

AEL Leadership Forum

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 7

APRIL 2019

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 10, 2019
AEL Executive Board Meeting
5 pm
AEL HQ,
2521 Riva Road,
Suite L-2, Annapolis

May 1, 2019
AEL Spring Social
4:30—7:30 pm
Hellas, Millersville
FREE
RSVP:
leafman65@gmail.com

May 15, 2019
AEL Executive Board Meeting
5 pm
AEL HQ,
2521 Riva Road,
Suite L-2, Annapolis

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Does Anyone Really Know What Time It Is?

By Will Myers, AEL President

Does anyone really care? Yes, I know I'm stealing song lines from *Chicago*, however, both questions are very relevant to our current negotiations with the Board of Education. At the Board of Education meeting held on Feb. 20, 2019, the Board voted to supplement the Superintendent's budget request in order to fund back steps for eligible teachers.

After seven hours and 81 amendments later, back steps were approved for Unit II members who were in Unit II in FY10 and FY11. After the meeting, I was able to speak briefly to a number of Board Members. I believe they were sympathetic to our request, however, felt

obligated to support teachers first. We must do a better job of letting Members of the Board know our frustrations about the inequities of compensation, the loss of steps, and the ever-increasing responsibilities of our job.

If you think letter writing is not effective, think again. While I was presenting testimony concerning our need to be included in the total compensation package, one Board Member held up a stack of at least 50 letters from teachers indicating that TAAAC made its concerns known while AEL did not.

When making my final plea for AEL to be included in the effort to restore steps, I said something like, "if we are



left out, I can guarantee you will receive plenty of letters." Hopefully I will not have to eat those words. The time for action is now.

We have the potential for a significant compensation package. We must be more vocal. If

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Does Anyone Really Know...

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“We have the potential for a significant compensation package.”

we want our position to be taken seriously, we need to let the County Executive and County Council Members know how important a fully funded

budget is to our voting membership.

When the opportunity arises in May to support the Superintendent’s budget, we

need to be visible in large numbers. Our voices must be heard. Does anybody really know what time it is? It’s time for ACTION!

The Sick Leave Bank Explained

As a member in good standing of AEL, you are able to participate as a member of the AEL Sick Leave Bank (SLB). Your participation requires that you are a contributor of only **sick leave days** in accordance with the required schedule as set forth in the SLB Rules and Procedures.

The eligibility to receive SLB benefits is a restricted privilege. Because there are only a finite number of days on deposit in the bank, members notwithstanding their eligibility, may, at the discretion of the SLB Committee, be restricted in the amount of days that can be utilized. Currently, sick leave days are authorized in blocks of 20 days with a maximum of 100 days per school year. As there has been significant usage of the SLB, there is no assurance that the SLB will be able to maintain this level of benefit.

The current demands on the SLB have resulted in these significantly low levels of remaining days that would be

available for all members. The SLB Policy clearly indicates that there must be a balance between the individual who is requesting assistance and the total SLB membership. Only the strict compliance with eligibility requirements, adherence to SLB payback requirements and the appropriate rationing of future benefits will permit the SLB to serve all its members.

Please keep in mind that eligibility and continued use are conditioned on several factors. These include, but are not limited to;

The exhaustion of all available BOE leave, annual, personal, assault leave and sick leave days.

The requirement that any member eligible for Workers Compensation or other third party benefits initiate timely action to utilize these third party sources or lose SLB coverage for absences associated related to illness or injury that would otherwise be covered by

these providers.

Restrictions on pre-existing diagnosed conditions or injuries.

Timely filing of requests and certification of conditions from a physician.

The SLB Rules and Procedures can be viewed on the AEL website. AEL, and not the employer, administers this rather extensive protocol. Decisions as to application approval and the administration of the SLB are made by your colleagues, not your supervisors. Any decision that is believed to be adverse can be appealed to the AEL Executive Board. A decision by the Executive Board is final and no further appeal is available.

Please take the time to familiarize yourself with this most important program. If there are further questions concerning the SLB please feel free to contact Richard Kovelant, Esq. Executive director/ General Counsel at 443-848-8022.

Seven Tried and True Tips for Administrators

By Denise Hofstedt, Editor

Preparing administrators for handling potential disciplinary matters is a large part of AEL Executive Director Rick Kovelant's responsibilities. With 30 years of experience in the Anne Arundel County School system administrators, Rick says he has just about seen it all. When an issue arises, he can often predict what will happen next. He is a "hope for the best, plan for the worst" kind of guy and he is the one you want on your side when things get rough.

