

AEL Leadership Forum

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 6

JULY 2016

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 20, 2016

**AEL Executive
Board Meeting, 5pm**
AEL HQ,
2521 Riva Road,
Suite L-2, Annapolis

August 13, 2016

**AEL Executive
Board Retreat, 9
am to Noon**
AEL HQ,
2521 Riva Road,
Suite L-2, Annapolis

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

'Yes' to 4
impasse

Once in a 5
lifetime...

A vacation 5
to remem-

New 7
members

Different day — same song

By Will Myers, AEL President

After a series of contentious negotiation sessions last year both the Board and AEL wanted to set new ground rules for this year's negotiations. As a result, a professional mediator was contacted and a daylong session was conducted. This session went very well and we left hopeful that upcoming negotiations would be less stressful and more productive.

I must admit our sessions this year were much more co dial and less verbally combative. The Board's team did not ask for any concessions and readily agreed to minor requests made by AEL. However, when the conversation turned to AEL's request for equitable compensation, we were met with the same tune as last year, "The County has only allowed for one-step for eligible

employees "over and over again. No argument, reason or rationale on our part seemed to make a difference. The Board's team spent a great deal of time and effort trying to convince us we should have been happy with what we have received over the last eight years and what was offered now was reasonable since that was all they had in their budget.

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The cart and the horse: What happened to the horse?

By Rick Kovelant, AEL Executive Director and General Counsel

In the last several publications, I have discussed the nature and extent of the negotiation process. Although a contract was ratified and approved for

the 2015-2017 school years, AEL and the Board agreed to allow compensation openers, as well as "several wild card openers" for the 2016-2017

school year. Negotiations for these items have been ongoing, but the Board refuses to advance any economic proposals

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What happened to the horse...

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When AEL advanced its proposal for a three-step increase and its equivalent for those who had no further steps remaining, it fell upon deaf ears.

beyond that which it had previously submitted to the County (without the required negotiation with AEL) and which the County approved. Thus, it appears that the Board no longer recognizes the lawful requirement to negotiate wages with AEL as the Unit II bargaining representative. In short, the Board's decision to only submit what it believed to be an appropriate level of compensation for funding by the County is not only an ethical failure, but is contrary to the law because it has completely ignored and sidestepped the entire collective bargaining process. As a result of the Board's and County's agreement, all eligible Unit II employees will receive a step increase. For those of us who read between the lines, it is clear that any Unit II employee who is at the top step will receive no further compensation.

When AEL advanced its proposal for a three step increase and its equivalent for those who had no further steps remaining, it fell upon deaf ears. AEL was advised that the "non-negotiated compensation", as approved by the County was what Unit II employees will receive. Therefore, if you are out of steps, you are out of luck. So much for good faith bargaining and so much for the respect and appreciation of Unit II employees and their contribution to the educational program.

We are left with few alternatives. First, AEL can accept the non-negotiated compensation. If we do so, it will establish a precedent that wages are not really the subject of negotiations and the Board and County can

fashion their own economic packages without the need



to sit at a bargaining table with any union. The second available alternative is to petition the Public School Labor Relations Board (PSLRB) for a declaration of impasse and resolve this matter pursuant to its procedure. This would require the submission of a "Best and Final Offer" by both sides, an attempt at mediation and a decision by an arbitrator if all else fails. Although AEL has requested that the Board's negotiating team at least

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Same song...

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Needless to say we were not swayed by their argument. They wanted us to forget the past when the same song was played, “we only have 1.25% COLA increase in our budget” and then miraculously approved a 2% bump for job groups that did not have union representation.

Sticking to the facts: a step increase is equal to a 1%

COLA. This is not on par with a step for TAAAC which is equivalent to a 2% COLA. It does not make up for the shortage from last year. It does not make up for the loss over the last eight years. It does not account for the money saved from reducing the number of “challenged” schools from 28 to 17. It does leave the most senior members of our

organization (40 years or more) without a compensation increase for their years of service.

It is my hope by going to impasse, that we will find a middle ground by going through an outside mediator. Until then, I’m putting on the album “Who’s Next” and playing, “We Won’t Be Fooled Again”, over and over and over...

“...It does not make up for the loss over the last eight years. It does not account for the money saved from reducing the number of “challenged” schools from 28 to 17.”

What happened to the horse...

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provide, in writing, their best and final offer as we have done, to date there has been absolutely no response. This silence speaks loudly of the Board’s lack of a true commitment to this process and its apparent adherence to a funding decision reached through its negotiations with the County Government. In years past, compensation was negotiated between AEL and the

Board prior to a submission for funding to the County. **This year, not only has the Board put the cart before the horse, it has eliminated the horse entirely.**

The participation of the PSLRB will not guarantee success or that AEL’s proposal would be accepted in whole or in part. The participation of the parties in this context would, at the very

least, assure that collective bargaining between AEL and the Board is a requirement the Board cannot unilaterally ignore.

Some may believe involving PSLRB in our dispute is akin to letting the genie out of the bottle and therefore, may not be a good thing to do. In this case, however, the process and AEL need all the help they can get!

