

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

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Teachers Have More Questions than Answers

As the factors around returning to school buildings continue to evolve, there is one thing that is clear, Teachers still have many questions that continue to be unanswered. Our students deserve an environment to return to that is stable and as safe as possible. We want to have our students back with us and we want to know that everything possible has been considered and addressed to meet their needs.

The following is a list of questions that TAAAC Leadership has been hearing from teachers. They have been provided to the members of the Board of Education and AACPS leadership.

School Day:

1. Will a final schedule be in place for Elementary, Middle, and High School students before students return? Will these continue to change with short notice to teachers as has already been done?
2. Will schedules be uniformly adhered to across the county or will it be on a building-to-building basis?
3. How/when should a stakeholder expect to be informed of the policies being developed for their school, student, or job?
4. Who will supervise hybrid students whose teacher has been granted an accommodation to teach virtually full time?
5. What would students who are in-person be expected/permitted to do during the lunch period? Where would they do that? Who supervises?
6. Will in-person students move room-to-room throughout the day or remain in one room in the secondary setting?

Teaching/Learning Logistics:

1. What will the teacher work hours be (so that many can plan for childcare, etc.)?
2. What will the teachers' day consist of?
3. Who will supervise students during the lunch time? (teachers have daily contractual time for planning, grading, communicating with parents, attending special meetings)
4. If a teacher is granted accommodations to teach virtually, who will supervise the students who are physically in their classroom for hybrid learning during that period?
5. If a teacher is in their classroom with in-person students, how would the teacher be able to move about the room and/or teach from their SmartBoard or from their Lab, without excluding the students who are learning synchronously from home?
6. How would the students at home be able to see the teacher if the teacher is not sitting at their laptop?
7. How would the teacher be able to attend to the virtual students who may have questions, if the teacher is not sitting at their desk in front of their laptop screen?

Continued on page 4

Commentary



Russell Leone

Over the past year one thing has been clear and consistent in our message, Teachers and other educators want to be with our students under safe conditions. Working toward these safe conditions has been a roller coaster ride for our educators. We started this pandemic with many praises about how teachers are the heroes as many saw the challenges of teaching their children from home. Parents have continued to be champions for us. TAAAC members have taken every opportunity to get to the table and collaborate with AACPS to varying degrees of success. However, we still do not have a clear path forward for answering educators' concerns for safety. Added to this is the complete demoralization of teachers to hear our Governor state that vaccines aren't important, and that our students deserve to be back in schools because children haven't had an education in a year.

The decision to open buildings on March 1 is one that was made without any real explanation. As an educator, I am hoping that it is not

driven by a desire to get students in a setting to be able to sit for a state test. Our students have always been more than a test score, but we must show them that even more so now. Our children need us to be focused on their social, emotional and physical well-being, and getting them back in to just check off a box for testing would be disheartening to say the least.

I have visited three schools to see their preparation. While some measures have been addressed, there was not a uniform system of documentation between the schools that cleaning had been done. AACPS must be prepared to have a system that is carried out no matter the building. One teacher even shared with me that the only system in place was signing-in at the office, but there was no way to indicate what areas were accessed such as bathrooms, copy rooms or classrooms, or to see when the last cleaning had taken place.

There are still no answers about how students will access bathrooms or what will happen when a teacher is sick (substitute teachers are not easily secured under good conditions). AACPS is still having trouble getting mid-day monitors, and we are hearing that cultural arts teachers may need to supervise classes at that time, which contradicts the need to limit exposure as they have been instructed to continue teaching virtually from their classrooms.

And this brings me to availability of vaccines. We believe that access to both doses of the vaccine must be provided to educators before they return. As of this writing, AACPS has yet to start this process and it takes 3-4 weeks between doses.

Recently, Dr. Fauci addressed educators when meeting with our NEA President, Becky Pringle. He stated, "The American Rescue Plan hopefully will provide the resources for masking, better ventilation, for whatever resources the schools might need to protect the students and the teachers*, in addition to get teachers* vaccinated as quickly as we possibly can. So not only will you have the public health measures of masking, better ventilation, better spacing but if we can get them vaccinated as quickly as possible that would hopefully get to the goal that we all want, namely to get the children back to school, for the good of the children, for the good of the parents, and for the good of the teachers* who want as much as everybody to get children back to school." (*Dr. Fauci stated, to him teachers mean the entire educational team.)

