

TAAAC ACTION REPORT

Your Professional Organization

VOL. 50, NUMBER 3

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

November 2017

MSEA Convention 2017

Elected TAAAC Delegates to the 150th MSEA Representative Assembly joined delegates from across the state in Ocean City, MD on October 20 & 21. Our TAAAC delegates were highly engaged in the business of the state association. TAAAC delegates participated in debate on a Bylaw Amendment, 27 New Business Items, and networked to get to know MSEA members from across the State.

The Representative Assembly voted to fill a vacancy on the MSEA Board that became vacant when Joe Coughlin from ESPBC became the MSEA Treasurer. There were several candidates in that race and the Representative Assembly elected, Justin Heid.

The MSEA President, Betty Weller, skillfully led a town-hall style discussion with Brit Kirwan, Chair of the Kirwan Commission, that is set to provide recommendations by December 31st to the General Assembly to address funding for schools across the State.

The Representative Assembly also heard speeches from candidates running in the upcoming MSEA election that included our own TAAAC President Richard Benfer running for MSEA Vice-President, and Russell C. Leone, TAAAC Secretary/Treasurer, running for reelection as MSEA NEA Director.

Additionally, the MSEA Delegates heard from several candidates for Governor throughout the weekend. All candidates that have declared candidacy, as well as the seated Governor, were invited. Of those invited, delegates heard from (in order of appearance) Rich Madaleno, Jim Shea, Rushern Baker, Alec Ross, Kevin Kamenetz, Krishanti Vignarajah, and Ben Jealous.

It was an energizing weekend and our local TAAAC delegates are ready to mobilize members in their buildings to be active participants during the upcoming campaign around the Kirwan Commission, General Assembly Lobbying, and our own local school budget season.





Richard Benfer

The continuing conversation about the Board of Education budget should not focus on “what it costs!” but “what can we invest!” This is a very important distinction going into this FY19 budget cycle. The Superintendent is formulating a budget that fulfills the needs of a growing county with a student population increasing in both number and diversity, and local government and citizens of Anne Arundel County need to understand that. 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 students but for the educators as well. Educator working conditions are student learning conditions. It is time for the county government and citizens of our county to realize that they should not be focused on how much things cost, but the investment to be made and the return on that investment. TAAAC’s “Raise Anne

COMMENTARY

Arundel” campaign turns its focus to the education of the local officials and the community.

Two years ago, the County Executive said he wanted to give the Board of Education what it needed. What that meant to teachers across our school system was that the County Executive was prepared to fund the Board of Education budget in full as it was ultimately presented.

“Our county is the 4th wealthiest in the State that collects proportionately less revenue than every surrounding county in the State.”

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. They also understand that to stabilize the workforce in AACPS they must become competitive with surrounding jurisdictions. That means they will need to provide full funding for STEPS (which are not raises, but part of the negotiated pay scale) as well as a COLA (Cost of Living

Increase) as pay for teachers has not kept up with inflation. In our current year the County Executive funded schools about \$20 million above the maintenance of effort required by law. This is a step in the right direction, but we need to do more.

Our county is the 4th wealthiest in the State that collects proportionately less revenue than every surrounding county in the State. Our property tax revenue is artificially capped by a 1992 voter referendum and our local income tax is now the third lowest in Maryland. 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. Our county chooses to further reduce already scant public revenue by lowering what is already a comparatively low tax burden. Our County Executive promised as the economy improves, so will funding for schools. In his speech last May when unveiling the budget, he stated that “steps for teachers will become a regular occurrence in the future.”

Over 500 new teachers were hired again this year. The school year started and the workload cycle has continued to climb with no relief in sight. Many of the issues educators are having are shared directly with the Superintendent at our monthly

(Continued on page 3)

TAAAC ACTION REPORT

Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County
2521 Riva Road, Suite L7
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(410) 224-3330 (410) 841-6022
(301) 261-8309 FAX (410) 841-5117
www.taaaconline.org

Officers

Richard Benfer, President
Pamela Bukowski, Vice President
Russell Leone, Secretary-Treasurer

Board of Directors

Robin Beers
Elizabeth Bringer
Reba Miller
Dyana Cronin
Kristina Korona
Jacqueline Lubniewski
Robert Mauro
Karina Colón
Catherine Snyder
Tamara Thumbtzen

Editors

Bill Jones, Executive Director
and Managing Editor
Roxanne L. Beach, Editor

(Continued from page 2)

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

Educators shape the future. In the process of educating our students we will “Raise Anne Arundel” (county) by Empowering Educators to nurture Successful Students and making Connections with the Community. Once again we need 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. The reauthorization for school funding on the State level through the Kirwan Commission is vital. Our voice in the room will raise awareness among our elected officials and the citizens of our County about the importance of our strong public schools. Education in Anne Arundel County and all of Maryland is top notch due to their unwavering dedication to the over 80,000 students we serve. We need the county officials and citizens of Anne Arundel County to share in that dedication.



A WORD FROM MSEA’S LEGAL TEAM

Workers’ Compensation Basics

As an educator, you’re covered by Workers’ Compensation insurance from your first day of employment. This insurance covers you for any injuries that occur while on the job or driving from one work location to another.

