

LEADERSHIP FORUM

The Newsletter of the Association of Educational Leaders, Anne Arundel County

Vol. 1, No. 3
Back-to-School 2003

Ready or not, here they come

Educational leaders share their back-to-school tips

As Anne Arundel County educational leaders ready themselves for the start of school, some were asked to share their plans and suggestions with the *Leadership Forum*. Here are a few of your colleagues' thoughts as they begin the 2003-04 school year.

Harry Zacharko, Principal
Cape St. Claire Elementary

"No matter what you do, make your back to school fun."

Chris Truffer, Principal
Old Mill Middle, North

To hit the ground running, Chris suggests, "Make sure over the summer you take time for yourself so that you can come back re-energized. You have to do that so that you can commit yourself to your school and your faculty."

Reggie Farrare, Principal
MacArthur Middle School

"Understand and learn from the mistakes of last year. Start with a positive attitude and keep it all year long."

AEL elects leaders

Thanks to all who have generously volunteered their time

Congratulations to newly elected AEL officers and directors. The following individuals, elected in the spring, will serve two-year terms:

President **Charles Janky**
1st Vice President **Bob Ferguson**
2nd Vice President **Leigh Reid**

Louise DeJesu, Principal
Hilltop Elementary

"Start out on a personal note. Get around the building and talk to your staff about what they did over the summer.

Make the new people feel welcomed and invited.

During in service days make sure there are teambuilding exercises and the opportunity for personal interaction. Try to get that team spirit

going. People working together will make the biggest impact on your success for the year.

Nina Griffith, Principal
Marley Elementary

"You have to start on a positive note. We are going to begin our year by celebrating any successes we have had in the past with a breakfast at the Old Country Buffet. And we try to give the teachers as much time as we can to work in their classrooms and not fill up their time with meetings. We all know they just want to get into their rooms and get organized. We are focusing on the positive to keep everyone's spirits high." ■



Dates to Remember

Sept. 1

Holiday: Labor Day
All Schools and Central offices closed.

2nd Week in September

AEL General Membership Meeting
Date, location and time to be announced.

Sept. 15

Deadline for returning Membership and Payroll Forms

Forms should be returned to Don Smith
See enclosed flyer for details.

Oct. 6

Holiday: Yom Kippur
All Schools and Central offices closed.

Oct. 23-25

MAESP Annual Conference
Ocean City
Visit www.maesp.org for more information.

Nov. 16-22

American Education Week
Theme: "Great Public Schools for Every Child -- America's Promise"
Visit: www.nea.org/eaw/

The following individuals will continue to serve — each as one year left in his/her term:

Secretary **Louise DeJesu**
Treasurer **Barry Fader**
Director **Rocco Ferretti**

Thanks to all who stepped forward — volunteering time and energy. ■

Members' ideas needed

AEL is seeking your thoughts and ideas as we set the path for future negotiations and other possibilities. You are invited to attend an **AEL General Membership Meeting** the 2nd week in September. The location and time will be announced at a later date. Come to discuss any concerns.

Negotiations for the first time in a while were not as productive as previous years. The forecast for negotiations this year seems a bit cloudy. Yet our General Counsel Rick Kovelant says, "When have they ever come to the table saying they have plenty of money for us?" So stay hopeful.

This year I begin my 30th year as an educator. I am excited, enthused and challenged by

the job that lies ahead. I know that AEL will continue to reach out to the County Council, County Executive, as well as state Legislature and Congress.

I know that although we are leaders for teachers, we need to work side by side to improve educators' salaries and retirement if we are going to draw the best and the brightest into Anne Arundel County.

I also know that I can rely on the members of AEL to help me through the challenges.

Lastly, you, the members, can rely on AEL's experienced Executive Board to answer your questions and concerns. Looking forward to seeing you in September at our get together to be held in October. ■

*President's Column
by Charles Jansky*

The forecast for negotiations this year seems a bit cloudy.

News and information from MAESP

by **Bob Kanach, Belvedere Elementary**

As your representative to the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals (MAESP), I want to encourage anyone who is not a member of this state principals association to strongly consider joining.

