



TAAAC
January 2024

Action Report

Nicole Disney Bates, President
Kristina Korona, Vice President
Diane Barnes, Secretary-Treasurer

What would 10% mean for you?

When many educators think about our union, one of the first things that comes to mind is our collective bargaining rights: we negotiate our wages and working conditions on behalf of all 7000+ Unit 1 employees in AACPS. This year, our Bargaining Team proposed a 10% COLA plus steps in a multi-year package. However, the budget proposed by Dr. Bedell has a 3% COLA which is disappointing. AACPS has had low wage growth in the past compared to other counties, so we are disappointed in this current proposal. We know that our voice has power and strength when we speak up together. The Board of Education and the County Council needs to hear our voice to say, "we just can't keep up" and 3% will not help us keep up. A 3% COLA is not enough for our students or our schools.

Here are three things you can do right now to help yourself and your colleagues during budget and bargaining season:

1. Testify at the rescheduled BOE Budget Hearing
2. RSVP for one of the County Council budget hearings below
3. Share your story



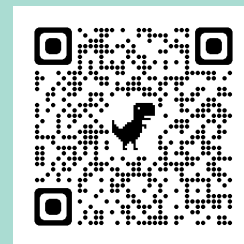
Whether you can testify in person or not, take three minutes to review our bargaining priorities using the QR code on the left and tell us why they are important to you. Share specific examples (excluding identifiable student information) of issues you have faced in your school, how some of the proposals might help, and what AACPS can do to change policies or budgets to support you.

COUNTY COUNCIL BUDGET HEARINGS

County Executive Steuart Pittman has told us the more we show up, the more likely he will be to increase the education budget. Can you be there?

Here are the hearing dates:

- District 5: January 25
- District 3: January 30
- District 1: January 31
- District 4: February 6
- District 7: February 7
- Spanish-Language: February 13



POLITICAL ACTION

Do you know that the Board of Education elections are important but don't know how to help - start by contributing to our political action committee! This is our opportunity to financially support candidates who will support us.

Visit: taaonline.org/for-members/politicalaction

**TAAAC Board
of Directors**

Maria Cote
Dyana Cronin
Maryalice Davis

Cathy Flanders
Will Johnson
Chris Lerch

Melissa McHarg
Marissa Raimond
Jessica Roth

Geoff Turk
Karina Zotti



TAAAC Member Resources

For more information, visit www.taaaconline.org.

CONTENTIA: UniServ Update

Unlike most other professions, as a public school educator in Maryland, you can suffer negative consequences for resigning your position outside of certain timelines. If you resign during the school year (with limited exceptions, see Article 17 B), the following will occur:

1. Any accumulated summer pay is forfeited, and you will not receive it (COMAR 13A.07.02.01).
2. The Board of Ed, at its sole discretion, may suspend your Maryland teaching certificate (typically for one year, but can be for longer).
3. AACPS and its agents are not required to provide you with a letter or recommendation or positive reference (though they may individually choose to do so).
4. Your insurance ends at the end of the month in which you resign.
5. If you are not vested in the Maryland state public employee retirement system, your contributions will be returned to you. If you are vested, that money will remain until you retire.

To avoid these consequences, members should provide their notice of intent to resign by April 15 (and continue to work through the end of the school year), and actually resign no later than July 15 before the next school year. By following these timelines, members will avoid these consequences and your insurance will continue through the end of August.

BOE BUDGET HEARING

The Board of Education postponed their budget hearing because of snow! Join us to advocate for better wages and working conditions:

- When: January 25, 2025 at 6pm
- Where: Old Mill High School
- RSVP: secure.ngpvan.com/yKleXYgtn0GoQ10K9Z5I2A2

Join us ahead of time at Ellie's for a happy hour!

LOBBY NIGHTS

Join the GR Committee every monday for Lobbying in Annapolis.

Sign up: <https://bit.ly/3Sr7Nbs>

HOT TOPIC COLLABORATIVE

Learn about your rights in dealing with extreme student behaviors, what rights your students have, and what actionable steps you can take to protect yourself and your students

- When: January 30, 2024 at 5 PM
- Where: Zoom
- RSVP: secure.ngpvan.com/36S3FRzII0i6IRnuResmPg2

MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Congratulations to Heather Kurdziel, music teacher at West Meade Early Ed Center, who was named AACPS Employee of the Month at the January 2024 Board of Education Meeting.

