

# AEL Leadership Forum

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 3

AUGUST 2020

## UPCOMING EVENTS

August 5, 2020  
AEL Executive  
Board Meeting  
4 pm  
Via Zoom

September  
AEL Executive  
Board Meeting  
5 pm  
TBA

October  
AEL Executive  
Board Meeting  
5 pm  
TBA

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## Forging Ahead

*By Edie Picken, AEL President*

First and foremost, I hope that everyone and your families have been able to remain safe and well during these very difficult times. As by now you have learned we are beginning the school year virtually. We have much to do to show the utmost support for our students, parents, staff, and ourselves before the school year begins.

Now, I want to thank everyone for their support at election time. As your President, along with the Executive Board, I hope to accomplish a lot on your behalf. It was exciting to see the number of people participating in the election process. This was the most I have seen in a long time since becoming involved in the organization.. This speaks volumes about our members and their desire for involvement. AEL has always had the support of its members. It is just as

important that along with your support AEL has your participation. (See full Election Results on pg. 6)

Your AEL Executive Board is an incredible team—there are those who continue to remain involved, but have taken on different roles/positions, and some new folks. They are: **Gene Summers**, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President; **Becky Blasingame-White**, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President; **Natalie Marston**, Secretary; **Ryan Sackett**, Treasurer; **David M. Kauffman**, Director-At-Large; and **Tracey Ahern**, Director-At-Large. Also working with the Executive Board: **Rick Kovelant**, Executive Director; **Bob Ferguson**, AEL Administrator; and **Will Myers**, President Emeritus. The institutional knowledge that these three possess is immeasurable and AEL is lucky to have them remain involved as we forge ahead.



*Edie Picken, AEL President*

This will be an exciting first year for me in my new role, as I am sure it will be for everyone on the Executive Board. In addition to the ongoing work AEL has been doing, one of our goals this year will be to get our members more actively engaged. One way is for you to serve on a committee. We have some longstanding established committees (examples: Workload, Pay Restructuring), and there are a those where we need people to

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## Forging Ahead ...

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**“The negotiating team will always use its best efforts and all means available to fight for fair and reasonable compensation.”**

step up and help reduce the load on one person (examples: Membership, Social). ***If anyone would like to serve on a committee, by all means let us know.*** Where we especially need your involvement is your attendance at membership meetings.

When these meetings are scheduled, we need to have a full turn out—even if it has to be virtual. It is at these meetings a great deal of information is presented to keep you informed, engage in important dialog, get your input, and to answer questions. We want and need to be able to communicate with you. Another way we will communicate with you will be through the Cluster Representatives. It will be incumbent on these people to get information out to you in a more personal way, while sharing information from you at Executive Board meetings. Your participation, such as writing letters supporting the AEL mission, as well as signing petitions when the need arises, will help us to remain strong and resolute. As the smallest bargaining unit, it is necessary that our membership reflects who we are. Therefore, another

goal this year will be to reach 100% membership. Currently, we are at 84% (275 out of 326 Unit II).

As many of you know, the negotiations process has always been the cart before the horse. We are going to put the horse before the cart. In the past, negotiations have typically taken place after the Superintendent has established his budget, submitted it for BOE approval and thereafter ultimately receives what the County Executive and County Council agree to fund. In reality this makes the **Superintendent’s placeholder** request to the BOE the first, best and final offer that AEL receives. We want to start that process before the **Superintendent’s budget goes** to the BOE and thereafter the County Executive and County Council in hopes that what we are asking for is included before the approval process. If we are able to accomplish this, it will be a great thing. The negotiating team will always use its best efforts and all means available to fight for fair and reasonable compensation.

What our members will need

to become accustomed to doing, is regularly checking the AEL website. AEL has a website and we recently have taken the time to get the information updated for you. There were some delays due to summer and the amount of information needing to be added, changed, etc. We will be working with our web manager to improve the site over the next few months, and to make certain the information is regularly updated. It will be very important for AEL members to utilize this site to gather information, seek answers to questions where possible, secure documents, read the newsletter, or find who you may need to contact directly. We want to hear from you personally; but you should go to the website first to see if what you are looking for is already at your fingertips. That address is: [www.aelaacps.org](http://www.aelaacps.org) Starting this year there will be an important change: We will no longer mail the newsletter. We will be post-

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## Forging Ahead ...

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ing the newsletter on the website! We will establish a regular posting time for access. We will let you know when that will be so you can simply go to the website and read it when you have the chance. Past newsletters are currently posted if you would like to go back and review them. If

you are new to AEL, please take some time to read a few. Our newsletter is another important means of communicating with you, so please make it a habit.

In closing, I am thankful for the trust you have placed in me by electing

me President and will strive to work tirelessly on your behalf. In whatever way I, the Executive Board, or Cluster Representatives can help you and the membership, please let us know. We are here to do whatever we can on your behalf.

## Making a Difference

*By Will Myers, AEL President Emeritus*

This has certainly been a life changing year. With the onset of COVID 19, our whole way of doing business in education changed in an instant. For me personally, I am ending a 49-year career and stepping down as your AEL president. I am greatly appreciative of the level of support and encouragement from our membership over the past eight years. The fight to keep our workload reasonable, to acquire equitable compensation and to guarantee fair promotional opportunities has been ongoing--it will never be over. I have great confidence in the new slate

of officers who will be **guiding AEL's future.** Now, more than ever, we need to be united in our efforts as a Union. The best way to be supportive is to be informed and involved.