If you think an injury that should be covered under Workers’ Compensation has occurred, you should:

- Immediately report the injury to your supervisor and contact your local UniServ director for assistance.
- File a claim with the Workers’ Compensation Commission within 60 days after an injury. (Under certain circumstances a claim may be filed up to two years after an injury.) You or your attorney usually file the claim. *Note: Just because you have prepared an incident report does not mean that a formal claim has been filed with Workers’ Comp.*
- Enlist the help of your local association to assist with the claim process, including recommending an experienced Worker’s Compensation attorney. Until the claim is approved by Workers’ Comp with an Order from the Commission, no payments for medical treatment, lost time, or any other matter will be provided.

While the law protects your ability to see your own doctor—and it is highly recommended that you do—in order to qualify for some contractual benefits, you may need to see the doctor or facility recommended by your local board of education.

Your UniServ director can ensure that you receive all benefits provided for under the collective bargaining agreement, which may include sick leave, assault leave, and/or injury on the job leave. Protect yourself and call your UniServ director as soon as possible following an injury.

The history of the labor movements needs to be taught in every school in this land. America is a living testimonial to what free men and women, organized in free democratic trade unions can do to make a better life. ... We ought to be proud of it!

-Vice President Hubert Horatio Humphrey, Jr. (1865-1969), Lyndon Johnson Administration

From Contentia this month . . . *Compensatory Time*

Unit I Members Covering Other Teachers Classes Compensatory Time Request

Article 15B

Substitutes shall normally be provided for all teachers absent from their regular teaching assignment including art, music, media specialists and physical education. Only after reasonable but unsuccessful efforts to obtain substitutes shall the principal assign teachers to other teachers' classes during their non-teaching periods.

Except in an emergency which occurs during the school day, no teacher shall be required to take a class for another teacher unless the teacher requested to take the class is given a reduced schedule or work load within the next five (5) work days. Substitutes shall be provided for teachers involved in field trips, athletic events or professional meetings approved by the appropriate administrator, provided the event is scheduled for a half day or more and funds are appropriated for this purpose.

Article 14A

When an uncovered vacancy causes a class of students to be divided among other teachers for the entire school day, the receiving teachers will each receive one (1) hour of compensatory in which the incidence occurs. Utilization of that leave will be arranged between the teachers and principal or supervisor.

Teachers are being asked to cover other absent teachers' classes in non-emergency situations at an alarming rate. Please use the form below for presentation to your administrator requesting a reduction in workload and/or schedule to restore the time spent covering other classes. Per **Article 15B**, these reductions are required. If the reduction is denied by the administrator, please contact your TAAAC UniServ Director to initiate the appropriate action.

REQUEST for REDUCED SCHEDULE or WORK LOAD

(To be completed by Unit I member providing substitute coverage.)

TEACHER COVERING _____

TEACHER ABSENT _____

DATE _____ TIME _____ ROOM _____

Reduction in Schedule/Workload Requested _____

Signature of Teacher _____ Date _____

.....
(To be completed by administrator providing reduced schedule or work load.)

☐ **Approved**

☐ **Disapproved**

If approved, reduction provided, or if disapproved, reason therefore:

Signature of Administrator _____ Date _____

Institutional Racism

Two years ago after the NEA Representative Assembly (RA) voted on several new business items (NBIs) addressing racism in schools and education policy, educator and blogger José Vilson declared, “Not business as usual at the NEA RA.”

“The NEA RA managed to introduce and pass some bills in session that I wouldn’t have thought possible even a few months ago, but the struggle to assure that these bills made it across felt strained in ways,” Vilson wrote. “If we’re really about moving forward, let’s make this a core value of what we do.”

NEA passed a broad, laudable, and well-intentioned business item (NBI B) about institutional racism that was unanimously adopted by delegates. But delegates defeated another item (NBI 94) that would have “discouraged” the use of derogatory/ racist images at NEA events and boycott vendors that do use them, which illustrates the difficulty in tackling the topic. Institutional racism is built in to our culture and can’t be ignored, yet we still struggle for an easy opening to badly needed conversations among individuals.

On EduColor, a collaborative of educators raising their voices for educational equity and justice, Vilson wrote: “Institutional racism does not reside in the walls of a school building. It lives in the beliefs, actions, and policies of people who, despite their best intentions, have been socialized in a deeply unjust society. Transformational anti-racist work shouldn’t be temporary or optional for anyone.”

In an interview with NEA, Dr. Lenworth Gunther, a history professor and 38-year NEA member who started fighting for racial equality as a student at Columbia University, said, “People tend not to explore what’s beneath the surface of their everyday world. History is about the four-fifths of the iceberg people don’t see.

“Institutional racism ignores the four-fifths of the iceberg that’s underneath the water—but that’s what sinks the Titanic. There’s an unwillingness, on the part of some people, to believe that institutional racism is a reality.”

Racism is deeply complicated, fraught with an ongoing narrative that bears constant analysis and discussion. Educators will do best to dig deep into their own beliefs and social responses to find their ingrained biases and find their way through them to provide what every student needs and deserves.

