

LEADERSHIP FORUM

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

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If security is a priority...

by Denise Hofstedt

Educational leaders in Anne Arundel County need assistance with school security, according to M. Jacques Smith, Principal at Chesapeake Bay Middle School. "Principals are trained to be the instructional leaders," says Smith, who is in the 37th year of his career as an educator. "We need support in the safety area so we can do that job. I support the B.O.E. request to add trained security professionals to our school staffs. Many of us are making a good effort in conducting the security evaluations in our buildings as we've been asked to do," says Smith. "But we really don't have the background to make those kinds of evaluations. We need trained professionals to help with security."

Principals should do what they do best – focus on learning, says Smith, who has spent nine years as an assistant principal and 18 years as a principal. "Principals can be fragmented and lose focus – pulled in different directions.... We try to do so many things that are good for kids – but sometimes the good is the enemy of the best. If we don't make time every day for learning then we are not doing our job. We have to make sure that our energy and resources are going into learning everyday."



Jack Smith

Among the biggest issues educational leaders face are the instructional challenges created by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), says Smith. "Never before have we expected all of our kids to reach proficiency. We are being challenged to be better and we accept that challenge."

He says the NCLB requirement for hiring qualified teachers is a good thing. "We are hiring more highly qualified teachers. It's common sense... kids learn more when the teacher has a depth of knowledge in the subject matter."

Smith, however, has his issues with

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New AEL website is up and running

Visit: www.aelaacps.org

The AEL website is posted! After nearly four months of work AEL now has another tool to serve its members and conduct AEL business.

Log on at www.aelaacps.org and explore news and information about AEL—past and present. Also, note our special education and professional partners with access to direct links, information and special opportunities offered exclusively to AEL Members. Your email account can be activated in two ways. See the article on page 2 of this issue for details.

Dates to Remember

May 16
AEL Meeting
4:30 pm
Old Mill High School

May 28
Deadline to submit your name for the AEL Leadership Ballot

For more information, see the article on page 2

May 30
Secure Futures Seminar for AEL Members
4:30-6:30 pm
Severna Park High School Cafeteria
For more information, see the article on page 3

June 21
AEL Annual Meeting and Spring Social
Following the AACPS Leadership Conference
Hellas Restaurant,
Veteran's Hwy,
Millersville

For more information, see the article on page 2

From one educational leader to another...

"Keep a balance in your life," says M. Jacques Smith. "A lot of young principals are out there working many long hours. That's a big mistake ... they could burn out, which is not going to help their family or their school. It's not a sprint, it's a marathon."

AEL leadership needed!

Election of AEL officers for 2007-08 will be held at our annual meeting on June 21. The following positions will be voted on at the meeting: President, 1st Vice President, and three Directors positions (one of these slots is set aside for a new assistant principal). Current submitted candidates are: President -- Bob Ferguson; 1st Vice President -- Ric Chesek and Will Myers; Directors -- Reggie Ferrare and Edie Picken.

Nominations and submissions for all

leadership roles will be accepted until **May 28** by Nominating Committee Chair Louise DeJesu at Hilltop Elementary, 415 Melrose Ave., Glen Burnie, MD 21061 or email ldjesu@aacps.org. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor at the time of elections on June. 21.

This is a great opportunity to get involved in AEL. Officers and directors are required to attend a monthly meeting (after school) and chair committees for AEL. Thank you for your interest. Keep AEL strong! ■

*by Louise DeJesu
AEL Secretary*

AEL email addresses available to members

System streamlined -- Sign up for AEL email address on line

The new password protected AEL email system is about to be launched. For the first time AEL members will have exclu-

sive access to each other with real-time communications. A special feature of the system is its sorting capability according to job similarities. For example, high school principals will be able to share information applicable to them only. The same is true for elementary assistant principals, middle school principals, central office coordinators and supervisors, etc.

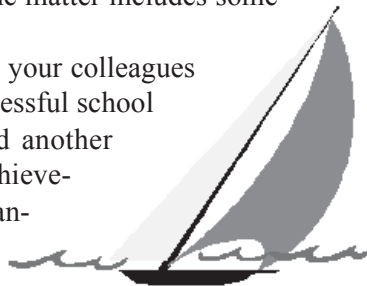
User names (email addresses) will look familiar: first initial and last name@aelaacps.org. All members will receive an individual email with their user name and password. Preferred password changes can be made by using the tool on the AEL website or by emailing Keith Phebus at kphebus@mackenziographics.com. ■

Annual Meeting and Spring Social Set

AEL's Annual Meeting and spring social is scheduled for Thurs., **June 21**, at Hellas Restaurant on Veteran's Highway in Millersville, just minutes from Old Mill High School. Thursday and Friday, June 21 and 22, are the dates for this year's Leadership Conference at Old Mill. The meeting and social begin right after the close of the Leadership Conference schedule on Thursday.

This social is special for AEL members. Not only is it the final get-together for this school year but election of officers for 2007-08 and other business requiring member decisions are on the agenda. At least one matter includes some changes to the By-Laws.

Mark your calendar! Join your colleagues in celebration of another successful school year. Anne Arundel recorded another banner year of children's achievement. And, AEL concluded another very successful round of negotiations.



Security, from page 1

NCLB. He thinks it's unfortunate that a school can be labeled a failure because one group, made up of as few as five students, did not make adequate yearly progress. He notes that inconsistent group size also makes state to state comparisons impractical. "In Maryland an accountability group is five students. In South Carolina it is 50. It doesn't make for a level playing field -- there's a disparity." ■

Busy year, many accomplishments

Once again we find ourselves at the end of a school year. It seems like only yesterday I was writing this column welcoming everyone back to begin the school year.

