

## TAs

### Salary and other compensation

- **Salary**
  - 3% COLA for all unit I employees
  - Step movement for all eligible unit I employees. This includes all employees hired on step 3 last school year as a result of a 1-year MOU. A new MOU was signed this year that includes language to evaluate the salary scale to ensure years of experience match experience step to be completed by April 15, 2025
- **Middle School Sports**
  - Middle school sports will be phased in over the next few years, any unit I employee who is interested in coaching will be compensated on the schedule on the TA document
  - Any unit 1 employee who works an athletic event will be compensated at \$50 for a Monday – Thursday event and \$55 for Friday and Saturday event
- **CTE Salary Scale**
  - Currently CTE employees top out at 13 steps equaling \$74,428. The purpose of looking at this scale is to get them more on par with how other educators in the county are compensated. We will be forming this committee later this fall to get to work on this
- **Summer Hearings**
  - This language expands and memorializes different scenarios where our members will be required to attend hearings over the summer and pays them for prep time in addition to attending the hearings

### Employee Benefits

- **Health Insurance**
  - This was one of the more contentious proposals AACPS made over the course of our negotiations. The initial proposal was for 7% in the first year of the contract which means it would have gone into effect in January of 2025. We said no to that but as time went on, we got it reduced it to 5% spread over 3 years. Also included on this was increases to co-pays for doctor and prescription drugs. We asked for and received data on where they were with funding of health care and consulted our insurance expert from MSEA and concluded that while we did not want to do an increase it was necessary for a few reasons. The first was the cost of medical care has gone up drastically over the last few years, in part because of COVID. For a while, people were not getting their routine screenings and consequently things were missed and what would have been a health issue because a serious situation in some cases. Additionally, after COVID it became increasingly difficult to schedule appointments for doctor visits, especially for specialists and inflation in the medical industry have caused costs to sharply increase. AACPS is self-insured which means they pay all claims so depending on the experience in any given year, these costs can go beyond what they have budgeted for which causes them to dip into their reserve balance over the past few years. To their credit, they have chosen to absorb these costs over the last several years but this year they asked all bargaining units to contribute more to health costs. While we don't like that we have to do this, the most important thing is to maintain the high level of benefits we have so in

order to not touch the plan design, paying more for premium share is the only way to ensure our insurance does not change. To go a little deeper into this, each year, the insurance company makes a recommendation to the employer to what they should charge in each tier of each plan. This is called the allocated rate and is calculated by the actuaries at the insurance company. The number they give is based on how much in claims AACPS paid the year before, what the trends in insurance are and projected to be, and what they anticipate claims will be in the upcoming year based on the demographics of those insured. Some years they come in under that number, other years they come in over. All of this contributes to how much the cost goes up. This is out of our control and AACPS's control. For full transparency, the other bargaining units in the county agreed to this increase before we did, our preference was to hold out for a lower number, but the other units felt they got equal value and wanted to cut deals, so they agreed on changes before we did. Based on how long it has been since they proposed changes to the employee share and them being able to show the need for increased contributions, and the fact other bargaining units agreed to changes, we had a lot of exposure if we had gone to arbitration over this issue.

### **Work Time and Workload**

- **IEP Progress Reports and Report Cards**
  - This proposal was made to reduce the workload for our members who send out IEP progress reports. As it stands now, central office sends out only the report cards and the special education case managers are responsible for sending out IEP progress reports. This aligns the two and puts the responsibility on central office to send both report cards and progress reports out. AACPS is working on this system to make the switch but haven't completed it yet, so they have asked to delay this until after ratification until they have the system up and running. They anticipate it will be ready for the second making period. We will keep you posted
  
- **12-Month Telework**
  - This will allow 12-month employees to telework 5 days per school year and will have to coordinate it with their supervisor. We will look to expand on this for other unit 1 employees in the future

### **Duration of Agreement**

- The contract will run through 2027 and will have re-openers each year of the contract for wages and 2 wild card re-openers. One of our goals going forward is to convince the BOE that we need to have negotiated wages for all years of the contract. Currently the board is against this because of the uncertainty of funding. Of course, our response to that was that funding is an uncertainty every year but if we have something in the contract already it makes it that much harder for the county executive to not fund our salaries. The BOE has said to me that they don't like to make promises they can't keep. While I understand this, it really is not a good argument in that they wouldn't be the ones not keeping the promise. We think if we go to the county executive together with AACPS, we can put the pressure on to fund the budget request. This is the type of partnership with AACPS we are looking to forge, we know we can accomplish more together

than we can separately so we should be doing as much as we can together. Dr. Bedell has signaled to us that he agrees with this philosophy so we hope this means we will be creating a more collaborative relationship with AACPS not only with our contract and salaries but with all things that will have a mutual benefit to both sides, that includes making sure our educators have the support and have the tools they need to do their jobs effectively and want to remain in AACPS for the duration of their careers.