AEL members vote ‘yes’ on impasse

Yes!

“...It is a disservice to educational leaders in Anne Arundel County.”

*Rick Kovelant,
AEL General Counsel*

More than 84 percent of AEL members voted in favor proceeding to a negotiations impasse after the Board of Education stood by its initial and only offer of a one-step increase for eligible Unit II employees.

“Standing by its first and only offer and giving no consideration to a ‘best and final offer’ is not only disrespectful to the negotiations process,” says AEL General Counsel Rick Kovelant, “It is a disservice to educational leaders in Anne Arundel County. Under the law the Board is required to negotiate wages with the recognized bargaining group. In this case, the Board and the County negotiated their own

concept of wages and ignored AEL.”

“For the Board’s Negotiating team to make one offer that fails to provide adequate compensation to all Unit II employees and leaves out those Unit II employees that have maxed out on their step increases thereby failing to fairly compensate some of our most experienced and effective educational leaders upon whom this system relies – is not something that we can accept”, he says.

This is only the second time in nearly

25 years AEL has reached an impasse with the Board in the negotiations process. With 84 percent of AEL members voting, 209 of 231 members voted in favor of proceeding to impasse.

As a result of the vote Kovelant petitioned the Public School Labor Relations Board for a declaration of impasse with the hope that the issue can be resolved by a third party through mediation or if need be arbitration. TAAAC and SAAAAC have also reached impasse with the Board.

Get well Bob!

Best wishes to AEL Administrator Bob Ferguson for speedy recovery from his knee replacement surgery. You got this Bob!!!

A once in a lifetime trip

By Don Counts, AEL Member, Coordinator, Advanced Learning

Editor's Note: Many thanks to Don Counts and Laura Dudeck for responding to my plea for vacation adventures. Two different takes on something we all need to do more often.

Last November, my wife and I belatedly (by about 18 months) celebrated our 30th anniversary with a three-week vacation to New Zealand and Australia. This had long been on our collective bucket list – amazing what you share after 30 years – and after much deliberation we set off on our “once in a lifetime” journey.

The flight, although long, was uneventful. We landed in Auckland weary, but eager to begin our journey. Our shuttle driver and the hotel clerk both greeted us with, “Oh, we were expecting you yesterday.” We had never before crossed the International Date Line, and thus had our first experience with time travel. Minor glitch aside, we began exploring. From Auckland to Rotorua to Queenstown, we developed our most lasting impression of New Zealand: the people are genuinely warm and kind. Whether



Queenstown, New Zealand

buying a cup of coffee, ordering lunch, checking into a hotel, or asking a stranger for directions, the overall friendliness of everyone we met touched us deeply. We felt very welcome. Anyone planning a career that involves interacting with the public would do well to spend time in New Zealand.

We wondered if Australia could live up to our New Zealand experience. It was really apples to oranges, or maybe kiwis. From the magnificence of the Sydney Opera House, to the stark beauty of Uluru, to the close encounter with penguins at Phillip Island, to the vibrant spectacle of the Great Barrier Reef, Australia did not disappoint us. However, our skills at throwing a boomerang left much

to be desired. Our instructor, an exceedingly patient Aborigine, assured us that the problem had nothing to do with our throwing ability. He carefully examined at our boomerang and proclaimed, “Flat battery.” We were vindicated.

By the time we departed for home, I seriously wondered if this was truly a “once in a lifetime” journey. I would gladly return to Australia and New Zealand. It was a truly wonderful trip, and the perfect way to celebrate our milestone anniversary.

And in case anyone is wondering, we *did* sample Vegemite. Unlike the rest of the trip, I would definitely categorize this culinary experience as “once in a lifetime.”

A vacation to remember... and repeat

By Laura Dudeck, AEL Member, AP, MacArthur Middle School

My most memorable vacation became that way not for the traditional reasons that vacations are made memorable. There was no exotic resort visited, no chance meeting with a celebrity, and no crazy experience to go home and share with friends. It was memorable because of all of the other vacations that followed so many years later.

In the summer of 1998, June to be exact, a group of some of my best friends and I met back in Ocean City, Maryland for a girls' weekend get together to celebrate the upcoming nuptials of the first of us to get married. We had all lived together several years back while working in the restaurants of Ocean City.



1998

Through those three to four seasons during the early to mid 90's we had gone out, celebrated, and bonded together like the closest of sorority sisters... only many of us were strangers when we met. When one of us finally decided to take the plunge that summer of 1998, it only seemed fitting to head back down to the ocean for a fun-filled bachelorette party. The reunion, which lasted several days, was filled with stories, catching up, sharing of outfits, and laughter... lots and lots of laughter. As we all met back at our cars to depart that Sunday afternoon, we agreed to do it again the following year.

