



# The EASMC Extra

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*"One Voice for Public Educators"*

## EASMC/CEASMC Building Association Representative (AR) Training

Have you ever thought about being a building representative, but weren't sure if it was a job for you? Or have you wondered what it is that we do for the dues you spend? EASMC and CEASMC are offering a building AR training on Saturday, January 14, 2012 from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm at the Southern Maryland Higher Education Center. We will start with a continental breakfast at 8:30 am and end with a light lunch at 12:30 pm. Topics that will be covered include, but are not limited to, the Role of the AR, How to Answer Member Questions, Knowing the Difference between a Grievance and a Smaller Problem, Association Acronyms, Why We Are Involved in Politics, Member Recruiting, NEA Member Benefits and more! Door prizes will be given away and attendees will receive a certificate of completion and materials to keep for use in your building.

If you would like to attend, please RSVP to Jennifer Tidd at [jtidd@mseanea.org](mailto:jtidd@mseanea.org) by January 9<sup>th</sup>. We hope to see many of you there!



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## EASMC Elections Are Coming!

As we move into the winter season, it is time to start thinking about the leadership of the Association again. Every January to March we conduct elections for EASMC leadership positions. This year we will be electing new officers as president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, and new member's at-large secondary, A&S, and retired. The elections for MSEA and NEA Convention delegate will also take place during this time.

In January, each member will receive a nomination form and a description of the positions available. Any member may nominate another member for the positions. The nominated member must agree to run and serve. Then, at the February RA the Nominations, Elections, and Credentials Committee take final nominations from the floor. Nominations are then closed. Next, the Committee sends out ballots and biographies of the nominated candidates and members are asked to vote for their chosen candidates. Voting results are usually announced at the March RA.

If you are interested in running or you know someone who would be an excellent advocate for members and public education, but are unsure of the process or the expectations, please email Linda Miedzinski, Chair of the Nominations, Elections and Credentials Committee at [lsmiedzinski@smcps.org](mailto:lsmiedzinski@smcps.org) with your questions.



EASMC needs high quality leaders, just as schools and all organizations do. If you are interested in working to improve public education and become a leader for our members and our Association, please consider running. You have nothing to lose and EASMC and our members have everything to gain from your involvement and activism. Thank you in advance for considering running for an EASMC office or as a delegate to our conventions.

### BOD Contacts

- Wanda Twigg- President, [wtwigg@mseanea.org](mailto:wtwigg@mseanea.org)
- Anna Laughlin- Vice-President, [amlaughlin@smcps.org](mailto:amlaughlin@smcps.org)
- Mike Soly- Treasurer [masoly@smcps.org](mailto:masoly@smcps.org)
- Linda Miedzinski- Secretary [lsmiedzinski@smcps.org](mailto:lsmiedzinski@smcps.org)
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- Michael Loughran- A&S [mmloughran@smcps.org](mailto:mmloughran@smcps.org)
- Liz Morris- Retired [emorris@md.metrocast.net](mailto:emorris@md.metrocast.net)
- Liz Purcell Leskinen- MSEA UniServ Director, [lleskinen@mseanea.org](mailto:lleskinen@mseanea.org)
- Jennifer Tidd, Admin. Assistant, [jtidd@mseanea.org](mailto:jtidd@mseanea.org)

# American Education Week

Last week was American Education Week. Here is the editorial that was in the Enterprise recognizing the week and the important work of all educators from EASMC President Wanda Twigg. Thank you all for everything you do to make SMCPS great and to keep EASMC strong.

November 15, 2011

Dear Editor:

November 13 -18 marks the 90<sup>th</sup> annual observance of American Education Week. It was started in 1921 when the American Legion and the National Education Association wanted to call attention to public schools and the education of our youth. Both organizations were motivated to action by the knowledge that 25% of those drafted into WWI were illiterate and 9% were physically unfit. American Education Week has grown since 1921 and is now sponsored by many education groups. This year's theme is "Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility." This theme highlights the importance of bringing together educators, parents, students, and communities to build great public schools.

Today's educators do more than teach the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic. They nurture and inspire children despite obstacles. They help students learn essential skills like critical thinking, conflict resolution, cooperation, problem solving and team work, which are very valued in society and the work-place. Today's students have so many opportunities available to them including a variety of fine arts programs, multiple intramural and extra-curricular sports teams, dozens of advanced placement and honors classes, specialized academies, JROTC programs, and many technical programs that range from firefighting to horticulture. While today's educators are held accountable for student success on our state and federally mandated tests, our mission is to teach the whole child and prepare them for work in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and to be productive citizens in a global society.

To do this, we must work together with our parents, community members and elected officials to ensure that even during these economic times that the future of our children is not endangered. We know that education is the foundation of our democracy and the great equalizer. Now more than ever, students need us to make the tough decisions that will protect their basic right to a great education. It is indeed our responsibility to protect that right and provide the highest quality education for our children.

So, during this 90<sup>th</sup> American Education Week, please visit a community school and if you get a chance, thank an educator for making a difference in your child's life or in your own. Educators are not sitting back waiting for Superman. They are working diligently for your children each and every day. Together we will provide a great public school for every child.