AEL has concluded negotiations with the Board and is preparing the changes that will be presented for your review, consideration and acceptance. For the first time in the course of negotiations, we have explored several pay concepts that, if adopted, will significantly improve compensation for Unit II employees. The proposed contract will be for a four-year period with salary "re-openers" if negotiated pay increases are not funded.

First, we have reached a tentative agreement on an across-the-board COLA enhancement. This will provide a 6% pay increase to Unit II employees and maintain appropriate pay differential with Unit I employees. This COLA adjustment is scheduled for each year of the four-year agreement commencing July 1, 2008.

Second, the salary scale will be improved by 2% in FY2008 and FY2009, and improved by 1% in FY2010 and FY2011. The adjusted salary scale will be subject to the COLA enhancement as described above. In addition, Steps 36 and 37 will be added in FY2008 and an additional Step will be added each year thereafter, ending at Step 40 in FY2011.

Third, a performance pay reserve equal to 2% of the Unit II gross dollar payroll will be set aside in FY2008 and FY2009 and 3% in FY2010 and FY2011. A committee of AEL members and officers has been working to determine the criteria for eligibility and amount that can be earned for performance from this fund. It hopes to have a report completed before the end of the school year.

Fourth, performance/assignment pay for challenged schools will be increased for principals (to \$6,000) and assistant principals (to \$3,000) for assignment. If AYP is met, an additional \$9,000 and \$5,000, respectively, will be paid. As you can see, this is an ambitious salary package. Here are some highlights from the benefit package...

- Mileage Reimbursement will be at the IRS rate.
- Sick leave pay upon retirement will be increased to \$50 per day in FY2008 and increased by \$5 increments in the following three years and

will max out at \$65 per day.

- Annual leave carryover will be increased to 50 days and increased to 60 days upon retirement.

- Tuition reimbursement will be for nine credit hours at the TAAAC reimbursement rate.

- BOE paid term life insurance coverage will be increased to \$200,000 from its present coverage of \$100,000.

- Health insurance contribution by Unit II will be 1%, the same as contributed by Unit I.

- A stipend to be negotiated for those who receive a doctoral degree applicable to their area of certification and/or related to their professional work assignment.

A great deal of time and effort has gone into the development of this tentative agreement and once the language has been written to incorporate these concepts into the current Negotiated Agreement, we will be requesting your formal participation in the ratification process.

Outside of negotiations, AEL has been busy encouraging the Board to follow the Superintendent's lead in providing early participation of Unit II members

in the promotion process. There was some initial confusion about Unit II members being required to use annual leave when taking part in the interview and assessment process. After my letter to the Superintendent was received, it was clarified that employees who apply for positions in this system and need time off for interviews will not be required to use their annual leave. Instead, their time off will be charged to a meeting and they will incur no penalty.

As you can see, it has been a busy year. I extend my thanks to all who have helped and volunteered their valuable time. Considering the above, perhaps this is why the school year has seemed to have flown by so fast. ■

**by Richard Kovelant,
Executive Director & General Counsel**

... employees who apply for a position in this system and need time off for the interview will not be required to use their annual leave.

Secure Futures: Special seminar for members

Integrated Financial Solutions will present its popular seminar on financial planning and secure futures to AEL on Wed., **May 30** at 4:30 pm at Severna Park High School (cafeteria). This free seminar will be helpful to you no matter where you are in your strategic planning, but it will especially relevant if you are within 5-7 years of retirement.

The Association of Educational Leaders

P.O. Box 74

Severna Park, MD 21146

The duck is coming to AEL

AFLAC partnership announced -- coverage can begin June 1

AEL is proud to announce its partnership with AFLAC beginning June 1st, 2007. You are all probably familiar with the humorous TV ads involving the AFLAC duck. Well, it just so happens that there is a very substantial provider of employee benefits behind

those clever ads and we are rolling out the opportunity for everyone to be offered these benefits.

To give you some understanding of the AFLAC program of employee benefits, AFLAC seeks to fill in the financial, "out-of-pocket" gaps that exist in the typical employer provided scenario of medical, workers' compensation and disability benefits. AFLAC is NOT health insurance. AFLAC pays you cash directly if you or a family member has an accident or sickness.

By selecting from a menu of benefits offered by AFLAC, you can decide for yourself if any or all services are of interest to you. The costs associated with the chosen benefits can be deducted from your pre-tax earnings to soften the impact on your net pay and make AFLAC's reasonable rates an even better deal.

AFLAC insures more than 50 million people worldwide between the United States and Japan. They are the number one provider in supplemental benefits. If you have any questions on the policies or are interested in receiving more information, contact John Leckliter at 443.618.4474 or at john_leckliter@us.aflac.com ■

Association of Educational Leaders

Officers, Board and Staff

Bob Ferguson, <i>President '05-'07</i>	410.439.0730
Ric Chesek, <i>1st Vice President '05-'07</i>	410.956.5885
Charles Jansky, <i>2nd Vice President '05-'07</i>	410.437.0464
Louise DeJesu, <i>Secretary '06-'08</i>	410.222.6409
Barry Fader, <i>Treasurer '06-'08</i>	410.222.1660
Rocco Ferretti, <i>Director '06-'08</i>	410.222.1075
Rick Wiles, <i>Director '05-'07</i>	410.222.5460
Reginald Farrare, <i>Director '05-'07</i>	410.674.0032
TBA, <i>Director '05-'07</i>	
<i>Executive Director Richard Kovelant</i>	410.897.0747
1957 Valley Rd., Annapolis, MD 21401	Fax 410.897.4885
<i>Administrator Larry Lorton</i>	Phone 410.647-5847
P.O. Box 74, Severna Park, MD 21146	fischlort@comcast.net
<i>Editor Denise Hofstedt</i>	Phone/Fax 410.421.5832
	dmhofstedt@verizon.net