

TAAAC ACTION REPORT

Your Professional Organization

“Empowered Educators, Successful Students, Connected Communities”

Vol. 52, Number 2

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

October 2019

Parent Conferences: COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

It's one of the most important things we do as teachers. When we work together with a child's parents toward common goals, we vastly improve the atmosphere for learning.

Remember: Most successful teacher-parent teams begin with a conference—usually one conducted before there's a real need to meet. Good luck!

TIPS FOR A PRODUCTIVE AND SUCCESSFUL PARENT CONFERENCE

- Make contact early. Get your relationship off to a good start by contacting parents early in the year with an email or newsletter. Outline the year's coursework and let them know you'll be happy to meet with them during the year. Check with your administrators for your school's policy on parent/guardian communication.
- Invite both parents and caregivers. Encourage the involved adults to attend when possible. Misunderstandings are less common if both parents hear what you have to say, and you can gauge the kind of support the child has. Remember: Each parent/caregiver may not be available. Be careful not to unwittingly hurt a child's feelings by assuming meetings are easy to schedule.
- Get the name and relationship right. Assume nothing. Check your records ahead of time to make sure you have the names and pronunciation right. Don't assume that the gray-haired man is a grandfather. Ask.
- Plan ahead. Have in mind a general—but flexible—outline of what you're going to say.
- Greet guests near the entrance they'll use. You'll alleviate anxiety and frustration, and visitors will feel more welcome.
- Use body language. Nonverbal cues set the mood of the conference. Smile, nod, make eye contact, and lean forward slightly. You'll appear interested and approving.
- Forget the jargon. Education jargon like “criterion-referenced testing,” “perceptual skills,” and “least restrictive environment” is a turn-off.
- Ask for opinions. Let it be known that you're interested, eager to answer questions, and will work with them throughout the year.
- Focus on strengths. It's very easy for parents to feel defensive because many of them see their own faults in their children. You can help by reviewing the child's strengths and areas of need, rather than by dwelling on criticism or stressing weaknesses.
- Be ready for questions. Be prepared to answer specific questions such as: What is my child's ability level?

(Continued on page 3)

Commentary



Russell Leone

As we head into the next round of negotiations for the 2020-2021 school year, we must also think about education funding. So much of our contract success on the local level is tied up in what happens at the state level. While the Kirwan Blueprint money that helped fund our salary improvements this past year was the major headline from the General Assembly, we also put an active, certificated teacher on the State Board of Education, added 200 new community schools statewide, and won full-day PreK for four-year-olds, \$130 million for special ed, and local control over the school calendar. In Anne Arundel County this translated to \$13.5 million in new funding, \$5.4 million for salary improvement. Tyler Heights and Mills-Parole received support and funding to be community schools.

Our wins don't happen unless we build power as a union and use it at the state and local levels. Our power is most visible when we show up as an organized group of people. We did that on March 11th when we joined close to 8,500 educators and supporters from across the state in Annapolis to March For Our Schools to demand

better for our students and we won \$1.1 billion in new funding for our schools. In Anne Arundel, educators and our allies dominated the budget process and we were able to win again. When we organize, we can win.

We must keep organizing for even more victories next year. Legislators on the Kirwan Commission are working on the Blueprint part two, which will include a revision for how we fund our schools for the first time in nearly 20 years — and, with that, both state and local legislators will have to determine how to adequately fund that new formula. In Anne Arundel County, almost 40% of our funding comes from Annapolis. Only 3% comes from the Federal Government, and the rest comes from our county. We have to make sure our legislators get this new formula right.

They will do the right thing—if we're organized, and if we push them to take the right actions.

If we're serious about improving our salaries and changing the landscape of public education in Anne Arundel County for years to come, we must keep organizing our members and community to make sure we have elected officials who know what policies will make a difference for our students and are ready to fight for them.

To do this, we will hold Community Forums this fall where we'll ask educators, coalition partners, par-

ents, and community members to come together to keep the pressure on the General Assembly to take action next year. Your attendance at these events are vital, but it's also important that you reach out to your neighbors and networks to engage non-educators in these important conversations, too.

The first forum will be held in Glen Burnie at the IBEW Hall near BWI on Oct. 22 at 6PM, and another in Annapolis on Oct. 29 at 6PM with location TBA.

