

# LEADERSHIP FORUM

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

Vol. 5, No. 10

Back-to-School 2009

## Happy Opening to All

I hope that you all had a wonderful summer that renewed your strength and commitment to our students. I want to thank all of the members who attended our end of year meeting at Hella's. It was exciting to see so many dedicated professionals willing to share their input into the future of our organization. As the new President of AEL I find this support exciting since we have so much to accomplish in the coming years.

I was a new Principal to this county eight years ago and it took quite a long time to find out that there was a professional organization that represented the administrators here. When I finally found the organization I was not sure how to navigate the membership. It wasn't until this past year when Bob Ferguson came to one of our cluster meetings and asked for representatives that I became involved. I don't regret that decision in the least. I realized that there was a small number of committed administrators who were responding to the needs of all those represented in our county. It didn't seem quite fair that such a small number represented such a large constituency. As I reflected on this situation I realized that there are probably many of us who are interested but need to be informed of the purpose of our organization and how to be involved. I want that to be one of our foremost priorities the beginning of this school year. We have a website now where you can find information on our organization. Take a look at it ([www.aelaacps.org](http://www.aelaacps.org)) and give me feedback on how we can refine it to fit the needs of our community.

Along with the electronic communication through the website there are also positions for representatives from each cluster who meet with the executive officers each month to discuss the organization and to be

informed of any upcoming events. If you are interested in sharing your input please either let your cluster representative know your ideas or let me know directly. (Cluster Representatives are listed on the back page of the newsletter.) We welcome your input since we represent



*Sue Errichiello*

*by Sue Errichiello  
AEL President*

you. Representation is most effective if there is communication between parties. If you want to be included in our monthly meetings, please let me know that you are coming. You are welcomed to participate. The dates, locations and times will be posted on the website.

I know that there are some challenges for all of us this year. The economy will play an important part in our negotiations. The furloughs days were a hard pill to swallow for many of us. Executive Director Rick Kovelant and I have had conversations about the possibility of retrieving those lost wages. He has been vigilant in pursuing this. Stay tuned.

This economic situation along with the daily possible vulnerabilities of our positions makes our organization that much more important to all of us. Be part of the decision making. We want to know your interests and how we can support your professional growth. Use us as a part of your professional network.

I look forward to working with all of you this year. Please email or call if you have any questions. Hope you had a great opening. Share your passion with your community. They are lucky to have you to lead them. ■

### Email Alert!

By Larry Lorton

Effective September 30, 2009, all subsequent member communications will be handled through the AEL email account. AEL business will no longer rely on BOE services. Hard copies of the AEL Newsletter, The Advocate, announcements, and other AEL business will not be available. If you have not yet established your AEL email account see the related article and do so asap.



AEL website  
[www.aelaacps.org](http://www.aelaacps.org)

## Reinventing AEL

Another summer has ended and another school year begins. The issues remain the same, although the faces may have changed. I have been involved with AEL well in excess of 20 years and have every interest in continuing in this capacity. While I had some time to reflect on the issues and concerns that face Unit II employees in general and AEL members in particular, I keep coming back to the same theme -- what can we do better? Perhaps the answer lies in the proposition that we need to reinvent AEL.

AEL was created as a collective bargaining unit to provide representation to all Unit II employees. The extent and nature of that representation has changed over the years as issues have developed. In the past, the AEL mission was predominately limited to negotiations regarding the collective bargaining agreement. While once confrontational, the technique became collaborative. You may remember that we were all trained in that technique during Dr. Parham's tenure as Superintendent. A kinder and gentler approach as you would. The approach has now taken on a different character. Today, we deal with multiple year agreements that seem to protect the contract language, but little else. We have become complacent. We need to reinvent AEL.

The complexity of employee issues, ranging from issues concerning benefits, discipline, and evaluations have taken representation of our members into strange and foreign territories. Every case that presented itself in these areas is unique. While the issues in the general sense have remained the same, the fight has stepped up to protect our members from administrative abuse both from above and in many cases, from within Unit II itself. We need to reinvent AEL to handle these issues.

New laws, rules, regulations and policy have changed the system in many dramatic ways. These changes have presented new challenges in the work place. Some of the changes as they

relate to insurance coverage for all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation, are positive. Some proposed changes seeking to eliminate or reduce coverage are not. Can we face the challenges? I believe we can but again we have to reinvent ourselves.

Reinvention does not require us to dismiss core beliefs and values. It does not mean that positive attributes should be abandoned. It does mean, however, that we have to find a better way to do business and that business is representing our membership in a positive and effective manner. Last year we began the process by becoming more inclusive and expanding participation on the Executive Board. We need to continue this expansion. Perhaps we can encourage more participation by having

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

each director bring a guest to a board meeting. We need to establish committees that are comprised of non board members who report at the board meetings. We need to encourage the use of the website as a virtual club house where current information is posted and the AEL Forum Newsletter and the AEL Advocate are archived.

We need to look at expanding our communication efforts. We brought the Advocate on line and have had positive feedback from the membership. The newsletter you are now reading has been the mainstay of the AEL information network. We are lacking the ability, however, to get rapid developing news and issues before the membership. Unlike TAAAC, who can promptly mobilize and become active in addressing issues, we lack that ability. This should not be the case since we are dealing with 300 individuals as opposed to 7,000. A new communication network must be developed and it needs to be secure so that we can freely and quickly enlist support and distribute information. It must begin with a current data base of email contacts, phone numbers and addresses. I am sorry to say that this information has not been forthcoming from our membership.