NEW MEMBERS

Happy new year to the 21 new TAAAC members who joined our union over the last month!



TAAAC Candidate Statements

CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT



Nicole Disney-Bates

As your President, it has been my pleasure to be able to lead you, to fight and advocate for you and with you. I have enjoyed our donut visits, our rallies to fight bad policy decisions, getting friendly candidates elected, and a great contract which was settled before years end but I am not done yet! I am asking you to allow me to continue as President to fight, advocate, and work for and with you as we navigate Blueprint together, get an amazing contract that focuses on wages, safety, working conditions and Blueprint. We can do this together!



Will Johnson

New leadership and vision is needed to bring TAAAC's focus back onto its members. As President, I will fight for members every single day of my presidency to ensure that we are stronger together. I have 6 years of strong union experience: current TAAAC Board Member, on the FY24-25 Negotiations team, and helped to draft our state's ESP Bill of Rights which has gone national. We must create a culture of transparency and trust. Together, we can make members the center of our work again. Learn more here:
<https://membersfirst.my.canva.site/vote> Vote Will Johnson for TAAAC President!



Kristina Korona

As a 22-year committed union member currently serving as VP, I've been at the forefront: showing up, speaking up, organizing and implementing actions, and thinking in innovative, strategic ways rather than passively accepting the status quo. As president, I'll bring my forward-thinking, justice-centered approach to build our collective power, ensuring all members have a voice and role within our union's collective decision-making and actions in order to leverage the strength of our 6400+ members while also building strong community partnerships, ensuring that not only are our concerns heard but our demands for transformational change are met. Respect. Collaborate. Empower.
bit.ly/votepowertogether

UNION ELECTIONS

Voting will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, January 29, 2023 for the following positions:

- TAAAC President and Vice President
- TAAAC Board of Directors
- MSEA/NEA Delegate
- MSEA/NEA Board of Directors

Elections will close at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, February 16, 2023.



TAAAC Candidate Statements

CANDIDATES FOR VICE PRESIDENT



Jorge Córdoba

Let's ensure that educators are paid as the professionals we are, provided high-quality healthcare, and secure and robust retirement. Let's empower educators to decide about their work, instruction, and school. Let's move toward transformative solutions that respond, recover, and rebuild our working conditions. We need to empower our membership by knowing our contract and blueprint law. We need to re envision, re vitalize, and re ignite our union. Will you continue to suffer alone or help with the transformational change collectively? Respect. Collaborate. Empower.bit.ly/votepowertogether



Russell Leone

Understanding our past successes and challenges is vital to coursing future action. As Vice-President, I will bring a wealth of TAAAC experience back to the table while refocusing work on members first. With 9 years board experience plus another 4 as President, I led many member successes, like closing pay gaps. Members were central to my leadership, including a council of 25 members representing different categories of membership. I believe it is time to put all members in the center of our work again. You can learn more here: <https://membersfirst.my.canva.site/vote>Vote Russell Leone for TAAAC Vice-President.



Marissa Raimond

Over the past four years as a member of your Negotiating Team, I've tirelessly negotiated contracts to secure well-deserved outcomes for educators and RSP's. Currently serving on the Board of Directors, I've played a pivotal role in shaping the Blueprint salary scale. As a Speech-Language Pathologist, I've personally witnessed the challenges faced by educators, RSP's, and students across all grade and continuum levels. My unwavering dedication, experience, and commitment uniquely qualifies me to advocate as your Vice President for a stronger, more united association. I'm not finished fighting for you. Together, let's win for a more robust and cohesive future!



TAAAC Candidate Statements

CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Dawn Austin

An AACPS educator and proven collaborative leader with a strong background in law, economics, and mediation. Actively involved with TAAAC for 5 years (bargaining team, government relations, nominating committee, etc...). Also on the Conflict Resolution Center Board 3+ years. Offering my unique blend of experience to help guide TAAAC forward.