### **Blueprint Committees**

- As we all know with the Blueprint legislation, there are multiple mandates that will have to be implemented, most if not all have a working condition component to them so we will have to make sure we are working with AACPS to negotiate all aspects of the Blueprint. The first task will be to meet and determine what the mandates are and then form committees to negotiate over them. We will be working to be sure we have the best possible situations for all of these mandates, and we of course will be looking for input from our members on how to move forward with them so we will be reaching out for subject matter experts and asking for volunteers to serve of committees throughout this process. We will keep you informed as to what, when and how as we move forward

### **Teacher Orientation**

- This was one of AACPS proposals, they want to require new personnel to attend orientation

### **Planning Time Committee**

- This was signed as a MOU to form a committee to meet and discuss planning time to see how we will move to a 60/40 split for planning time and classroom time. We are also using this committee to see how we can improve planning time now. The mandate for 60/40 does not go into effect until 2032

### **FAC, Student Discipline and Communication**

- **Communication.** This was an important one as for years we have been trying to get AACPS to get us information in a timely manner and to be sure information that is meant to get to unit I staff gets to unit I staff. Admins have in some cases not passed on the information so this will be changing. Also, AACPS has agreed to share information with TAAAC leadership ahead of time to allow the possibility of collaboration on messaging when appropriate. This is a big step in the right direction. We met with Dr. Bedell, and high-ranking members of his cabinet and he gave us his assurance that this improvement in communication is a priority for him
- **Student Discipline.** This was the one issue we spent a lot of time on in negotiations. We had talked about how many of our members were being assaulted and were feeling unsupported in the area of behavioral issues. The team relayed stories they had heard or experienced themselves about student issues as it relates to behavior and discipline. We had very aggressive proposals on this, but they didn't think this was a big problem. This was one of the issues we went to impasse over because we felt it was that important. While getting this committee doesn't solve the problem immediately, it does give us a platform to talk about these issues and the fact they were willing to commit in writing to meeting about this gives us hope that we can start making some progress in this area. We are meeting with Monique Jackson later this week

to have a preliminary discussion about this and committee work will begin in November. We will be asking our members for input and making sure our members have a strong voice when it comes to working on this

- **FAC.** FAC is supposed to be a way for faculty and admin to work together to solve issues. So often we hear that admins are either discouraging FACs, not participating or intimidating faculty from participation. This obviously was never how FACs were supposed to function. As part of the solution, Dr. Bedell has made it clear that admins are to participate in these committees and collaborate with our FACs to solve problems. We want to make sure these are up and running each year and that climate surveys will be done if they need to be. While again, this isn't an immediate fix, Dr. Bedell is putting his support behind this so we believe the restructure will have some teeth to it and will allow for productive sessions. We at TAAAC will be available for support as this process plays out. Feel free to reach out to your Uniserv, president or myself if you need assistance, especially if admins are pushing back.

### **Career Ladder**

- There were certain parts of career ladder that were subject to negotiations, other parts are still evolving and being figured out at the AIB level. The part we were able to negotiate was the compensation which we did with a subcommittee that made a recommendation to the negotiations team. The law talks about the floor, which was the 10k, 8k, 7k and 6k. When we met to talk about this, our concern was about compensation and whether moving over was worth it. We felt there needed to be additional compensation to go along with the mandated salary enhancements that occurred at each level of the NBC so we proposed a \$1,000 enhancement in each year which they rejected so we told them we wouldn't sign off on anything that didn't include more money between NBC milestones. We landed on \$500 for each year plus COLA which is better than any other county in the state thus far. Since the \$500 is in the contract, we could try to negotiate a higher number in future years. We absolutely understand many people will not want to go get another certification especially since many of our members have a +30, +60 or a doctorate but we wanted to make it as financially attractive as possible. As an example, the NBC plus all the maintenances equals \$31,000. If you add in the \$500 for each year in that time frame, it is worth \$38,500 plus you will continue to get the \$500 each year you are employed by AACPS. That isn't counting what the COLAs will add to it. We obviously aren't taking a position on whether anyone should do it or not, but we wanted to get the best possible financial scenario for anyone who does. There will be full presentations on this soon, I am waiting on a document I submitted to AACPS that has frequently asked questions that I will use in conjunction with these presentations. We want to make sure that AACPS and TAAAC are on the same page and giving out the same information, so this document is a collaborative effort. Before presentations start, we will put out a survey to our members to get questions in ahead of time so I can make sure we have answers and can add them to the FAQ document so the information will be available. Once this document is created, we will have it readily available on our website and socials.

### Proposals We Rejected

- AACPS wanted to change the date to conduct interviews for vacant positions from July 15<sup>th</sup> as it currently is in the contract to June 15<sup>th</sup>. We rejected this since the school year isn't always completed by June 15<sup>th</sup> and people don't know what their situation will be the following school year at that point.
- **SLOs.** The team felt strongly that allowing them to put too much weight on one SLO, it could be detrimental to members who have a vindictive admin that may use it to cause problems for someone. We countered with an optional SLO but they were not interested. They may want to revisit this issue in the future so we will be talking to the membership about their preference and what would need to happen to reduce it to one. We know some of our members would have been good with moving to one, but we wanted to make sure this was not going to harm anyone. I would love to hear from anyone who would like to see it reduced so we can look at this in the future.