Thank you,

Wanda Ruffo Twigg  
EASMC President  
MSEA and NEA Board of Directors -Member at large  
Mechanicsville, Maryland



Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend.

Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.

~ **Melody Beattie**

## Calendar

- ◆ Nov. 23-25 Thanksgiving break
- ◆ Nov. 30 EASMC/SMCPS Negotiations
- ◆ Nov. 30 SMCPS BOE
- ◆ Dec. 6 EASMC BOD
- ◆ Dec. 6 BOCC Public Forum
- ◆ Dec. 10 NEA BOD
- ◆ Dec. 13 EASMC RA
- ◆ Dec. 14 SMCPS BOE
- ◆ Dec. 15 EASMC/SMCPS Negotiations
- ◆ Dec. 15 Gov. Ed. Eff. Council
- ◆ Dec. 16 MSEA BOD
- ◆ Dec. 17-Jan. 1 Winter Break
- ◆ Dec. 22-Jan. 1 EASMC Office Closed



# Negotiations Update

By: Brian Rose, Negotiations Chair

Believe it or not, it's that time of year again: Negotiations!

The EASMC, CEASMC, and SMCPS negotiations teams exchanged proposals on Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup>. When we swap proposals, we ask all of our questions of each other so everyone has a clear understanding of intentions and goals related to the new language proposed to be added and any former language proposed to be deleted. 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.

Our intention for this year is to follow the negotiations time line more carefully. In years past, we had lengthened negotiations in order to know exactly what money was available in the hopes of bringing forward the best possible agreement in these difficult economic times. However, since our new Board of County Commissioners has taken office, it is clear that we want to try to wrap up negotiations before the winter break. Then the Board of Education will know exactly how much money it will need to include in its budget for Fiscal Year 2012-2013. While the budget process never truly ends, the BOE begins full preparations of its next year's budget in January.

We are scheduled to meet two more times in December. More dates may be added if necessary. Hopefully, as we close up the school buildings in late December, we will be finished with negotiating and we will be preparing for our full member vote.

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 Dudderar 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 Thanksgiving!



## Coming to a Theater Near You!

EASMC is pleased to announce a screening of the new film "American Teacher."

**Monday, January 30, 2012**

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

**Location: TBD**

- ◆ Popcorn & Beverages Provided!
- ◆ Discussion Afterwards

RSVP:

Jennifer Tidd at 301-737-2500, x 300 or [jtidd@mseane.org](mailto:jtidd@mseane.org)



## NEA Click & Save "Buy-lights" for December 2011

**NEA Click & Save**, the online discount buying service for NEA members, highlights select retailers and merchants each month. Check out these featured "**Buy-lights**" December and holiday gift-giving:

- |                           |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Harry &amp; David:</b> | Get 20% off            |
| <b>Shoes.com:</b>         | Get 15% off            |
| <b>Home Depot:</b>        | Get 10% off appliances |
| <b>Blue Nile:</b>         | Get 10% off            |

Other retailers offering great deals during the holiday season include Nordstrom, Macy's, Sears, Best Buy, and Kmart!

Join the 215,000 NEA members already registered for NEA Click & Save. Go to [www.neamb.com/clickandsave](http://www.neamb.com/clickandsave) and start shopping today!

## 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 November 8, 2011?

<b>BBES</b>	Murphy Holley
<b>CHS</b>	Nancy Lewis
<b>EMS</b>	Chris Meyers, Michelle Kozak
<b>EES</b>	Sabra Szczglowski
<b>FLA</b>	Meddo Swaby
<b>FCTC</b>	Wendy Farrell
<b>GKES</b>	Mary Hafner
<b>GMHS</b>	Miriam Klapka
<b>LMS</b>	Dawn Pipkin
<b>LMDES</b>	Kim Edwards
<b>LPES</b>	Beverly Scroggins
<b>OES</b>	Patty Parsons
<b>PPES</b>	Renee Campbell
<b>SRMS</b>	Kristen Breslin, Peg Johnson
<b>WMES</b>	Karen Myers



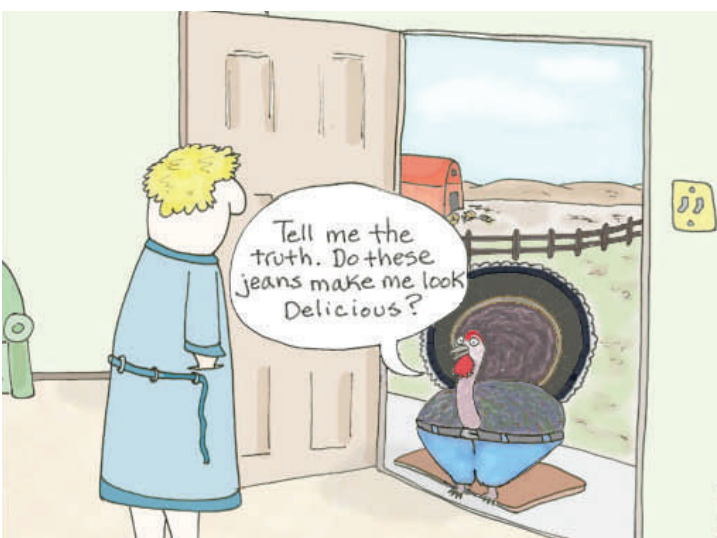
## Other Legislative News

As you all know, next year is election year and aside from the race for President of the U.S., we will also be electing a U.S. Senator, U.S. Representatives and locally, 3 members to the Board of Education. Delegates to the MSEA Convention in October voted to recommend to NEA that we endorse Senator Ben Cardin for U.S. Senator.