We've come a long way in improving funding in our county, but we aren't done yet. We have a huge opportunity to win even more next year. Now we need you to decide if you're going to stay silent or be the leader our students – and communities – need us to be.

TAAAC will be offering a Trauma Informed Schools workshop on November 19 at 4:45 in the TAAAC office. Please register at <http://bit.ly/TraumaInformedTAAAC>

Topics will include:

- What is Trauma?
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
- Healing Centered Engagement and Post-Traumatic Growth
- DOs and DON'Ts of a Trauma Informed Classroom

Dinner will be provided.

TAAAC Action Report

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From Contentia this month . . . *Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect*

Effective October 1, 2019, a mandatory reporter who knowingly fails to make a report of abuse or neglect to CPS may be charged with a misdemeanor; and if convicted, he/she is subject to a fine not exceeding \$10,000, or imprisonment not exceeding three (3) years, or both.

A mandatory reporter includes an educator or professional employee of the public school system, ie teacher, administrator, counselor, social worker, etc. All such individuals have had a long-standing statutory obligation to report suspected abuse or neglect; and in the past, the penalty for knowingly failing to report suspected abuse or neglect was disciplinary, including possible termination and loss of the teaching certificate.

Now, the penalty for failing to report abuse or neglect will not only impact employment, but also may result in a conviction for a misdemeanor. The professional employee must have *actual* knowledge of abuse or neglect. Inasmuch, reports should be based upon first hand observations, not second-hand information. That said, because of the penalties, we fully anticipate that everything will be reported regardless of whether there is actual knowledge.

While we always err on the side of caution with children and make reports, we hope that administrators receiving self-reports from students of purported “touching” by teachers will continue to exercise good judgment in determining what should be reported.

(Continued from front page)

Is my child working up to his/her ability level? How is my child doing in specific subjects? Does my child cause any trouble? Does my child have any specific skills or abilities in schoolwork?

- Get your papers organized in advance. Assemble your grade book, test papers, samples of the student’s work, attendance records, and other pertinent data ahead of time.
- Avoid physical barriers. Arrange comfortable conference-style seating so that you’ll all feel equal.
- Structure the session. As soon as the parents arrive, review the structure of the conference.
- Stress collaboration. Let the parents know you want to work together in the best interests of the student.
- Listen to what parents say. You’ll get more out of a parent conference if you listen carefully to what parents are saying to you.
- Ask about the student. You don’t want to pry, but remember to ask if they think you should know anything special about the student that may affect schoolwork.
- Focus on solutions. Many conferences are held because there’s a problem somewhere. Focus on solutions rather than problems. Plan a course of action.
- Don’t judge. A child’s caregivers or parents may lead a very different lifestyle than your own—communicating your judgment of their attitudes or behaviors won’t be productive.
- Be specific in your comments. Instead of saying, “She doesn’t accept responsibility,” say: “She had a week to finish her book report, but she wrote only two paragraphs.”

Reprinted from MSEANewsfeed

Sick Leave and Personal Business Leave

Reminders and procedures that you need to know

Sick Leave

- Sick leave must be used in half-day increments.
- Under normal circumstances, you must notify your principal at least one hour prior to the time you are supposed to report to work if you are using sick leave. Exceptions may be made by your principal. *Your principal can deny your sick leave and force you to take leave without pay if you fail to comply with the one-hour rule. You may also be subject to disciplinary action.*
- You are required to produce a note if your sick leave use exceeds three consecutive days.
- As a Unit I Member, you are not required to seek advance approval for using personal business leave in combination with sick leave. *If presented with a form or directive mandating advance approval, contact TAAAC. Other employee units have this requirement in their contracts. TAAAC does not.*
- Up to 15 days of available sick leave per school year may be used for illness of a family member.
- You do not have to provide lessons plans while out on extended sick leave.
- If you are not already a member, consider joining the TAAAC sick leave bank.

Personal Business Leave

- The use of any personal business leave requires advance approval.
- If your request to use personal business leave is made with less than 24 hours' notice, you must declare the reason for your leave.
- Personal business leave shall normally be approved at least 24 hours in advance.
- A holiday period may not be extended by taking personal business leave on a Friday or Monday (exceptions may be granted by your principal).
- Personal business leave may not be taken during the first five or last five teacher duty days of the school year (exceptions may be granted by your principal).

