questions, provide a bargaining update, review the impact of the County budget as adopted by the County Council, and talk about how best to support our 12-month employees going into the summer. During this all-member meeting, we look forward to seeing and hearing from you. Please use the below link to register:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEld-Cvpz0rE9ERNt3p27ShwvKuH82enfWF>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

## Sick Leave Bank Open Enrollment/Cancellation

Unit I employees that would like to join the TAAAC Sick Leave Bank may do so during the Open Enrollment Period, which is July 1 through September 30. New Unit I employees may join within the first 30 days after their effective date of employment.

**Unit I employees who wish to cancel their participation in the TAAAC Sick Leave Bank must do so by June 30 or risk the irretrievable loss of their one-day contribution.**

Your Association Representative Chairperson has been provided with a list of SLB members for their work location or you may call the TAAAC office.

Those interested in enrollment/cancellation may go online to complete the form at

<http://taaaconline.org/sick-leave-bank/>

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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Sarah M. Grello

Sallie G. Luck

Holly Mistretta

Lizabeth O'Dell



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://taaaconline.org/theme-parks-and-more/>

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