Read EduColor’s complete guiding principles and join the movement at educolor.org.



TAAAC members can now buy tickets for Six Flags! Just log on the Six Flags website to buy tickets with substantial savings on the main gate price. This benefit also allows you to “print and go” so you have your tickets in hand when you get to the park. To access your special tickets, please go to sixflags.com/PartnerLogin with the following Username: TAAACAM and Password: **SixFlags2** (password is numeric & case sensitive).



Ticketsatwork is your authority on the best deals at theme parks and water parks nationwide! With savings up to 60% off, your family will have exclusive access to all the hottest rides, water activities and attractions available this season. Visit www.ticketsatwork.com and enter our company code, **TAAAC**, for the most up-to-date offers on theme parks, hotels, Broadway shows, local deals, shopping partners and much more.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Jennifer Asbeil
Kiersten Bahruth
Rafika Bohanan
Janine Dowding
Stephanie Elleman
Constance Fairbaugh
Jacqueline Farguharson
Patricia Gossage
Lauren Hicks
Monique Hunter
Brianna Jukne
Eleanor Lehman
J. Karen Lehmkuhl
Patricia Mandrich
Selina Matulonis
Meredith McMahan
Brianne McNallen
John McNulla
Maria Morales
Ashley Russell
Heather Winkler
Andrew Zeger
Elizabeth Zirulnik

The Primrose School of Gambrills

Seeking a school-age teacher to work at our school from 4 PM to 6 PM Monday through Friday, also eight hour days when Anne Arundel County public schools are closed. This teacher would be responsible for engaging in caring for our school age students. This teacher would help with homework passing out snacks and creating fun team-based activities. Please contact Mrs. Rastogi at nrastogi@primrosegambrills.com or 410-923-2424.

"I want the Supreme Court to know that I don't have throwaway students. Our DREAMers aspire to achieve and contribute to their families, their communities and the only country they've ever known."

Gladys Márquez, teacher, Blue Island, IL

Education Votes
www.educationvotes.org



Link up with TAAAC on Social Media



Please scan the
code to follow
us on Twitter



Please scan the
code and Like
us on Facebook

TAAAC Events Calendar

November 2017

- 1 – Daytime Board of Education Meeting – 10:00 APM @ BOE
- 1 – ARC – 5:00 PM @ Severna Park High
- 1 – Middle School Concerns Committee – Following ARC
- 6 – Sick Leave Bank @ TAAAC Office
- 7 – TAAAC Executive Team @ TAAAC Office
- 8 – TAAAC BOD – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC Office
- 13 – Government Relations – 4:45 PM @ TAAAC Office
- 14 – Elementary Concerns – 4:30 PM @ George Cromwell Elementary
- 15 – High School Concerns – 3:40 PM @ TAAAC Office
- 15 – Evening Board of Education Meeting – 7:00 PM @ BOE
- 16 – TAAAC ASI @ TAAAC Office
- 16 – Membership Committee – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC Office
- 20 – Sick Leave Bank @ TAAAC Office

Visit www.taaaconline.org

Pay Days 8th & 22nd



Mission Statement

TAAAC supports, organizes, and empowers members to improve their professional lives in order to provide, protect, and promote quality public education for every student.

#raiseannearundel

TAAAC Members

Raise a Wing...
...with your fellow educators



When: Tuesday, November 21, 2017

Where: Elle's Place
 8421 Veteran's Hwy.
 Millersville, MD 21108

Why: To mix, mingle, and celebrate completing the first marking period

For more information, contact Tami Thumbtzen at tamithumb@gmail.com or Kate Snyder at KateSnyder66@gmail.com.

This event is sponsored by TAAAC's Membership Committee.

NOMINATIONS OPEN

The TAAAC Nominating Committee is currently 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 Tuesday, December 12, 2017

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]

ATTENTION:

Are You Paying Too Much??

If your employment status has changed and you have an annual salary under \$42,488, please contact the TAAAC office so that your membership dues can be adjusted accordingly.

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



BINGO WORLD

4901 BELLE GROVE ROAD

BALTIMORE, MD 21225

410-636-0311 * 800-992-9300

Wellness Claims and Benefits

Do you have Aflac policy and need help with claims?
Every year Aflac \$25 to \$100 to visit a doctor

Are you making your annual wellness claims?
sickness - accident - cancer

Suzanne Herrmann

301-985-2020

suzanne_herrmann@usa.ac.com

Cynthia Eckhardt

301-318-6559

cynthiaeckhardt@employee-plans.com

Inspiring Passion For Maryland's Waterways

ClearShark H2O is revitalizing passion to protect Maryland's waterways, ensuring this precious resource is treasured for years to come. We're creating engaging opportunities for our youth to connect with Maryland's waterways by designing experiences that ignite a passion and appreciation for them.

We Educate
OUR YOUTH

We Preserve
OUR WATERWAYS

We Support
OUR COMMUNITY

clearsharkh2o.com | info@clearsharkh2o.com

LUXURY 2 AND 3 BEDROOM APARTMENTS

novus

ODENTON

315 Nevada Avenue
Odenton, Maryland 21113

410.874.2051 NovusOdenton.com