TAAAC Events Calendar

October

- 14 – IPD Committee – 4:45 PM @ TAAAC
- 21 – SLB @ TAAAC
- 24 – TAAAC/ASI – 3:45 PM @ TAAAC
- 24 – Understanding Retirement – 5 PM @ Severna Park Middle, Media Center
- 28 – Government Relations – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC

November

- 4 – SLB @ TAAAC
- 6 – TAAAC Board of Directors Meeting
- 8 & 9 – AR Retreat @ Calhoun MEBA Engineering School
- 13 – RA Meeting – 5PM @ Severna Park Middle Meeting Prior to RA:
 - Elementary Concerns
 - Middle School Concerns
 - High School Concerns
- 18 – SLB @ TAAAC
- 19 – Trauma Informed Workshop – 4:45 PM @ TAAAC
- 21 – TAAAC/ASI – 3:45 PM @ TAAAC
- 25 – Government Relations – 4:30 PM @ TAAAC
- 27—29 – Thanksgiving Holiday – TAAAC Closed; All Schools & Central Offices Close

Visit www.taaaconline.org

ATTENTION!

Are You Paying Too Much

If your employment status has changed and you have an annual salary under \$44,656 and/or are working .5 or less, please contact the TAAAC office so that your membership dues can be adjusted accordingly.

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

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Ayotemi Adediwure
Taylor Aiello
Lisa Angyelof
Tyra Ashburne
Rachael Banton
Hanora Barron
Julie Bastian
Judith Baum
Allison Bledsoe
Sabrina Booker
Morgan Branch
Trevor Brinlon
Lynn Chiavacci
Nancy Chipriano
Kerry Cline
Ashley Conley
Amy Cooper
Jessica Corliss
Marisa Corona
Patricia Courtney
Joseph Crisp
Michelle Cristion
Shannon Crowner
Susan Culbert
Michael Cummins
Russell Curtis
Angeleke Damon
Maria Dee-Buchwald
Mary Lou Dembik
Bryce Devine
Judith Diaz
Katherine Dillow
Maria Doudakis
Michele Doyle
Myles Edmonds
Stacy Epperson
Sabrina Fellenbaum
Kelly Fins
Eric Foreman
Jeffrey Fown
James Fox
Kimberly Freeman
Laicy Gandy
Antonia Gates
Laura Gaunt
Michael Gliozzi
Cynthia Grant
Tyrone Hall
James Hart
John Hartman
Luciane Hawkins
Erin Healey

Kandice Henry
Haley Herrine
Charles Heuer
Donna Hill
Kristen Hoffmaster
Jessica Howe
Callie Huck
Alex Hufnagel
Joshua Jack
Rose Jack
Kathryn Jacobs
Yasmine Johnson
Shandai Johnston
Avita Jones
Emily Kavanagh
Theresa Kee
Sarah Kellner
Rebecca Kintner
Irene Kowalskyj
Emily Lamond
Sandra Lastner
Rebecca Lee
Alec Lemoncello
Brittini Logan
Jonathan Maggart
Evelyn Maldonado Quirais
Aslie Masucci
Brunhilda Mbanwie
Mary M^cGuire
Tatiana Mick
Ajonee Miller
Megan Mills
Ian Mitchell
Victoria Mitchell
Patrick Molloy
Heather Moorman
Jonathan Morris
Ryan Mulherin
Megan Mundaca
Theophilus Nartey
Dimitra Neonakis
Nicholas Ochoa
Katelyn Ogle
Cyntina Olsen
James O'Neal
Lukash Onyshkevych
Milagnos Palmer
Luisa Panzer
Karen Parisi
Shamea Parker
Keith Parks
Amy Phillips