He has seven tips that will help administrators navigate through confrontations with parents and students that make up a portion of a day in the life of a modern educational leader.

1. Call Early, Call Often.

Something happens, you

think it's not a big deal – call Rick. Find out if, based on his experience that it can turn into "a big deal." He's there to offer advice and guidance. It's free to AEL members. Take advantage of this membership benefit – he is there for you. When a member waits to call, the team spends its time playing defense. It is always best to get out in front of a problem than deal with it from behind. He also reminds members to call when things change – if there is an update CALL.

2. When and Where Possible,

Have a Witness. If you are having a meeting with a parent or student, include (where possible) an authorized staff member or colleague to be present and take notes. It's difficult to participate in a meeting and record the narrative of

what is being discussed and decided. After the third party writes up the notes, review them to make sure you and your witness have the same interpretation of the meeting.

3. Document, Document,

Document. If a witness is not available take timely and immediate notes. Make a record as conversations occur... who was there, what was said, who said it... as soon after the event as possible. Write it down before the details fade. Producing a narrative of events weeks or months later is never as powerful as having contemporaneous notes.

4. Pass the Ball Upstairs.

Get your supervisor involved at an early stage. Give them a "heads up." You want them to hear it from you first. They don't

It is always best to get out in front of a problem than deal with it from behind.

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Seven Tried and True Tips...

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Follow up and make sure it was done. "Trust but verify," as Rick likes to say.

want to be surprised. So keep them informed. "I had a meeting with these parents, here are my notes..." After you talk to your supervisor, follow up with an email or a memo... "As per our discussion..." "As per your instruction..."

5. Follow Procedure. When an issue arises, the administrator often isn't faulted for decision making but is taken to task because protocol wasn't followed. Make the appropriate calls. Notify the entities that need to be notified. Rick has assured us that no one has been

punished for making too many phone calls to report a problem.

6. Count on Your Self and You Will Not Be Disappointed. The only person you can count on is yourself. Don't rely on others to come to your defense. The process can quickly become adversarial and people whom you think will back you up might not for whatever reason. If someone says, "I'll report that for you, don't worry about it." Follow up and make sure it was done. "Trust but verify," as Rick likes to say.

7. Be Economical with Your

Words. When interviewed, don't give an essay answer when "Yes" or "No" will do. Be succinct in your answers. Narratives are not always necessary. You can clarify as need be but since your narrative is being weighed against statements that are already in the position of those that are conducting the interview, simple responses are usually best. Keep your answers short and to the point – no more, no less.

Keep Rick's number on speed dial, 443-848-8022.

Timing is generally everything.

Welcome new members

Alexandra Lively, Assistant Principal, Point Pleasant Elem.

Monica Sayers, Assistant Principal, Van Bokkelen Elem.



AEL Spring Social & Membership Meeting

May 1, 2019

4:30-7:30 pm

Hellas, 8498 Veterans' Highway, Millersville

RSVP to Bob Ferguson at leafman65@gmail.com

It's free!

Plan to **reconnect with your friends and colleagues** at the AEL Annual Spring Social and maybe win a **DOOR PRIZE**. We will also be honoring this year's retirees.

Take advantage of the opportunity to spend time with some of the best educational leaders in the state. Mark your calendars... RSVP by April 26.



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.

43 Years in Education: What I Learned

By Virginia L. Dolan, Ed.D., NCSP

Dear Colleagues,

Once you know when it is time to retire there is a kick in your step and a twinkle in your eyes. You begin to breathe, long, deep, refreshing breaths. Trips to exotic places are no longer are a dream, rather they are marked on your calendar. That said, this is also a time to reflect upon the myriad of interactions with colleagues and students encountered over the years, who helped shape who you are, giving shape to your purpose.

Yet, what has sustained me throughout this journey has been the powerful relationships with you, my colleagues, who are all too often under-appreciated.

As for me, after 35 years in Anne Arundel County Public Schools with another 8 years accumulated in New York and Chicago, my kick is higher, and those trips are closer with each day. As I close this chapter in my career, I reflect about the years with a sense of joy, peace, some frustrations, and yes, tears.