I could not have said this better myself. We are close to seeing the end of this terrible pandemic, but it is still a fight for our lives. Decisions must be based on the essential needs of our students' health and not on the pressures of trying to catch up to

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From Contentia this month . . . *First Day Back To (Physical) School*

At some point you will return to the physical classroom. When that eventuality occurs, please use the TAAAC Form located on page 5 to take an “inventory” of your room.

Our goal at TAAAC is building local power, so please use 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. Take a look at the form on page 5 and use it to walk your workspace when you return. If your issues are not addressed, we are here for you. Next month we will have a “daily update” form for issues related to safety that arise after we return.

Click here for printable form

<https://taaaconline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/TAAAC-First-Day-Reopening-Form1.pdf>

TAAAC Foundations for Educational Excellence Scholarship Awards

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 application, 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

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.

Please use the following link to complete the official nomination form online:

<https://taaaconline.org/nominations-open/>

8. Is every school and classroom with adequate audio for virtual students to hear the teacher in the classroom?
9. How would the teacher offer a different (more “active”) class experience to in-person students, while still needing to remain connected to the virtual students, synchronously?
10. Would students who are in-person just be doing virtual learning, but from a desk in the school rather than from home (see previous questions regarding movement by teacher)?

Transportation:

1. How will schools/bus drivers ensure that the only students authorized to attend in-person that day are loaded onto transportation vehicles at each bus stop?
2. What would the plan be if a student arrives to school who is not permitted to attend hybrid (parents did not indicate HYBRID on survey) or for students who arrive on non-scheduled days?
3. Where will students wait once they arrive to school before the start of the school day?
4. What consequences/strategies are being applied to prevent violating the above-mentioned transportation issues?

Health and Safety:

1. Is there a consistent method across the county for documenting/reporting that cleaning has taken place in each room/location within the building?
2. What is the plan for bathroom usage by students?
3. How will students have access to water?
4. Who will monitor that students are respecting the CDC distancing guidelines as they move throughout school complexes?
5. How is the distancing between students’ desks measure and enforced? (Some desks have only 3-4 floor tiles between them.)
6. What sort of masks are required? What if a student does not abide/cannot afford their own? Will schools be stocked with replacement masks for those that break or are of inadequate quality?
7. Where will teachers go for lunch and planning? Is there a designated place away from the classroom that adheres to all safety protocols?
8. Will there be plexiglass provided for service providers to conduct student testing?
9. How will educators (especially in Special Education Centers) be able to realistically carry out CPI measures?
10. What will be the assessments used to evaluate students who need to be quarantined? The CDC currently classifies “typical” symptoms such as fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, and muscle or body aches as symptoms. If a student identifies any of these symptoms, will they be sent home to quarantine?
11. What will be the frequency of those assessments? Who will be responsible for administering those assessments?
12. Is there a designated quarantine area in every building separate from the nurse’s suite that is required for non-COVID related needs? Who will supervise the quarantined while they await transportation?
13. What is the expectation for the family/staff member, in order to return to hybrid learning (for example: negative test taken two days after being sent home)?
14. What is AACPS’s plan for contact tracing? How will contact tracing be conducted for both staff and students, and by whom?
15. How often and in what manner will the building/classrooms be sanitized? Please be specific to identify how all small spaces will be cleaned, and how this can be conducted between scheduled classes effectively?



TAAAC FIRST DAY SAFETY INVENTORY

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
I have windows that open and close correctly (If I have windows).		
I have at least 6' of distance between every desk (and mine). The "T-Shaped Room" is socially safe/distant.		
There is a clear exit path for everyone in my room.		
If I have them, air flows out of the vents in my room.		
I have all the cleaning supplies I need provided in my room.		
I have all the PPE items I need in my classroom.		
My Principal has identified/given a clear, easy to understand and enforceable mask policy for both students and staff.		
My Principal has identified a safe, appropriate location for me to eat lunch and plan.		
My Principal has identified a safe, appropriate bathroom for me to use.		
If you answered "no" to any of the questions, or have a different concern, please write a short explanation:		

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Thomas Barber
Amandalis L. Barrood
Danielle Blummer
Sophia Cote
Ashley Dyjack
Ross Foca
Christopher J. Glaspell
Kimberly A. Guinn
Lindsey Hammond
Gretchen E. Haroth
Daniel E. Kolton
Kaitlyn Marsh
April-Ann Marshall
Cristian J. Ruiz
Jennifer M. Stump
Lisa Taylor
Shannon Wasshausen
Douglas A. Wetzel
Brianna Woolford



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

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