It is now the summer of 2016, and I am proud to say that we still make this excursion year after year. We all have families now- our children are growing up before our eyes, and our husbands are still "rolling their eyes" all these years later as we scramble to pack and try on

outfit after outfit to impress one another down at the beach. We have been through many weddings, several divorces, miscarriages, births, fights, disappointments, tears and lots of laughter. They are still my most favorite people to be around, and still the first girls I call, text, or message when I'm having a bad day or need to share a laugh. We love one another like sisters and never knew that all those years ago in 1998, we would start a tradition that occurred annually regardless of where we were in life. Now in our 40's, we often joke about what we will look like trapesing through the sand in our 70's, or out at the bar reminiscing about what we looked like all those years ago. One thing is for sure- I wouldn't want to be there with any other group of people.

A note from Nelson: Use YOUR DAYS!

By Nelson Horine, AEL First Vice President

There has been some confusion about the Professional Leave Pilot Program that AEL negotiated for you.

On December 14 all Principals received the FY2016 Negotiations Update via email from Florie Bozzella. On page 6 under Article 11 Work Schedule, is the description of this

pilot program and how the days can be used. The memo can also be found on the AEL website. One of the primary intents of the program was to give you the benefit of applying the days in the summer to Fridays when you elect to work regular work hours during four-day work weeks instead of extended

days. By using these days you do not “burn” your regular leave days. . .you need those for vacation. You still have several Fridays left so use the Professional Leave Program days that you have. Hope you are having a wonderful and refreshing summer.



Welcome new members

Catherine Thorson, AP Georgetown East Elementary

Elizabeth Curled, AP, Richard Henry Lee Elementary



AEL Mission Statement

The Association of Educational Leaders exists to ensure all Unit II employees are fairly and equitably treated in the course of their employment.

We commit to accomplishing this mission on behalf of Unit II employees by ensuring:

1. Adherence to our Negotiated Agreement.
2. All Unit II employees are adequately and equitably compensated for their responsibilities and work load.
3. Personal and professional needs shall be respected.
4. Fair, consistent and equitable practices shall be adhered to when dealing with hiring promotions, assignments and evaluations.
5. Fair, consistent, equitable practices in dealing with matters relating to discipline and conflict resolution.
6. Fair, consistent, equitable practices in resolving school and community conflicts.

The Association of Educational Leaders
2521 Riva Rd., Suite L-2
Annapolis, MD 21401



2016-17 AEL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE/BOARD/STAFF

Will Myers (2013-17)	President	(P, South River HS)	(o)956-5600	wtmwants@aol.com
Nelson Horine (2013-17)	1st VP	(P, Anne Arundel Evening HS BOE)	(o) 222-5384	linnea.horine@gmail.com
Amy Hussey (2013-17)	2nd VP	(AP, Chesapeake Bay MS)	(o) 437-2400	ahussey@aacps.org
Edie Picken (2016-20)	Secretary	(AP, South River HS)	(o) 956-5900	epicken@aacps.org
Paul DeRoo (2016-20)	Treasurer	(P, Bates MS)	(o) 263-0270	pderoo@aacps.org
Patrick Bathras (2015-19)	Director at Large	(P, Severna Park HS)	(o)544-0900	pbathras@aacps.org
Jessica Tickle (2015-19)	Director at Large	(C, Office of Student Data)	(o)222-5153	jtickle@aacps.org
Jennifer Hernandez (2016-20)	Director at Large	(C, Div of Curriculum)		

REPRESENTATIVE DIRECTORS (14): CLUSTERS/FEEDER SYSTEMS

Phil Elliott	(AP, Annapolis HS, Annapolis Cluster)	pelliott@aacps.org
Tracey Ahern	(P, Odenton Elementary, Arundel Cluster)	tahern@aacps.org
Tammy Perunovich	(AP, Belvedere Elementary, Broadneck Cluster)	tperunovich@aacps.org
Becky Blasingame-White	(P, Hebron-Harman Elementary, Meade Cluster)	bblasingame-white@aacps.org
Ryan Sackett	(AP, North County HS, North County Cluster)	rsackett@aacps.org
Dave Kauffman	(AP, Northeast HS, Northeast Cluster)	dkauffman@aacps.org
John Striffler	(AP, Old Mill Middle South, Old Mill Cluster)	jstriffler@aacps.org
Patrick Bathras	(P, Severna Park HS, Severna Park Cluster)	pbathras@aacps.org
Edie Picken	(AP, South River HS, South River Cluster)	epicken@aacps.org
Mike May	(AP, Southern HS, Southern Cluster)	cmmay@aacps.org
Terri Poisson	(Social Studies Coordinator, Board of Education)	mypoison@aacps.org

There are several Open Representative Director positions, please contact Bob Ferguson for more information.

STAFF

Rick Kovelant (Executive Director, Legal Counsel)	(o) 897-0747, (c) 443-848-8022
Bob Ferguson (Administrator)	(o)410-224-3311 (fax)410-224-3345 (c)443-223-5645; leafman65@gmail.com
Connie Crouch (Executive Secretary)	(o)410-897-0747 or (o)410-224-3311 (f)410-224-3345
AEL Office, 2521 Riva Road, Suite L-2, Annapolis, MD 21401	(o)410-224-3311 (f)410-224-3345