

AEL Leadership Forum

VOLUME 12, ISSUE 2

MARCH 2017

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 2017
AEL Executive Board
Nominations Open
Visit: aelaacps.org
Deadline: March 24

March 16, 2017
AEL Executive Board
Meeting
5 pm
AEL HQ,
2521 Riva Road,
Suite L-2, Annapolis

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

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Trust de- 2
teriorating

Motivation 4

Spring 5
Social

Seeking 6
balance

Nomina- 7
tions

Where to We Go From Here?

By Will Myers, AEL President

After two years of disappointing negotiations regarding compensation, we are back at the table again.

The Superintendent's recommended budget contains a request for a one-step increase for all eligible employees and a moderate increase for those without a step. In AEL's salary structure, one step equals a 1% COLA. Employees without a step will likely receive a 1% increase. As a result of the current salary structure, a 2% COLA for TAAAC and 1% COLA for AEL practically equals the same amount in real dollars. Using the same formula for AEL's 1% COLA and Unit V and Unit VI receiving a 2% COLA cannot be compared in the same way. Units V and

VI receive almost twice as much compensation in real dollars. This inequity has resulted in much unrest amongst our membership.

Additionally, we are most certainly facing an increase cost in health benefits. Currently, we are still discussing prescription cost increases for FY17. Health care premiums for FY18 will be open for negotiation. Any substantial increase will likely offset our modest COLA. If the Board finds it necessary to furlough employees to offset the deficit in the healthcare fund, we will end with little or no gain in our compensation. If we are to take action, we must start now. At this time, the budget has a \$56

million increase in the maintenance of effort required by the County.



Any cut to the Superintendent's request will affect desperately needed resources. I can hear CCR's song "I See A Bad Moon Rising" in the background and can only hope we can prevent a bad day becoming worse. AEL will continue to fight for "Truth, Justice and the American way"; however, we are not superheroes.

Our strength comes from our membership standing together in solidarity.

AEL Members' Trust in Board Deteriorating

By Rick Kovelant, AEL Executive Director and General Counsel

Editor's Note: For those who were unable to attend the AEL Membership Meeting was held on February 16, 2017, the following letter from General Counsel Rick Kovelant was read and presented to those in attendance.

"The representations made... were false and misleading and designed to convince AEL that no further funds were available when, in fact, those who were sitting across the table were among the recipients of these "unavailable funds."

Dear AEL Members

Thank you for taking the time to meet today and discuss the options available to AEL as we move toward a new Negotiated Agreement. I want to take this oppor-

tunity to share my thoughts and concerns in this regard.

In the not too distant past, AEL and the Board of Education incorporated a Bill of Respect into the Negotiated Agreement. Among the items enumerated in the Bill of Respect is the proposition that Unit II employees should be equitably compensated for the duties and responsibilities to which they are assigned in accordance with the salary guidelines and work schedules. While the subject of compensation is generally the driving force in the course of negotiations, the negotiation of this item is also illustrative of the attitude of the school system toward our membership.

Collective bargaining between the Board and the designated employee repre-

sentative is required by law.

The bargaining process means more than simply to meet and confer, it means these meetings are to be conducted in "good faith." Unfortunately, for the last two years the good faith requirement has proven to be non-existent. Being constantly told that the school budget has no funds available except for 1 step advancement for eligible Unit II employees or a .97% COLA for all Unit II employees was dishonest. Those who advanced the position that no further funds would be available for this group or for anyone else received a 2% COLA two years in a row. The representations made at the bargaining table, not once but twice, were false and misleading and designed to convince AEL that no further funds were available when, in fact, those who

Continued on page 3

Deteriorating Trust...

Continued from page 2

were sitting across the table were among the recipients of these “unavailable funds.” Perhaps these individuals were the valued employees that were referred to by the Superintendent.

The issues of trust and good faith really transcend the matter of compensation. In an attempt to test the feelings of the membership, a survey was prepared and I am proud to say that the response was overwhelming. The survey clearly indicates that with respect to the issue of trust and support by the Board as evidenced by the excess compensation paid to Unit V and Unit VI, 92% of those responding noted they were “concerned.” Further, more than half of those who were

“concerned” believed that this evidenced a lack of support. While the Board and the Superintendent indicate they value you as employees, their conduct belies the fact. Certainly the survey supports the fact that AEL members feel less than valuable as a result of the unfair and disproportionate treatment that resulted from the Board’s misleading bargaining practice.

