

AT THE TABLE



A BARGAINING BULLETIN

Your bargaining team met with representatives from AACPS for our third bargaining session yesterday, January 17, 2023. It was a full day of negotiations where we held extensive discussions on several issues, including the Sub MOU, health insurance costs, and challenges our members face when forced to use FMLA and sick leave concurrently.

On the sub-MOU and coverage pay, we are optimistic that AACPS shares our desire to see this crucial benefit made permanent in our contract, and not simply exist as a temporary Memorandum of Understanding. The vacancy crisis is not going away anytime soon, and you all have stepped up to substitute for absent colleagues, cover unfilled vacancies, and increase your caseloads. All these tasks go beyond your standard workload and should be compensated accordingly. Your team made clear that returning to the previous model of comp-time for coverage, rather than real financial compensation, is a non-starter.

Discussions were productive and each side had the opportunity to express what's worked well with the Sub-MOU and the challenge in implementing it consistently and equitably. We look forward to seeing AACPS's counterproposal in future sessions.

We also spent significant time discussing the recent legal changes to the **Family Medical Leave Act**, or FMLA, that require our members to use their paid sick leave concurrently with unpaid FMLA. This often leaves our members without any form of paid leave in the event they or their family members get sick after their FMLA leave. Our team is trying to develop solutions to this problem, but AACPS is resistant to any changes. While conversation was productive because we were able to clarify our position, they were also difficult given AACPS's resistance to working with us to solve this clear problem.

The final topic was a data-driven discussion of our **health insurance costs** and how those costs are distributed for different types of employees. AACPS presented data on the costs of our plan and their limitations in making any changes. Our team felt this discussion was useful to clarify the financial implications of any changes.

Overall, negotiations remain productive and both teams are seriously engaging with the issues. Dividing lines are starting to emerge, however, and the elephant in the room of your COLA remains an open issue. This is why your bargaining team needs YOU to attend the **AACPS Budget Hearing on January 24** to tell the Board of Education that educators need a significant raise and recognition of your experience!

Our next negotiation session is on January 30, and we look forward to updating you again after.

YOUR NEGOTIATIONS TEAM

Dawn Austin
Robin Beers
Marlena Colleton-Pearsell

Rob Connerton
Nicole Disney-Bates
Jill Grimm

Mike Magee
Andrew Posner
Marissa Raimond

FOLLOW US

