



The EASMC Extra

44219 Airport Road, California, MD 20619
Phone (301)737-2500, x300 • Fax (301)866-1967

"One Voice for Public Educators"



From Your President

As the end of 2011 approaches and 2012 is just around the corner, we reflect on the year that was and look forward to the year ahead.

2011 brought with it the usual challenges for EASMC and our members. We worked hard to negotiate a proper increase for everyone and wound up with 3 furlough days when our commissioners failed to release the \$1.4 million necessary to cover their cost. Our message was "temporary solutions for temporary problems." We got our message out in the community that our schools were underfunded and about 1,000 people turned out to attend the BOCC public hearing on the budget. The BOCC did come through with enough money (along with some fund balance from SMCPs) to keep 18 of our precious teachers from being rified. We lost 72 positions across the system which has resulted in some folks doing 2 or 3 jobs and an increase in class size for many. We took a beating in Annapolis with the 2% increase in our pension contribution even with a rally that turned out about 15,000 folks in opposition to the changes. Once again, EASMC tried in vain to get Fair Share/Agency Fee legislation passed in Annapolis. Delegates Wood and O'Donnell just will not support it long enough to get a letter of agreement to the chair of the House Ways and Means Committee. Senator Dyson and Delegate Bohanan have supported the legislation, but we need one of the other 2 delegates to sign on to get it passed through committee. The legislation passed the Senate without a problem.

While all of this was going on, EASMC and SMCPs were working diligently on the student growth portion of the teacher evaluation system. That work continues and we hope to have something that meets the requirements of the law while protecting our members from undue an inappropriate dismissal based on student test scores or classroom performance. EASMC is also dealing with a move by some of our administrators and supervisors to create a separate bargaining unit. When the Board of Education moved to create the new unit in November, EASMC warned that this was an illegal act. The Board moved anyway, so now EASMC and MSEA will be filing a case with the Maryland Public School Labor Relations Board. We also know that many of you are feeling the stress of partially implementing the new common core curriculum while still teaching the voluntary state curriculum for the MSA and HSA tests this spring. The feeling of being pulled in two directions is real and palpable to our members.

And none of this happens in a vacuum. Everyone is feeling the pinch of less money in their take home pay. Even with the success of getting the furlough days reinstated, that additional 2% in pension payments is having an impact on people's lives. We are back at the negotiations table again and we heard very clearly from our members that the need for steps and a COLA are great. The county has a \$30 million dollar surplus and we are the fastest growing and one of the wealthiest counties in the state and the nation. Yet, we will likely find ourselves out begging the BOCC for additional funding again this year. While we want to believe that they will see and understand our needs and come through with more appropriate funding for our schools, we have also heard the rhetoric. A "needs not wants" based budget is what they are saying.

We NEED high quality staff to run a high quality school system. Our students NEED up to date technology and text books and clean buildings. We all NEED to be valued and appreciated and shown the respect of the community. We NEED time to complete our work and to have proper professional development. We NEED good administrators and supervisors who understand the burden placed on the classroom teacher in these days of dueling curricula. We NEED a Board of Education and Superintendent who show they respect their staff by submitting a budget that takes care of the staff rather than expecting

Continued on Page 2



Inside This Issue:

Movie Screening	2
Negotiations Update	3
Legislative Breakfast	4
Rep Training	4
Just Ask Liz	5



BOD Contacts

- Wanda Twigg- President, wtwigg@mseane.org
- Anna Laughlin- Vice-President, amlaughlin@smcps.org
- Mike Soly- Treasurer masoly@smcps.org
- Linda Miedzinski- Secretary lsiedzinski@smcps.org
- Melinda Kearns- Elementary mmkearns@smcps.org
- Melissa Kiernan- General munkiernan@smcps.org
- Billy Breslin- Secondary wfbreslin@smcps.org
- Michael Loughran- A&S mssloughran@smcps.org
- Liz Morris- Retired emorris@md.metrocast.net
- Liz Purcell Leskinen- MSEA UniServ Director, lleskinen@mseane.org
- Jennifer Tidd, Admin. Assistant, jtidd@mseane.org

From Your President Continued...

the staff to provide our pay raise with take backs in insurance. We NEED a BOCC that truly values public education, public educators and our students and isn't afraid to spend the money it takes to provide a 21st century education. We NEED a community that isn't afraid to publicly support public education and educators.

2012 will also bring the election of 3 Board of Education members, our Congressman and Senator and the President and Vice President of the United States. We must be diligent in electing the officials who support public education, educators and our students. Having seen what electing the wrong officials can mean to collective bargaining and support for worker's rights and the middle class across the country, we MUST elect pro-public education officials. Our very livelihoods depend on it.

St. Mary's County has been blessed to have the Naval Air Station here during the economic recession. The recession could have been much worse were it not for the benefits of federal spending during these last 3 years. Our income tax revenues are up and our school system is growing. Yet, we have less staff to meet our needs. Each New Year brings a time of hope and plans for a better future for everyone. Let's all hope that our BOCC finds the political will to provide the funding that is needed to keep our school system great in 2012 and beyond. Our students, staff and the community deserve nothing less!

