

AEL Leadership Forum

VOLUME 12, ISSUE 3

APRIL 2017

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 6, 2017
**Spring Social &
Membership
Meeting**
4:30—7:30 pm
Hellas Restaurant
8498 Veteran's Hwy
Millersville
RSVP
leafman65@gmail.com

April 20, 2017
**AEL Executive
Board Meeting**
5 pm
AEL HQ,
2521 Riva Road,
Suite L-2, Annapolis

May 18, 2017
**AEL Executive
Board Meeting**
5 pm
AEL HQ,
2521 Riva Road,
Suite L-2, Annapolis

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Back to the Future

By Will Myers, AEL President

I believe most reasonable people understand the fact that a national dilemma is the rising cost of healthcare. The major issue with this dilemma is the cost of prescription drugs. Those costs held up the finalization of the FY 17 contract.

After many exhausting meetings, all unions, including AEL, have reached an agreement with the Board of Education to accept modest employee increases in their prescription contributions. I sincerely believe our agreement is the most favorable we could attain. This agreement will be in effect for three years.

Now our work begins

anew. County Executive Steve Schuh is willing to help the school system cover an existing deficit in the healthcare fund. However, he believes school system employees need to contribute more to healthcare premiums to bring our employee contributions in line with the contributions of other county workers.

As you may have guessed, fair employee compensation is the battle ground now and for the foreseeable future. There is a proposal being examined to add a step increase for Unit II members who did not receive a step increase when the last contract was enacted. This step would not be available for newly promoted



Will at South River High at 5:49 pm on a Saturday evening in February. He called it "an early night."

members who have received their step increases as the result of the normal promotional process. This proposal will help resolve some of the existing inequities found when the current salary structure is examined. I can almost assure all of you that salary steps will soon

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The Survey: Seeing is Believing

By Rick Kovelant, AEL Executive Director and General Counsel

Included in this issue of the Leadership Forum are the results of the AEL Membership Survey. For the first time in the history of the Association, members were asked to contribute their thoughts, feelings and opinions regarding their employment. While the results of the survey speak volumes as to membership's concerns regarding their jobs, administrative support, and compensation, the survey

document serves additional, equally important purposes.

First, the Executive Board, the Negotiating Team, and the Workload and Compensation Committee have all traditionally relied on their own individual experiences, as well as anecdotal information from members to assist in the performance of their respective responsibilities. A good faith effort to

capture the sentiment of AEL members needs more than instinctive beliefs. The survey, with its overwhelming response, now provides quantitative data to support the positions taken by AEL. We can now say with greater assurance, that our members feel overworked and less than supported, and believe that their compensation is inadequate as to their expected job

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Back to the Future...

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be a thing of the past. When salary increases are discussed in the future, the term COLA will be front and center. The concept of COLA increases will allow AEL's compensation to be compared to other bargaining units more equitably. Looking back at past bargaining disappointments will not help us during fu-

ture negotiations. However, I still believe the budget process is flawed. The unions and the Board of Education do not really control the revenue stream. We negotiate for months for money that is only on paper. Regardless of what is agreed upon during the negotiations, the ultimate final financial compensation outcome is deter-

mined by the Anne Arundel County Council in June each year.

Please know that your Negotiating Team will do its best to represent you, our members, during the negotiating process. As Sonny and Cher once sang, "and the beat goes on . . ."

Seeing is Believing...

Continued from page 2

requirements. This will allow us to develop appropriate positions based on fact, not opinion, that our membership is less than satisfied with their employment and in significant numbers, prepared to leave the school system.

Second, the survey has opened up a method of communication between AEL leadership and its members. Because of time constraints and prior commitments, membership attendance at scheduled meetings becomes difficult. Although requests for survey responses are generally disregarded, the participation in this survey effort was quite to the contrary. More than 70% participation in the survey was an overwhelming membership response that could not have been achieved at an actual meeting. Perhaps in this virtual world, a survey may well be the most effective way to generate partici-

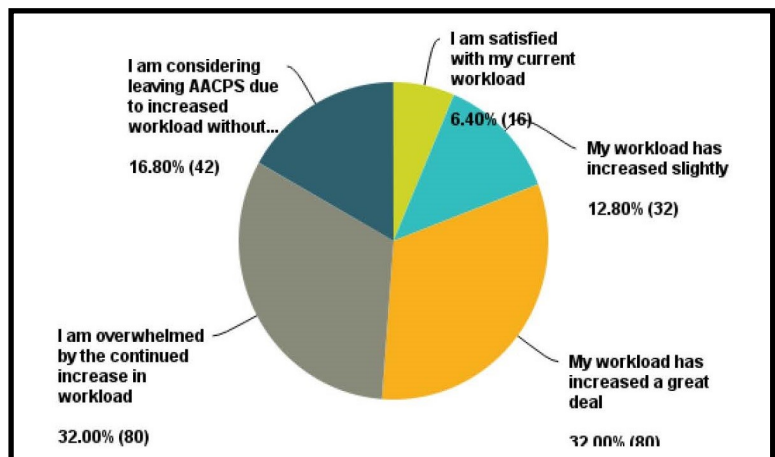
pation.

Third, survey results should allow all participants and nonparticipants to learn that their responses and/or opinions are not unique. I trust your beliefs fall within some range of the responses that were provided. Regardless of how you have or would have responded to the survey questions, you can appreciate that you have something in common with your colleagues in these critical survey areas.