As some of you may know, most of my career has been spent focusing on those who are at least one and half standard deviations from the mean: a teacher of gifted and talented, special education in a residential treatment center, then moving into school psychology and finally administration in prevention and intervention. Throughout these

various encounters there has been nothing more powerful than to see a student succeed in learning, behaving and/or self-regulation. It kept me going in the face of adversity. I used to say if I can wake up the next day knowing that none of my students ended up in the ER or worse, that was a good day. Yet, there were other days when, having absorbed their pain, I arrived home, deeply sad, feeling hopeless against forces beyond my control. As time passes, I have concluded those days are more frequent than I care to count, given rise to our absolute direction to focus on students' social/emotional/behavioral functioning. Yet, what has sustained

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Ginny Dolan

What I Learned...

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me throughout this journey has been the powerful relationships with you, my colleagues, who are all too often underappreciated. Despite my graduate experiences, my best education came from listening and observing you. I have so admired your persistence, stamina, and skills, in the face of significant challenges inside and outside of your building.

When I was a school-based school psychologist I believed a very large part of my role was to support my administrators. There were indeed, many days that I would close the door in your offices and just listen. In so doing, it occurred to me that I was learning so much from

you, yet you had few opportunities to breathe deeply and articulate the accumulation of “agita” (my grandmother’s translation for heartburn) that was so needed.

Here is what I learned, despite our size, shape, color, race, ethnicity, culture, gender, we all:

- have hearts, red blood, lungs and brains
- need to eat
- need to feel safe
- need to belong
- need to feel nurtured and loved
- need to be guided and taught,
- need to observe

- need to listen and be listened to
- need to be respected and respect

My plans include continuing with my private practice, traveling to those exotic places, spending time with my children, their spouses, and with my beloved five grandchildren, but mostly to relax with my best friend and husband of 43 years.

As you continue in your careers I have great confidence that you will guide your staff and students with an aim to be the very best that they can be. They need you!

Carpe Diem

Ginny

“...it occurred to me that I was learning so much from you, yet you had few opportunities to breathe deeply and articulate the accumulation of “agita” (my grandmother’s translation for heartburn) that was so needed. “

The Association of Educational Leaders
2521 Riva Rd., Suite L-2
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2018-19 AEL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE/BOARD/STAFF

Will Myers (2017-21)	President	(P, South River HS)	(o)956-5600	wtmwants@aol.com
Nelson Horine (2017-21)	1st VP	(P, Anne Arundel Evening HS BOE)	(o) 222-5384	linnea.horine@gmail.com
Becky Blasingame-White (2017-21)	2nd VP	(P, Hebron-Harman Elementary)	(o) 859-4510	rblasingame-white@aacps.org
Natalie Marston (2016-20)	Secretary	(P, Central Special School)	(o) 956-5885	nmarston@aacps.org
Lou Anoff (2017-21)	Treasurer	(AP, Severna Park MS)	(o) 647-7900	lanoff@aacps.org
Open	Director at Large			
Kevin Wajek (2017-2021)	Director at Large (C, Secondary Mathematics HS)		(o) 224-5464	kwajek@aacps.org
Open	Director at Large			
REPRESENTATIVE DIRECTORS (14): CLUSTERS/FEEDER SYSTEM				
Open	(Annapolis Cluster)			
Tracey Ahern	(P, Odenton Elementary, Arundel Cluster)			tahern@aacps.org
Open	(Broadneck Cluster)			
Open	(Chesapeake Cluster)			
Open	(Glen Burnie Cluster)			
Dave Kauffman	(AP, Meade HS, Meade Cluster)			dkauffman@aacps.org
Troy Hermann	(AP, Meade Middle, Meade Cluster)			thermann@aacps.org
Ryan Sackett	(AP, North County HS, North County Cluster)			rsackett@aacps.org
Open	(Northeast Cluster)			
Open	(Old Mill Cluster)			
Open	(Severna Park Cluster)			
Edie Picken	(AP, South River HS, South River Cluster)			epicken@aacps.org
Open	(Southern Cluster)			
Kevin Wajek	(C, Secondary Mathematics HS)			kwajek@aacps.org
Open	(Special Centers)			

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

STAFF

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Bob Ferguson (Administrator)	(o)410-224-3311 (fax)410-224-3345 (c)443-223-5645; leafman65@gmail.com
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