Have a safe and enjoyable Holiday Season! See you next year!

Movie Night



Popcorn & Drinks Provided

Sponsored By: EASMC

Brief Discussion Afterwards

Featuring
American Teacher
(Narrated By Matt Damon)

Date: Monday, January 30, 2012

Place: Forrest Career & Tech Center

Time: 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Deadline to RSVP: 1/23/12

Contact: Jennifer Tidd
jtidd@mseane.org
301-737-2500, x 300

FREE TO PUBLIC!

Negotiations Update

By: Brian Rose, Negotiations Chair

The EASMC, CEASMC, and SMCPS negotiations teams exchanged proposals on Thursday, November 17th. We are not at liberty to discuss any specifics of what happens at the negotiations table. However, I can say that from my perspective, there were no real surprises.

We also met for negotiations on November 30 and December 15. More dates have been added in 2012. While we didn't finish negotiating before the holidays, we are hopeful to complete the process early in the New Year before the school system submits their FY13 budget.

Your EASMC negotiations team is comprised of Liz Purcell Leskinen as our Chief Negotiator, Peg Johnson as our member representative, Kathy Norton as our A&S representative, and myself as negotiations chairperson. Wanda Twigg serves as an ex-officio member as your President and Anna Laughlin this year is participating in an ex-officio capacity as your Vice President. Both Wanda and Anna sit at the table and take part in our conversations when we caucus; however they are not voting members of the team and do not participate in actual negotiations. They are there to monitor activities as your advocates.

The SMCPS negotiations team includes Brad Clements as Chief Operating Officer, Linda Dunderer as Chief Academic Officer, and Greg Nourse as Director of Finance and Human Resources. Greg and Anna are new to our meetings, and we welcome them. Our spirit of positive collaboration to improve our school system and our working conditions continues even within the confines of our present economic reality.

And, it is also another time of year, so I wish all of our EASMC members a very Happy Holiday Season!

**Please Note:
CHISTMAS IS CANCELLED**

**Apparently, YOU told Santa that
you have been GOOD this year ...**



He died laughing



Calendar

- ◆ Dec. 19-Jan. 1 Winter Break
- ◆ January 3 EASMC BOD
- ◆ January 7 EASMC/CEASMC Legislative Breakfast
- ◆ January 10 SMCPS BOE
- ◆ January 10 EASMC RA
- ◆ January 10-11 MSEA BOD
- ◆ January 11 General Assembly Session Begins
- ◆ January 14 EASMC AR Training
- ◆ January 16 MLK, Jr. Holiday
- ◆ January 19 Southern CBC
- ◆ January 25 SMCPS BOE
- ◆ January 27-29 NEA Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference
- ◆ January 30 EASMC Screening of "American Teacher"

EASMC Representative Assembly:

Do you know what's really happening in EASMC & SMCPS?

Is your school or site represented at the monthly RA? Is your building getting all the latest information and updates about what's happening across the system and within the Association? Would three or four of you be willing to share the responsibility of attending the RA on the second Tuesday of the month? It's work to get representation at every meeting, but the benefits are well worth the effort! Let us know how we can assist you in getting representation for your site!

Was your site represented on December 13, 2011?

BBES	Murphy Holley, Brian Rose
CPCS	Joanne Clapp
CHS	Nancy Lewis, Karl Pence
DES	Melissa Formica
EMS	Chris Meyers, Michelle Kozak
EES	Zenia Wallish
FLA	Meddo Swaby
FCTC	Wendy Farrell
GMHS	Miriam Klapka
LHS	Stephanie Law, Ilene Cohen, Tammy Parsons
LMS	Dawn Pipkin
LMDES	Kim Edwards
OES	Patty Parsons
PPES	Renee Campbell
RES	Florence Grayson
SRMS	Kristen Breslin, Peg Johnson
TCES	Lisa Cointot



H&R BLOCK®

Coming in January - Special Discounts From H&R Block

Beginning in January 2012, download a coupon for special NEA member discounts! File a federal form 1040EZ for FREE (through February 29, 2012) or save \$20 to \$99 on tax preparation at a participating H&R Block tax office or online at Block Live™. After January 3, 2012, visit www.neamb.com/hrblock or call 1-800-786-3429 for details!



At Jo-Ann, we appreciate the hard work and dedication of teachers and home school educators. We are proud to offer the Teacher Rewards Discount Card. You'll receive 15% off every purchase you make, both in our stores and at Joann.com®. **Sign up** for one today!

Link: http://www.joann.com/joann/common/content_custservice.

The Education Associations of St. Mary's and Calvert Counties

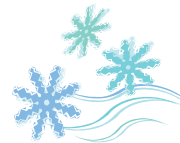
Invite you to attend their 8th Annual Legislative Breakfast

*Saturday, January 7, 2012
8:30 a.m. until 10:30 a.m.*

*Lenny's Restaurant
23418 Three Notch Road
California, MD 20619*

Enjoy a breakfast buffet and discuss educational legislative issues before the start of the 2012 session in Annapolis.