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*Today, we deal with multiple year agreements that seem to protect the contract language, but little else.*

## Annual Meeting: Great turn out, bylaw changes

by Larry Lorton, AEL Administrator

The largest participation in recent memory at 75 signed-in voting members reflected the uncertain times and the agenda of AEL's 2008-09 Annual Meeting and social, held June 23. Hellas was, again, a great host. Also, AEL owes Aflac's Suzanne Herrmann a huge "thank you" for her wonderful support in helping underwrite the meeting costs. Aflac is one of AEL's key Professional Partners providing a unique package of payroll protection options to AEL members (see Aflac's link on AEL's website at [www.aelaacps.org](http://www.aelaacps.org)).

AEL's 2009 Annual Meeting presented an unusually heavy agenda including both the election of officers for 2009-10 and three proposed changes in AEL Bylaws. AEL's Executive Board can propose bylaw amendments but only the membership can enact change.

The three proposed bylaw changes were approved. All addressed matters relative to Association officers. First, effective July 1, 2009, both Active [employed] or Life [retired] members can seek and hold AEL leadership office. Heretofore,

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### Kovelant ...

*Continued from page 2*

Last year we looked into the possibility of obtaining office space. This would have given us a physical presence, a place to store our files, a meeting area and the appearance of a well organized union. We need to pursue this matter further. While there is a cost involved, it would be, in my opinion, worth the expenditure as AEL would have more visibility and roots.

As always, the AEL leadership and I welcome your input and comments. Reinvention is more than a makeover. It is a project that we need to undertake as a group. As we go forward this school year with negotiations for a new contract, and seeking a fair share of the compensation we were promised, we need your support. Be a guest at a meeting, join a committee, share contact information and be kind to your subordinate AEL member remembering that we are all in this together. Help reinvent AEL. ■

only active members could hold office.

The second approved bylaw proposal changes from 2nd Vice-president to the newly created "Director Emeritus" the office into which the exiting-from-office, former, president succeeds.

And, lastly, the 2nd Vice-president now joins all other officers as both elected and a two-year term.

All three proposals are related to one another. The key rationale for the changes are: (1) deliver a level of equality and consistency to all officers by making them all elected positions and for the same term of office, (2) sustain a vehicle to keep the unique experiences and insights of the past president a part of Executive Board discussions and decision-making, and (3) create opportunities for the experience and institutional memory of retirees to have a formal role in AEL affairs and business which, in turn, hopefully will help stimulate more retirees to stay active in AEL.

Newly elected officers for 2009-10 are: President, Susan Errichiello, Principal, Belvedere Elementary and Director-at-Large, Donna O'Shea, Principal, Crofton Elementary. Re-elected and returning to office for 2009-10 are 1st Vice President, Will Myers, Principal, South River High; 2nd Vice President, Charles Jansky, Principal, Bodkin Elementary; and Director-at-Large, Linda Ferrara, Principal, South Shore Elementary. Elected leadership continuing in office for 2009-10 are: Secretary, Louise DeJesu; Treasurer, Barry Fader; and Director-at-Large, Reggie Farrare, Principal, MacArthur Middle. Bob Ferguson, retired, assumes the newly created Executive Board office of Director Emeritus.

As is always the case the new Executive Board under the leadership of President, Susan Errichiello and Executive Director, Rick Kovelant, needs every member's active involvement in the conduct of AEL business. Every indication for 2009-10 promises uncertainty and challenges at least as difficult as those faced last year. AEL needs every member's commitment and contributions more than ever. ■

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## The Association of Educational Leaders

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### Association of Educational Leaders

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# AEL Email: Take advantage of this free member service

**W**e still have too many members who have not logged in to set up secure, password protected accounts. It cannot be emphasized enough the necessity for AEL to have access to its own internal, exclusive, secure, member-only email system.

This is a plea to those who have yet to log on. It is easy, simple, and takes all of 2-4 minutes including establishing a forwarding address. Follow the instructions below.

## SETTING UP YOUR ACCOUNT

1. Go to the AEL website: [[www.aelaacps.org](http://www.aelaacps.org)]
2. Click on “**email log-in**” at top right of the Home Page
3. Type in generic email address: 1<sup>st</sup> initial last name @aelaacps.org
  - (Example: jschmoo@aelaacps.org)
  - Exceptions are:  
[markbrown@aelaacps.org](mailto:markbrown@aelaacps.org),  
[andrewadams@aelaacps.org](mailto:andrewadams@aelaacps.org), and  
[kerribuckley@aelaacps.org](mailto:kerribuckley@aelaacps.org)  
[Contact: Keith Phebus ([keith@curbmedia.net](mailto:keith@curbmedia.net)) for any other option]
4. Type in this generic password: PASSword123
5. Follow the link and click on “Change Password” at the bottom left of the page
6. Customize your password [anything you can remember].
7. “Go back” and click on “Horde” graphical interface (the one on the left of the three options)

## CUSTOMIZING OPTIONS

We have two individualized options to receive AEL email:

### **A. USING ANOTHER MAIL PROGRAM SUCH AS Outlook, iPhone, or Blackberry:**

1. On the I-net type in the following link in Search: <http://tutorials.bluehost.com/tutorials/>
2. Scroll down the page to “Mail Programs”
3. Click on the program that you wish to configure your email account to
4. Follow the video tutorial explaining what you need to do.

### **B. FORWARD AEL EMAIL TO ANOTHER EMAIL ADDRESS (i.e., Home)**

1. Get your AEL email account set up as per the instructions above
2. After entering user name and password click on “forwarding options” on bottom left
3. Click on “add forwarder”
4. Enter the email address you want your AEL email forwarded to and press “add forwarder”

NOTE: Using Option B requires you empty your AEL inbox from time to time to keep it from filling up. If your AEL email box gets full incoming email will bounce back to the sender.

For problems or questions of any kind contact: Keith Phebus: [keith@curbmedia.net](mailto:keith@curbmedia.net)