The survey results were shared with the Superintendent before distribution on the website or in this publication. The results certainly speak for themselves, but their impact on the Superintendent's leadership role and indeed, that of the Board of Education remains to be seen. Even if nothing changes,

the survey has provided an extremely valuable tool for AEL. Knowing what our membership believes will only lead us in the correct direction in our attempt to fulfill the AEL mission.

Since Will, in his message on page 1, has decided to use the Sony and Cher song, "The Beat Goes On," as his closing, excuse my reference to the song, "I Can See Clearly Now," for my final remark. I think the title should be changed, however, to "AEL Can See Clearly Now." I only hope that the Board of Education's vision improves as well.



From the survey: How would you rate your current workload?

Frustration Among County Educational Leaders

AEL Member Survey Measures Discontent

An ever increasing workload and lack of support by the Superintendent and the Board of Education have contributed to a growing frustration among the county's educational leaders, according to a survey conducted in February by AEL. Nearly 90 percent of AEL members responded to the survey.

More than 93 percent of AEL members have reported an increase in the current workload.

Nearly 32 percent say that the workload is overwhelming and 16 percent say they are considering leaving the county because of it. A little more than 50 percent of those surveyed describe the Superintendent's support of the school leaders as "poor" or "needs improvement."

Less than a 10 percent of principals, assistant principals and coordinators feel confident that

they can express their concerns about the school system without reprisal.

When it comes to compensation, there is little doubt of the group's dissatisfaction. Eighty-seven percent disagree or strongly disagree with the level of compensation the Board of Education was willing to give Unit II employees. And a whopping 90 percent don't believe that healthcare costs to Unit II members should be in-

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The Survey...

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creased to cover the care fund. Complete re- found on the AEL website:
 deficit in the health sults of the survey can be www.Aelaacps.org

Salary Enhancements for Unit II Employees, 2009 to 2017

	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
COLA	0	1%	0	1.25%	1%	0	1.25%	.97%
STEP	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0
Total	0	1%	0	1.25%	3%	2%	1.25%	.97%

AEL Spring Social and Membership Meeting

April 6, 2017, 4:30-7:30 pm * Join us as we honor retirees

Gwen Atkinson, Louise DeJesu, Jeanmarie Hofstetter and Donna Usewick

Hellas', 8498 Veterans' Highway, Millersville, RSVP to Bob Ferguson at leafman65@gmail.com

Education Trends: Behind the Scenes

By Heather Garris, Assistant Principal, Solley Elementary

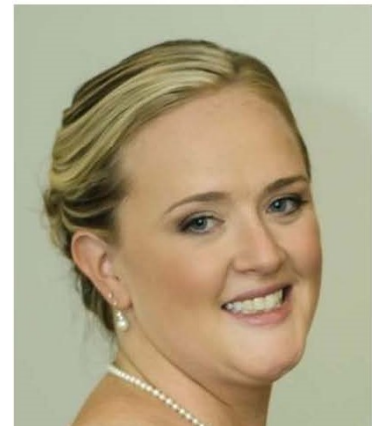
“Our teachers are lecturing less and checking more, encouraging students to discover and explore their passion in a more flexible manner.”

Editor’s Note: We asked some AEL members to share their thoughts on educational trends. Thanks for sharing.

All the political news happening with education right now has left many educators nervous for what will become the future of education. Some of the top educational trends currently are: Common Core, parent choice of schools, immigration laws, and social media. While all these political debates are important to the outcome of education, I think it is important to highlight some of the positive educational trends that have also been taking place behind the scenes in the news.

Since leaving the classroom and moving into an administration role, one of the biggest trends I have seen is a shift in the role of the teacher. From being the traditional “Stand and Deliver” model of instruction which is being pushed out by the “Guide on the Side” approach, just like the standard classroom being replaced with more creative, comfortable, learning spaces, today’s teachers are trending in the direction of being mentors and coaches for their students, and overseeing activities and providing assistance when needed, but not being the helicopter teachers that were once an expectation. An example is Collaborative and Cooperative learning. As educators we have all

heard about this, but for a while it was just directed



Heather Garris

toward the teachers, staff, and community to work together collaboratively, but now we are seeing a push for students to experience this as well with others. Our students are now being able to work together, share projects, provide feedback, as well as many other creative ideas with not only other students in their classroom(s), or even in their school, but with today’s latest technolo-

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Educational Trends...

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gy students are being able to work with other students from different schools and even different states and countries.

Our teachers are lecturing less and checking more, encouraging students to discover and explore their passion in a more flexible manner. An example is Inquiry-based learning: STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). STEM

has become very popular in today's public schools. The Obama Administration in 2009 created this push called "Educate to Innovate." The goal is to have America's students be able to be back on top in the international arena for Science and Math. Also to be given the opportunity to gain interest and possible future careers in these fields, as well as have more females become interested since it is a predominately male career.

This is a very exciting time in education, because no matter what trends come in and out of our education system we are now focusing around what is most important, which is our students, and providing them the most opportunities possible. As long as we, as educators, keep focused on the most important part of our job, we will continue to move and educate our children for their future.

"As long as we, as educators, keep focused on the most important part of our job, we will continue to move and educate our children for their future."

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
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2016-17 AEL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE/BOARD/STAFF

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Patrick Bathras (2015-19)	Director at Large	(P, Severna Park HS)	(o)544-0900 pbathras@aacps.org
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Jennifer Hernandez (2016-20)	Director at Large	(C, Div of Curriculum)	(o)222-5424 jhernandez3@aacps.org

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

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