*Please RSVP to EASMC by December 16, 2011
by calling the EASMC office at 301-737-2500, x 300
or emailing jtidd@mseanea.org*



EASMC Association Rep Training

Date: Saturday, January 14, 2012

Time: 8:00 am - 1:00 pm

Place: Southern Maryland Higher Ed Center



One Voice for Public Educators

Topics to be Discussed:

- Recruiting Members
- Defining the Role of the AR
- Building Association Teams
- Representing Members
- Enforcing the Negotiated Agreement

Light breakfast (beginning at 8 am) and lunch will be provided. Training starts at 8:30 am

RSVP By: January 10, 2012

Jennifer Tidd
jtidd@mseanea.org
301-737-2500, x 300



Liz Purcell Leskinen
UniServ Director

Just Ask Liz



Question:

We were told that a special education student may be given no less than a grade of C, even if the student is failing. How does this square with “rigor”?

Answer:

I contacted Ms. Melissa Charbonnet, Director of Special Education for SMCPS, for advice and guidance on any potential directives on this topic. She said that at no time has she ever said that a teacher cannot give a student with a disability a grade below a C. What Ms. Charbonnet actually said was, “Grades should be closely examined” for students with IEPs. According to Ms. Charbonnet, such an examination of grade distributions should NOT reveal a lot of A’s and B’s, which would indicate that “the rigor of instruction and the individual accountability needs to be ratcheted up and accommodations and modifications must be reduced.” Conversely, she explained that there also should NOT be a lot of D’s and F’s. “Both the family’s attorney and I can make a very solid argument that if a student is failing, we are not providing a FAPE (free appropriate public education).”

Ms. Charbonnet expounded as follows. “The purpose of an IEP is to provide a specialized, individualized program to provide access to the curriculum so that the student is able to progress from grade to grade and receive some benefit from their education. If kids are failing they are NOT accessing curriculum and are not receiving benefit from their educational program. If kids are failing because they are not turning in work or refusing to do work, then it is our obligation to determine the function of the behavior and implement a behavior plan which addresses the dysfunctional behavior. Any behavior plan must be implemented across environments, including the general education staff. The SMCPS has made some significant progress in the area of over identification, specifically in the area of Speech/Language. We need to continue to closely examine disproportional representation in Learning Disability, Emotional Disability, and Intellectual Disability, especially with AA students.”

I hope that this provides some insight and perspective that helps you make the best decisions possible to advance your students. The bottom line is that there is no directive to require no less than a grade of C for students with IEPs. If you have additional questions or need more specific advice, please feel free to contact your site IEP chairperson, site administrator, or Ms. Charbonnet if you are ultimately unable to resolve your questions and concerns. She can be reached at mbcharbonnet@smcps.org. We appreciate her willingness to address this topic for us.

Question:

What are the number ratings that are on my observation this year? Who sees them, where did

they come from, and what do they mean?

EASMC representatives have been involved with the annual updating of the Teacher Performance Assessment System (TPAS) and participate on the ongoing Education Effectiveness Pilot Committee. The observation ratings reflect the very same four-level rating system that has been in place for years and align precisely with the TPAS rubrics. The numerical values line up with the ratings: 4 (highly effective), 3 (effective), 2 (developing), or 1 (ineffective). For observations, the ratings are given but they are not necessarily labeled with the numbers when you see your draft report; this varies by administrator and you can request to see the numbers if you prefer. According to Jeff Maher, Director of Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development for SMCPS, “When it comes time for the evaluation, the numbers are used to provide objective information to the evaluator based on multiple observations. The numbers allow for averages to be calculated for the evaluator based on all of the rated elements. Thus, these numerical ratings help to inform the evaluator with this data in making his or her decision about the overall rating for each domain.”

Question:

I was told that all principals can now see our observations online. Is this true? If so, isn’t this an invasion of our privacy? I thought the purpose of observations is to have honest exchanges and improve performance, not to embarrass us.

Answers:

I gave my answer to this previously but wanted to confirm its accuracy with Jeff Maher, Director of Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development for SMCPS. Your observations and evaluations are indeed housed in an electronic database, but Mr. Maher confirmed, “Principals and supervisors only have access to observations of staff to whom they are assigned. A principal in one school cannot see the observations of staff in another school. The online database is password protected and rights are restricted to assigned staff.” Thank you to Mr. Maher for setting the record straight. Hopefully this assures you of your privacy and reaffirms the school system’s intentions. If you have specific questions or concerns, feel free to contact your site administrator, your supervisor, or Mr. Maher at jamaher@smcps.org. As always, EASMC is available to support you if you are unsuccessful in resolving your worries.

Costco Means Savings for NEA Members!

As a Costco member, you can save money on thousands of brand-name items every day. From fresh foods and health & beauty items to clothing and electronics, you’ll find tons of useful items for school, home and office. To become a new member of Costco, simply login and register at www.neamb.com, go to the Everyday Living tab and the Costco discount page, and then complete and print the special Costco membership application. Present it at any U.S. Costco location when you register to become a new member—it’s that simple!