Charis Cephas

With almost two decades of middle and high school experience as a classroom educator and now teacher specialist, I hope to grow with you as I lead. Currently, I'm a building representative and bargaining team member. If elected, I'll lead with respect, collaborate open-mindedly, and work to empower members.

bit.ly/votepowertogether



Cathy Flanders

A teacher for 16 years, I have served on the TAAAC Board, your Negotiations Team, Government Relations Team, and as my school's FAC as chair with fidelity. I have spoken up for increasing teachers' pay and work load reduction at Budget Hearings. In all things, I fight for teacher efficacy.



Jennifer Fulwiler

A veteran teacher, and dedicated advocate fighting for raising teacher pay, decreasing workload, and inclusive work opportunities for all. With a background in Special Education and teaching all grade levels K-12, I am committed to being a voice for all, addressing contract and workplace concerns for members county wide.



Christopher Lerch

As a 29 year veteran AACPS teacher, I am currently serving on the Board of Directors filling a vacated seat. I have been a building rep. for over a decade, and served on the membership committee. If re-elected, I will continue to fight for higher salaries and COLA increases.



Melissa McHarg

As an 11-year veteran and current Board of Director, I have advocated to improve school safety, wages, work conditions and accountability for leadership. I will continue to attend rallies and speak up to make sure teacher voices are heard, especially around the above topics and equitable Blueprint implementation.

Elections will open on January 29, 2024 and close on February 16, 2024.

To vote, check your personal email for information from MSEA@intelliscanvotes.com



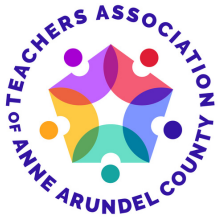
TAAAC Candidate Statements

CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Elizabeth Ruddy

I'm a veteran classroom, special education, and encore teacher with experience on the elementary and middle school level. Over the past decade as an active union and BOD member I have witnessed our strength when we work respectfully and collaboratively to empower our members. Respect. Collaborate. Empower. bit.ly/votepowertogether



Jessica Roth

I started working with TAAAC as a building rep in 2018. Since then, I have served on several committees and am a current member of the Board of Directors. If elected, I will continue my work to advocate for member needs in order to build our strength as a Union.



Keanuú Smith-Brown

As an early career fourth-grade educator, I'm a building representative who was an elected NEA and MSEA delegate. As a visionary leader with 15+ years of community service and political leadership experience, I'll ensure our union recognizes the need to respect, collaborate with, and empower us all. bit.ly/votepowertogether



Logan Wilson

I am running for your TAAAC Board of Directors. In AACPS, I have been an active participant in TAAAC areas such as recruitment, member organizing, and vocalizing important issues and events that TAAAC has rallied behind. It would be a pleasure to serve my fellow AACPS teachers!



Karina Zotti

As a BOD running for reelection, I bring the perspective of both a former classroom educator as well as a current PPW. I will continue to represent ALL members in a respectful, collaborative, and empowering way. We need leaders that will advocate for and support ALL Unit 1 members. bit.ly/votepowertogether

VOTING FOR LOCAL, STATE, & NATIONAL LEADERS

Elections will also open for 50 MSEA Delegates and 34 NEA Delegates, who will be attending the annual Representative Assemblies. Candidates include: Dawn Austin, Diane Barnes, Rebecca Baucom, Jon Boughey, Em Callahan, Charis Cephas, Cathy Flanders, Sheen Goldberg, Maggie Graham, Jill Grimm, Cathy Hall Guay, Jennifer Jerrell, Kristina Korona, Russell Leone, Stephanie Leuschner, Robert Mauro, Melissa McHarg, Kate Miller, Melissa Napfel-Sisk, Kristen Park, David Pickens, Ravi Pillalamarri, Marissa Raimond, Joy Reider Simpson, Colin Reinhard, Mary Robinson, Jessica Roth, Elizabeth Ruddy, Keanuú Smith-Brown, Linda Tindale, Benjamin Tuck, Zoe Vilicic, Nicholas Wassam, Kate Werner, Logan Wilson, and Amy Young-Buckler.