

# AT THE TABLE

BEYOND STEP  
EQUITY

BARGAINING IN THE  
BLUEPRINT ERA



A BARGAINING BULLETIN

Your TAAAC Bargaining Team was back *At the Table* on March 2, 2022, along with AACPS to kick off FY 23 negotiations. This was our first session in the Blueprint Era as we prepare for the implementation of the statewide law which mandates funding formulas, increased educator wages, new career ladders, community schools, defined supports for schools facing challenges, and more.

Many of you reading were among the wave of Maryland public school employees joining the #RedforED movement to push the State's elected officials to make this law a reality. While we are excited about the possibilities the Blueprint opens, we do have concerns about the law's narrow focus on National Board Certifications. We are hopeful AACPS will partner with TAAAC to implement the Blueprint requirements with sufficient educator input.

The bruising and difficult debate around back steps is now behind us and we all – including AACPS – must look to the future and collectively move forward. We hope to have honest and open debates inclusive of our entire school community to determine the best Blueprint implementation process for all parts of our County.

During the March 2 session, the Bargaining Team presented a joint opening statement for our AACPS colleagues. Consistent with the [results of the bargaining survey](#), your Team detailed the Union's hope for a longer-term commitment on wages (perhaps in the form of a multi-year agreement). We also thanked AACPS for the budget request the BOE has delivered to the County and requested they partner with us to ask the County for more resources toward a COLA larger than 4%. Wages typically register as the most crucial issue for TAAAC members, but this year workload concerns are almost of equal priority. We made certain to share ideas on increasing planning time, reducing non-professional duties, extending lunch to a full thirty minutes, and making the current sub-coverage MOU that went into effect last month a permanent part of the contract with that MOU set to expire June 31. [Please review your Team's opening statement.](#)

We ended the two-and-a-half-hour session agreeing on additional dates for bargaining where the Team will continue to press for competitive wages, balanced workloads, compensation for extra work, and safe and equitable schools. The Bargaining Team, like last year, will need your support to ensure we are best heard at the bargaining table. Please look for opportunities to lobby the BOE or County Council, join petitions, write letters, or similar actions that will give us the fairest opportunity to be *heard At the Table*.

On a personal note, I know last year's contract is not perfect, and there may be ideas to bolster the recent substitute-coverage MOU. TAAAC leaders and members found or created time to make sure your voices were heard on backsteps, safety, and workload. You are the true heroes that opened the way for these agreements.

Kenneth Page, *TAAAC Executive Director and Chief Negotiator*

**YOUR  
BARGAINING  
TEAM**

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