

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan. 19, 2017

**AEL Executive
Board Meeting,
5pm**

AEL HQ,
2521 Riva Road,
Suite L-2, Annapolis

Feb. 16, 2017

**AEL Executive
Board Meeting
5 pm**

AEL HQ,
2521 Riva Road,
Suite L-2, Annapolis

March 16, 2017

**AEL Fall Social
AEL Executive
Board Meeting
5 pm**

AEL HQ,
2521 Riva Road,
Suite L-2, Annapolis

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Wrong 2
question

New 4
Members

Fall social 5
photos

Attention 6
**Coordina-
tors**

Clarity in 7
2017

AEL Leadership Forum

VOLUME 12, ISSUE 1

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2017

The Era of Discontent

By Will Myers, AEL President

For the second year in a row, we have settled for a contract which included inadequate compensation and little or no extra benefits. This certainly has not been by choice. Each year, we are held hostage by the claim of budgetary restrictions. Even after extensive mediation, there were no concessions made by the Board's negotiation team.

In the spirit of solidarity, we have refused to cut stipends for challenged schools.



We have insisted all members receive compensation. Perhaps it is time to reconsider our priorities. Should we bargain away challenge school pay? Should we tell our senior members they have "stayed at the party" too long – it's time to go?

Sadly, the Board would gladly hear us say "yes" to both questions. I, frankly, see a concerted effort by the Board to bring us to heel. We are regarded as simple employees who should not be asking for more than is offered. A picture of Oliver Twist asking for "more porridge, please" comes to mind. As we begin a new round of

negotiations, everything is up for consideration. We will need your input as we set our priorities for beginning talks.

We must begin to air publicly our discontent. We will be posting a template for a letter to be sent to our Board Members expressing our displeasure with the negotiation process. We will also be preparing a survey in order to document our feelings regarding workload, compensation, working conditions, support, resources, etc. The survey will be anonymous and should document our concerns during these trying times.

A Coalition or Not a Coalition Should Not Be a Question

By Rick Kovelant, AEL Executive Director and General Counsel

“NOBODY from any of the unions agreed to this plan.”

More than five years ago the four recognized bargaining units met for the purpose of forming a coalition in order to share information, as well as bargain with the Board of Education, on a collective basis, regarding universal issues such as health care. This coalition, known as the Coalition of Educational Employees, has proven useful to the individual union participants and the BOE. It has, up until this year, been an acceptable means of negotiating health care topics and insurance issues that impact all employee bargaining groups and their members. It has also been a means of providing for the dissemination of information. One would think this past and useful practice would continue to be embraced by the BOE, but

unfortunately, this has not been the case. The BOE has undertaken every method possible to undermine the process and fractionalize coalition negotiations, utilizing the keystone issue of health care. Let me explain...

In order to fund the pay raises for **ALL** employees in the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, the BOE, apparently in collaboration with the County Council, decided that the health care fund balance was excessive and by reducing its contribution to this fund, those funds could be used for the increased compensation for the employees. This plan resulted in the health care fund balance going \$20 million into the red. **NOBODY** from any of the unions agreed to this

plan. In particular, AEL was not even informed that this was a consideration until after it had occurred. In order to make up this \$20 million deficit, the BOE was able to get the county government to fund \$10 million to cover half of the deficit, provided this funding would not be deemed a reoccurring expense. A waiver from the State Board of Education was needed in order to avoid having the County’s “one-time funding” considered as part of the “maintenance of effort” in future years. Confusing? It gets more so. Our BOE has now received the one-time \$10 million funding from the county government to help make up the deficit, but what about the additional \$10 million it needs? This is where we come into the picture. Per the BOE, if all

Continued on page 3

Coalition...

Continued from page 2

the unions agree to a revised pharmaceutical co-pay schedule that will now include a new fourth tier of expensive life saving drugs that will require an exorbitant co-pay contribution by the employee, the County will see the school employees' good faith and may provide the additional



\$10 million and the State Board of Education may extend a waiver as it has in the past. The BOE made it very clear that the additional funding generated by increasing the co-pay will have a nominal impact on the health care fund's shortfall. The true motive for increasing the co-pay is to convince the county government of our good faith effort to help solve the deficit.

This questionable tactic by the BOE raises minimal dollars and it would be at the expense of our most vulnerable employees, those who can least afford the

costs associated with these drugs. It is not acceptable that we are expected to do this to "prove" to the county government that it could obtain the participation of the unions in correcting the health care fund deficit that the board created. Accordingly, it was not agreeable to the Coalition members. When the Coalition asked to examine and negotiate the entire health care package

and its cost, the BOE responded by opposing Coalition bargaining for the first time since its inception. Negotiating and understanding the entire cost associated

with the health care program would have allowed the employees to learn about any proposed additional costs and place them in a proper context. Agreeing to the costs of one segment of coverage without knowing the costs associated with the remaining coverage areas is not a productive means of addressing these issues.

Since the BOE was unable to reach an agreement with the Coalition, it attempted to declare an impasse with each of the unions that comprise the Coalition.

Continued on page 4

“When the Coalition asked to examine and negotiate the entire health care package and its cost, the BOE responded by opposing Coalition bargaining for the first time since its inception.”

Coalition...