Every year our work becomes more complex. The years ahead will be challenging. The expectations from our Board, the Central Office and our parents will increase. It will be the job of AEL to buffer those expectations with reasonable limits. As a strong Union of dedicated professionals, we have been able to **protect our members' rights.** So much of **AEL's work is unseen by**

our membership. I can guarantee rarely a day goes by without a question being raised or a member needing help or advice.

I always have believed those who choose education have received a calling to make a difference. I know each of us as individuals can make a positive difference. Just for a moment think of the impact over 300 individuals can make if they were united as one.

My future plans include staying active in AEL. I still want to make a difference which will benefit our membership. To borrow a **line from John Wick," I have served. I will continue to be of service".**



# The Times They Are A Changin’

*By Rick Kovelant, AEL Executive Director and General Counsel*

**“Congratulations to all who have been elected to serve. I look forward to working with you in moving AEL further along its path.”**

Well, summer has ended or has it begun? Somehow, this is very hard to tell. As the Bob Dylan song so correctly indicates, **“The Times They Are A- Changin.”** The change in leadership by a popular election has resulted in an exciting and energetic Executive Committee led by President Edie Picken. Congratulations to all who have been elected to serve. I look forward to working with you in moving AEL further along its path. As for the work undertaken in the past years by Will Myers along with Nelson Horine on behalf of AEL, I can say I was honored and grateful to have participated under their leadership. I know AEL members share my appreciation for their efforts and look forward to the future under the guidance of the new Executive Board.

As we open the school year, we are all facing the same challenges pertaining to our person-

al, family and professional lives. Operating a union in a traditional manner is difficult. Conducting union activities in a virtual environment is even more challenging! The times have most definitely changed the way we will be providing representation, conducting negotiations and meetings, and otherwise attending to the needs of membership.

Because the times have **changed, it doesn’t have to follow that AEL’s mission has to change** as well. Take a moment to read the Bill of Respect, which is appended to the newsletter, appears on the website, and most importantly, in the Negotiated Agreement. This simple statement defines the core purpose of AEL. As a result, everything that the BOE has or will expect of Unit II employees has to be measured and assessed against these ten-

ets. This applies to evaluations, promotions, demotions, discipline, wages, hours and certainly, working conditions. The question therefore, that always needs to be asked is , **“Does a contract proposal or**

change in BOE policy or regulation impact the **Bill Of Respect?”** If the impact will be adverse, AEL must challenge the proposal or change in order to maintain the integrity of the organization and protect its membership.

I have every confidence that the new Executive Committee, like those Executive Committees in the past, will be vigilant in making sure it protects the mission as outlined in the Bill Of Respect. The times may be **changing, but AEL’s goal and purpose remain intact.**



Rick Kovelant

# All the Best to Our 2020 Retirees

We say goodbye to literally hundreds of years of educational leadership and knowledge when we bid farewell to these 19 retirees. This was not the year we imagined it would be nor is this the send off we would have liked to have had to show our appreciation to these educational leaders. Thank you for your mentorship and your years of dedication to Anne Arundel County . Without a doubt, you will be missed.

Millie Beall	Carole Janesco	Sara Pickens
Kathleen Cole	Kathy Jones	Dan Schaffhauser
Don Counts	Fran Magiera	Tammy Scott
Paul DeRoo	Lynn Markowitz	John Trumbule
Sharon Ferralli	Kathryn Maxa	Valerie Wesner
Catherine Gillette	Will Myers	
David Grigsby	John Nunn	

## 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.

# Election Results

Congratulations and thank you for your service... here are the newly elected officials of AEL. Thanks to all who took the time to vote. The response was excellent.

Position	Name	Term
President	<b>Edie Picken</b>	2020-2024
1st Vice President	<b>Gene Summers</b>	2020-2024
2nd Vice President	<b>Becky Blasingame-White</b>	2019-2023
Treasurer	<b>Ryan Sackett</b>	2020-2024
Secretary	<b>Natalie Marston</b>	2020-2024
Director At Large	<b>David Kaufman</b>	2020-2022
Director At Large	<b>OPEN</b>	2020-2022
Director At Large	<b>Tracy Ahern</b>	2020-2022
President Emeritus	<b>Will Myers</b>	Life Member
Executive Director	<b>Rick Kovelant</b>	
Administrator	<b>Bob Ferguson</b>	Life Member
CR Annapolis	<b>Jazmin Lawhorn</b>	2020-2021
CR Arundel	<b>Open</b>	2020-2021
CR BOE	<b>Nicole B. Howard</b>	2020-2021
CR Broadneck	<b>Arthur "Trip" Murphy</b>	2020-2021
CR Chesapeake	<b>Cortney DiSalvo</b>	2020-2021
CR Crofton	<b>OPEN</b>	2020-2021
CR Glen Burnie	<b>Edmund Kling</b>	2020-2021
CR Meade	<b>Troy Herman</b>	2020-2021
CR North County	<b>B. Jeremy McNeil</b>	2020-2021
CR Northeast	<b>John Wojtla</b>	2020-2021
CR Old Mill	<b>Tracy Prater</b>	2020-2021
CR Severna Park	<b>Patrick Bathras</b>	2020-2021
CR South River	<b>Bret Wescott</b>	2020-2021
CR Southern	<b>Kevin Buckley</b>	2020-2021
CR Special Centers	<b>Olu Banmeke</b>	2020-2021

Newly elected  
Open positions