Michelle Piwonski
Lindsay Pope
Michael Rader
Joseph Reggie
Lauren Renko
Moximino Rivera
Francisca Rizzuto
Cyleena Rodriguez
Sarah Roe
Ellen Romero-Alcantara
Amando Santiago
Logan Schuebel
Maureen Shea
Erin Shehan
Shannon Shiffrin
Marquise Simon
Tonia Slade
Austine Spriggs
Ashely N. Smith
Mercedes Smith
Ryan A. Smith
Sara Smith
Madison Snyder
Eryn Somers
Armand St. Pierre
Saera Suhail
Mararet Sullivan
Emily Tevault
Michelle Thompson
Brynn Treloar
Alexis Tyler
Grace Vanech
Jeanine Venturella
Natasha Wainwright
L'tisha Walker
Kara Walsh
Maurice Ward
Brian Wartell
Alan Watson
Rebecca Watson
William Watson
Denise Whitty
Tanisha Williams
Patrick Wilson
Brady Wolff
David Wertz
Mary Wright
Greg Yatarola
Erica Young
Janmarie Youngkin
Robin Zimmerman
Stacie Zwirlein

TAAAC Payroll Membership Authorization 2019-2020

LAST NAME _____ FIRST NAME _____ M.I. _____

LAST 4 DIGITS OF SS# _____ EMPLOYEE ID NUMBER _____

ADDRESS _____

City, State & Zip _____

HOME PHONE _____ CELL PHONE* _____

HOME EMAIL _____

DATE OF BIRTH (mm/dd/yyyy) _____ HIRE DATE (mm/dd/yyyy) _____

***Use of Cell Phone:** By providing my phone number, I understand that the NEA, MSEA, TAAAC, and NEA Member Benefits may use automated calling techniques and/or text message me on my cellular phone on a periodic basis. The NEA, the MSEA, and TAAAC will never charge for text message alerts. Carrier message and data rates may apply to such alerts. Text STOP to 36453 to stop receiving messages. Text HELP to 36453 for more information.

The Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County, TAAAC, is an organization of local educators acting on behalf of local educators. Its sole source of operating revenue is membership dues. TAAAC negotiates with the Anne Arundel County Board of Education for salaries, wages, hours, healthcare benefits, and other conditions of employment for all bargaining unit employees. In addition to the Sick Leave Bank and benefits found in the Negotiated Agreement

TAAAC offers the following exclusive members-only benefits:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Professional assistance from TAAAC staff for job-related issues ➤ Free representation & legal assistance for job-related issues ➤ Discounted legal fees for non-job-related matters ➤ \$1,000,000 in liability insurance ➤ Complimentary NEA \$15,000 term life policy - first year ➤ Housing assistance including home purchase, rental discounts, refinancing, and relocation services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Auto and homeowner insurance premium discounts through Horace Mann Insurance Company ➤ Access to AFLAC and The Hartford products to supplement the Sick Leave Bank, including products to pay for absences due to pregnancy ➤ TAAAC Auto Purchase Plan and United Buyer Service vehicle purchases at discount prices ➤ Discount tickets: theme parks, attractions, hotels, movies ➤ Leadership opportunities: local, state, and national |
|---|--|

Membership Commitment and Annual Payment Authorization:

Membership Commitment: YES , I want to join with my fellow employees and become a member of the Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County (TAAAC), the Maryland State Education Association (MSEA), and the National Education Association (NEA). I hereby request and voluntarily accept membership in these associations and agree to abide by the Constitution and Bylaws of all three associations.

Annual Payment Authorization: Yes I hereby agree to pay the annual dues, fees, and assessments established by the three associations in consideration for the services the union provides. I understand that those annual amounts are subject to periodic change by the governing bodies of the associations. I authorize on a continuing basis, and regardless of my membership status, the payment of those annual dues amounts established by the three associations through payroll deduction unless I revoke this authorization in a signed writing sent to my local affiliate via U.S. mail between and including August 15 and September 15 of the membership year immediately preceding the membership year for which the authorization is to be cancelled.

The 2019-20 dues amount is approximately \$30.70 per bi-weekly pay, pro-rated for part time employees.

I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS AGREEMENT IS VOLUNTARY AND IS NOT A CONDITION OF EMPLOYMENT, AND THAT I HAVE THE LEGAL RIGHT TO REFUSE TO SIGN THIS AGREEMENT WITHOUT SUFFERING ANY REPRISAL.

SIGNATURE

DATE

wpdata\comamon\committee\membership\2019-20

Employee to Complete

SCHOOL NAME

WORK EMAIL

Check One:

- Full Time (>0.50)
- Part Time (0.25 -0 .50)
- Part Time (<0.25)

Salary Range:

- Over \$44,656
- \$22,328 to \$44,656
- Below \$22,328