Continued from page 3

“Coalition bargaining on these universal issues makes sense, and saves time, money and effort for all concerned.”

tion. The BOE sought the intervention of the Public School Labor Relations Board, but its impasse requests were rejected. Attempts by the Coalition to have the BOE come back to the bargaining table have, to date, been ignored. In short, a process that has served the educational community for several years is being abandoned because the BOE and its negotiating team do not like this collective opponent. Quitting

a long standing, agreed upon negotiation process simply because one doesn't wish to deal with the position taken by one collective voice seems childish to say the least. Coalition bargaining on these universal issues makes sense, and saves time, money and effort for all concerned.

AEL believes its strength lies in its collective efforts on subjects that have a universal im-

pact. We are not sacrificing our individual goals or failing to properly represent our members by this pursuit. Just as in the private sector, when labor unions joined the AFL/CIO, AEL's affiliation with the Coalition of Educational Employees can only assist AEL in meeting its mission and responsibility to its members. It should be clear that a coalition or not a coalition should not even be a question for consideration!

Welcome new members

Farah Springer, Principal, Seven Oaks Elementary

Katherine Hicks, AP, Magothy River Middle



AEL Fall Social, November 2016

Thanks to all who attended the Fall Social in November at Hellas. Members caught up with colleagues, enjoyed dinner and received an update on the ever evolving Negotiated Agreement.



Members Vote to Accept Mediator's Recommendations

On December 6, AEL members attending the ratification meeting voted to accept the mediator's recommendation

of a .97 cola retroactive to July 1, 2016. The Board of Education approved the

agreement with AEL for Fiscal Year 2017 on Dec. 21.

"The process to get to this agreement has been a long and time-consuming one," Board President Stacy Korbelak said. "The Board is pleased that we now have an agreement in place that rewards, as best we can, our hard-working administrators." A copy of the mediator's recommendation can be found on our website

www.aelaacps.org.



AEL Members met on Dec. 6 and approved the mediator's recommendations.

How Coordinators Benefit from the Professional Leave & Teleworking Pilot

By Jessica Tickle

Just like other AEL members, Coordinators have the opportunity to benefit from the Professional Leave & Teleworking Pilot Program. The work of coordinators is recognized in a special way in this program, specifically:

Article 11 – Work Schedule

- Coordinators have the opportunity to telecommute on Code Blue days and during any summer 4-day work weeks.
- As long as you have tasks that can be completed while off-site, this option is open to you.

For example, it may snow on a school day and we may have a Code Blue called. If you have work that can be completed remotely, you have the option of working from home (per our Negotiated Agreement) on a Code Blue day. This means you work from home and do not have to take leave for not coming in on that day. As long

as your supervisor is in agreement and knows what you are working on, you have the right to use this option.

In another example, in the summer you may have kids in day care. You may have to pay extra for them to be there for extended hours so the only option has been to take a leave day for each Friday and work normal hours. Now, you may select the extended hours option and do the additional time remotely in the evenings or on the Friday. We all must still work our 40 hours but the difference can be done remotely.

The task that must be completed in order to take advantage of this option is to document the days this option is used on a form and have it signed by your supervisor. For Code Blue days that is hard to do in advance but it is a good idea to alert your supervisor of your potential intent to do so. The form is called the Teleworking/ Telecommuting Agreement Form. The last page is all that is needed, and it takes about 5 minutes to fill

out. Your and the supervisor's signatures are all that is needed. The form then stays with your supervisor. I would recommend for now that you bring along a copy of the summary of changes to the Negotiated Agreement for reference as some supervisors may not recall that we now have this formal option.

When I met with my supervisor and we had a detailed conversation about what work tasks would be my focus and how we would be able to monitor my progress. These were the same conversations we usually have for the regular day-to-day tasks that are completed onsite. Once the meeting took place and I secured the signature, I was able to check the box for extended day with confidence and plan my summer accordingly.

This opportunity is indeed a benefit that resulted from months and months of work and negotiations and I want to be sure you all can take advantage of it as much as possible.

Striving for 'Clarity' in the New Year

By Cheryl Cox, Principal Waugh Chapel Elementary

A new year.....2017. Everyone is talking about their resolutions and I ignore it. I have stopped making those years ago. I refuse to be one of those people who goes crazy at the gym for the month of January and then gives up. Resolutions are never kept, because 12 months is a long time to stick to anything, and it is much easier to make mistakes and forgive yourself, but keep going in order to have a more successful year and a more successful you. For several years, I have participated instead in Jon Gordon's One Word Challenge. I take a lot of time to reflect on who I want to be in the new year or what area I know I need to work on

and then I choose a word that encompasses that goal. This year, my word is "clarity."

I want to be clear about what my goals are, how I support my teachers, clear about where my priorities are within the schoolhouse. As far as my personal life, I want to have clarity about the people in my life that matter, and the things that don't. I want to keep my path clear as I work toward my next level of work and my own professional goals. It will be clear to my family members that they come first.....that that basketball game or swim meet is one I will be sitting on the sidelines of, even if there is

much work to be done at

school. I want

to be clear

about why I

exist and do

the work that I

do, and it is

simply because

it is not work, it

is a passion.

Will I have mo-

ments where I

will fail with

regards to

clarity? Sure. But I know with

having just one word to focus

on, that I will experience more

growth than backwards

steps....and isn't that what it

is all about anyway? Every

day is a step and an experi-

ence....Cheers to 2017!



Cheryl Cox

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)	(o)222-5424	jhernandez3@aacps.org

REPRESENTATIVE DIRECTORS (14): CLUSTERS/FEEDER SYSTEMS

Phil Elliott	(AP, Special Centers)	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, Meade HS, Meade 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

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