AT THE TABLE

A BARGAINING BULLETIN

Dear TAAAC members,

Tuesday, October 27th was a day of solid work at the bargaining table, but our overall report—as the subject line indicates—is mixed.

Our teams have worked through the contract, in collaboration, to modernize language and update terminology. Our aim is to bring this contract out from behind the squeaky door that closes on Vincent Price towards the end of "Thriller," and into 2026. These areas of modernization include:

- Updating the names of AACPS offices and programs
- Removing defunct concepts like the "job bank telephone listing," and
- Streamlining and clarifying language by removing effective dates in the distant past. (So far, the oldest we have found is March 5, 1969.)

We are glad to have negotiating partners who are willing to clear the cobwebs and dust off this agreement.

While we are very aware that the district's failure to put a pay proposal on the table is an outstanding issue between our teams, we are using this interval to build a relationship that will serve as the foundation for discussing and collaborating on more substantive changes, including—most importantly--pay.

Team member Atticus Bedingfield reports:
"The AACPS team is very knowledgeable and thoughtful—team members who have been at the table with AACPS in the past say that it is notable how much more engaged and cooperative they are as a group. We continue to have personable side conversations, which are a good index of the mood at the table; I think that a basis for a strong and mutually respectful negotiating process is being established."

Our Tuesday negotiation session ended with brief updates on several areas in which TAAAC had previously asked AACPS to negotiate, even before this round of contract negotiations had commenced. These areas include the district's new toileting policy, which the AACPS team has acknowledged has not been implemented in a thorough way—we await additional updates on this.

The outstanding areas also include the proposals we had made on handling last-minute virtual learning days, which AACPS seems to want to handle in the context of the larger negotiation.

Most troubling to us was AACPS's response to our proposals regarding the impact of the middle school pilot, which we first raised with the district when the pilot was announced in

March, and about which AACPS has consistently refused to negotiate. This week, AACPS responded that because the pilot is not a permanent part of AACPS's program, they don't want to negotiate about its impact on members, and are unwilling to treat TAAAC as a stakeholder in conversations about how the pilot might be revised in the future.

This refusal to negotiate continues in the pattern of AACPS's unwillingness to put proposals on the table on the issues that matter to our members the most, and—while we're encouraged by the tone of the conversations we have had in bargaining—we cannot lose track of the fact that this is the employer's position.

We need your help to get AACPS to put a pay proposal on the table—and to respond to us substantively on the middle school pilot. Please call the members of the AACPS Board of Education in advance of the Wednesday, November 4th Board meeting, and let them know how you and/or your family are impacted by these issues. Their phone numbers are as follows:

1. President Gloria Dent (District 1): 410-991-5133
2. Vice President Dawn Pulliam (District 7): 410-507-9204
3. Robert Silkworth (District 2): 443-534-5766
4. Erica McFarland (District 3): 410-693-7458
5. Sarah McDermott (District 4): 410-533-7940
6. Dana Schallheim (District 5): 443-534-2660
7. Dr. Joanna Tobin (District 6): 410-570-0361

Yours in solidarity,
The TAAAC Negotiating Team