In this era of “Alternate Facts,” AEL’s task becomes even more difficult. Options under the law are few. There can be no strikes or slow downs or any of the other typical activities available to private industry union groups. What we can and must do is fight for the Respect that was negotiated. To this end, bringing our concerns to the public through the media, meetings with parent groups, press re-

leases, etc. must be explored and where appropriate, implemented.

Your support in completing a survey was a strong starting point, but if AEL does not use this most valuable information to advance the concept of good faith and honest bargaining, the Respect to which you are entitled to will continue to be an empty promise reduced to an innocuous place in the Negotiated Agreement.

Inadequate, compensation was only the byproduct of the bigger issue -a dishonest and failing negotiation process.

Thank you for your support and interest and I hope your involvement in an effort to restore honesty to the negotiation process.

Motivation: What Drives Us? What Keeps Us Going?

By Jennifer Schwikert, Acting Principal, Jacobsville Elementary

‘Whether it is an academic stride, behavioral growth, or socially, knowing that our leadership has helped that child to grow or inspire even the smallest step forward.’

Editor’s Note: We asked some AEL members to share their thoughts on staying motivated through the waning days of winter. Thanks for sharing.

The first thing that comes to mind for me as an Administrator when thinking about how we can all stay motivated through our mid-year point is refocusing on what our purpose is in the first place.

Let’s ask ourselves, who and what are we here for? I think that we can all say *our students! The Kids!*

They are our first and foremost priority from each and every decision we make from the moment we set foot into our buildings each day until the moment we leave.

We need to take the time to look at the progress our students are making and take the time out and visit them in their classrooms to see the joy of learning and each and every bit of progress they are making. Whether it is an academic stride, behavioral growth, or socially, it is gratifying to



Jennifer Schwikert

know that our leadership has helped that child to grow or that we have inspired even the smallest step forward. Their smiles when they see me, the pride they have when they or the “Hi Ms. Schwikert!” and hugs or moments they share about their lives.....that is what truly keeps me motivated as an Administrator.

In Pursuit of ‘Balance’

By Susan Sergeant, AP Magothy River Middle

At the start of the school year our leadership team was tasked with selecting one word that would be our mantra for the year – to help us keep positive energy and to help us with self-care. I choose the word *balance*. It is easy to be swept up into dramas and minutia that interfere with our work. Also, work can overshadow



Susan Sergeant

your life as a whole human being. So my word is *balance*. Balance your time, balance your energy, and know that your efforts are enough. Your efforts are

more than enough. As a middle-manager there are few accolades and there are many tasks that can seem thankless and mundane. When I begin to feel the stress of our job, I give myself a dose of children. I visit classes, sit and chat at lunch, or just observe the hallways. When I keep balance and remember that I am here for children, the days fly by.”

‘Balance your time, balance your energy, and know that your efforts are enough. Your efforts are more than enough.’

Welcome new members

Isaphine Johnson, Principal at Millersville Elementary

Carla Buonassisi, Assistant Principal at Crofton Woods



AEL Executive Board Position Nominations Open

By Edie Picken, AEL Secretary

It is that time again to seek nominations for positions on the AEL Executive Board that end this year. Currently, four positions are open for nominations, as well as all Cluster Representatives.

If you would like additional information about the positions, you can find it on the AEL website (www.aelaacps.org).

Select the “Publications” tab, followed by the “By-Laws” tab, then select the “Download By-Laws PDF”. You will find duties and expectations for the different positions on pages 2-5.

We are using Survey Monkey this year to secure nominations. All nominations for these positions must be in no

later than **March 24**. As soon as the nominations window closes, AEL will construct the voting ballot and begin electronic voting by April 1.

To vote, visit the link below:

[https://
www.surveymonkey.com/
r/9MV59N6](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9MV59N6)

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.

Keeping it Real: AEL Spring Social set for April 6

If social media (or the talk of social media) is wearing you out... plan to reconnect IN PERSON with your friends and colleagues at the AEL Annual Spring Social, **Thursday, April 6** at Hellas Restaurant on Veterans' Highway in Millersville, 4:30 pm to 7:30 pm.



As many of you know, your colleagues can be an invaluable support system and resource for you. Take advantage of the opportunity to spend time with some of the best educational leaders in the state.

Mark your calendars...

April 6, 2017, 4:30-7:30 pm

Hellas at 8498 Veterans' Highway, Millersville

RSVP to Bob Ferguson at leafman65@gmail.com

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

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Becky Blasingame-White	(P, Hebron-Harman Elementary, Meade Cluster)	bblasingame-white@aacps.org
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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

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