Our organization works hand in hand with the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) in representing our interests at both the state and federal level. Through membership in the national association you also have access to the Legal Assistance Program and the New Legal Benefits Program as well as access to excellent publications and workshops.

If you would like more details about either of the programs, please contact me or check the national's website at www.NAESP.org.

As stated above, MAESP does lobby our

state legislature when it is in session as well as represents us on various committees at MSDE and other educational driven organizations. MAESP also offers workshops for assistant principals and aspiring elementary administrators. We are always looking for administrators who are interested in serving on one or more of these committees so please contact me and I will forward your name to our executive director, Jim Dryden.

Our annual conference in Ocean City will be held on Oct. 23-25. More specific information will be forthcoming to all MAESP members. Be sure to visit the website at www.maesp.org.

If you are interested in joining our professional organizations, I recommend that you contact Don Smith at the AEL office (410-349-11764) to sign up for the payroll deduction program which is the easiest way for you to become a regular member. For \$330 per year you will become a member of both MAESP and NAESP. If during the year I can be of any service to you, please do not hesitate to contact me. ■

Watch your mail for a notice announcing the date, time and location of the September **AEL General Membership Meeting**

A failure to communicate

As we start the school year, I am reminded of the Academy Award winning movie *Cool Hand Luke*. As some of you may recall, the key line spoken in that movie was, "What we have here is a failure to communicate." While I am sure other parallels can be made to the movie, suffice it to say, our efforts to reach either the County Government or, in fact, the School Board regarding our concerns and positions seem to give new meaning to this immortal line.

Case in point is the pending litigation involving the "removal" of Personnel Specialists from our bargaining unit. While the Administration may say, "what's the big deal," AEL feels that this is a concerted effort to reconstitute collective bargaining units into employee groups that the Board believes are more advantageous to their interests. The removal of this position is a subject of negotiation, not a unilateral raid on AEL membership. Litigation is usually the last step in communication breakdown. In this case, every effort was made to discuss the matter with

then Associate Superintendent Joey Wise. Unfortunately, letters and calls remained unanswered. This was not a failure to communicate; rather, there was no attempt by the Board to communicate at all. Perhaps this type of litigation will cause someone to pick up the phone and intelligently discuss the issues we have raised in the context of our lawsuit.

The above is only one example of the "nobody's home" philosophy adopted by the current Administration. Common courtesy suggests that when an inquiry is made, a response is given. While we may disagree as to the nature of the response, or even believe the inquiry is without merit, it nonetheless warrants a reply. This is a far cry from the communication skills that were exhibited in prior years. It is my hope that the Administration will have an opportunity to read this column. After all, the Negotiated Agreement requires that AEL provide its newsletter to the Board. While this may save postage and telephone charges, it is a poor substitute for allowing those in charge to know our concerns and thereafter have a meaningful dialogue. ■

*A Message from Richard Kovelant,
Executive Director & General Counsel*

AEL Spring Reception



More than 50 AEL members were on hand for the Spring Reception held June 12 at the Yellow Fin Restaurant in Edgewater. Thanks to LifeTouch Studios for its sponsorship of the event.

Pictured above (l to r) Barry Fader, Darlene Parks, Charles Jansky and Bob Wagner.

Do your membership and payroll forms need updating?

A reminder from Don Smith

Included in this newsletter are a goldenrod membership form and a green payroll authorization form. If you are a current member of AEL and do not wish to make any changes in your membership you do not need to do anything. If you wish to make any changes in your membership(s) in any way, please complete both forms and send them to AEL at P.O. Box 74, Severna Park, MD 21146. If your address, phone number, email address or position has changed, please return the goldenrod form.

As always, if you have any questions about your membership, please contact Don Smith at 410-349-1764.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you --*Don Smith* ■

The Association of Educational Leaders

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Association of Educational Leaders

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Letters to the Editor welcomed

We encourage members to use this newsletter to share their opinions and ideas. If you would like to express your thoughts on the issue of the day (i.e. the reduction of pupil personnel workers and its impact on your school) or time saving tip or a creative solution to a common problem, please send your submission to: Don Smith at 410.349.1764 (fax) or Denise Hofstedt at 410.421.5832 (fax), dmhofstedt@att.net. ■