If you have been reading the Enterprise, you know that Marilyn Crosby, Cathy Allen and Mary Washington have all filed to run for re-election for their respective Board of Education seats. They are all running unopposed at this time, but citizens have until January 11, 2012 to file for elected office. EASMC will engage in our recommendation process after the filing deadline.

If you are not yet a registered Maryland voter, please check out the St. Mary's County Board of Elections website and click on Voter Information/Forms to download a voter registration form. Do not let apathy allow the wrong people to be elected to represent you and public education. Register to vote today!

On November 8, the people of Ohio voted overwhelmingly to overturn the law in Ohio that would eliminate collective bargaining on almost every topic for public employees. SB 5 which became Issue 2 on the referendum was soundly defeated through the collective collaborative efforts of public and private sector unions, including OEA (Ohio Education Association) and the NEA and the thousands of individuals who knocked on doors, signed the petition to have the issue brought to referendum and those who never gave up and turned out to vote on that historic day. Congratulations to the people of Ohio for standing up for the middle class and their rights to collectively bargain. Now, we look to Wisconsin to see if they are able to muster enough signatures to recall their union busting Governor Walker.





Liz Purcell Leskinen  
UniServ Director

## Just Ask Liz



Bee Thankful

several times with Jeff Maher and Scott Smith (design developers) for database demonstrations; each time we raised privacy concerns and each time they assured us that access will be strictly on a “need to know” basis.

We will keep you informed as development and implementation continue, but you should certainly assume that at the very least, Kelly Hall, Scott Smith, Linda Dudderar, Jeff Maher, and Dr. Martirano can access both your observations and your evaluations should they be so inclined. The primary purpose of their oversight is to ensure timely and appropriate implementation of TPAS!

### QUESTION:

I heard that an employee is prohibited from taking a day off before a three-day holiday (let's say the Friday before.) Also, I heard that an employee would be prohibited from taking a professional day off. For extremely important events, the employee would have to get a two-week waiver from Linda D. and only for extenuating circumstances. These two points are certainly drastic to me.

### ANSWER:

You may still request **non-emergency** personal leave for the day before or after a holiday or for a professional day, but you must submit your leave request two weeks ahead of time to Linda Dudderar rather than to your principal. The language from the negotiated agreement is below.

*Except in an emergency, all employees shall have the approval of either the Chief Operating Officer or the Chief Academic Officer (as appropriate) at least 2 weeks prior for personal leave on the day before or the day following a school holiday, the first or last day of the school year, or on a staff development day.*

The purpose of this language is not to limit your ability to take personal leave, but to ensure good planning on days shown to have extremely high absenteeism. First, SMCPs wants to ensure the availability of substitutes since these are high usage days for leave. Second, SMCPs wants to confirm the number of staff development attendees since the cost is often based on the quantity of attendees and in this period of scant funding, we cannot afford to waste a dime on unused resources!

If you or your child is ill, or you have a real emergency on any of these days, you certainly may call in your absence using SubFinder. Just be aware that if SMCPs can show that there was no illness or emergency, you could be subject to discipline. The bottom line is that the two-week notice **ONLY** applies to (1) the day before or the day following a school holiday, (2) the first or last day of the school year, and (3) staff development days. The purpose is simply to promote the best planning possible given what you know and what you can therefore share. All other non-emergency personal leave requests are still processed by your site administrator.

### QUESTION:

When I went from being a teacher to an administrator, I lost money in terms of salary. It is my understanding that that this is standard for all teachers moving into an administrative capacity. Why is this fair and why does EASMC continue to allow this?

### QUESTION:

My principal asked me to turn in lesson plans prior to me going out on maternity leave, and reminded me that I will have to submit/enter my student report grades. Do I have to do this while in an approved leave status?

### ANSWER:

When you are on extended leave, such as for maternity, you should **NOT** be writing or submitting lesson plans or doing grades. What you should do, however, is leave a unit plan or some type of outline that indicates where you have been and where you are going with your students so that the substitute can stay on pace when preparing the daily lesson plans. If grades or interims will be due during your absence, be sure that your grades and other student data are current prior to your leave start date.

### QUESTION:

My principal told me that we cannot get a sub for less than a half day. Does this mean that we need to take a half day of leave if we just need to leave an hour early for a doctor's appointment?

### ANSWER:

I contacted Rhonda Meleen, SMCPs Coordinator of Fiscal Services. According to Rhonda, you only need to take the amount of leave for the exact time that you are off. She explained, “We pay substitutes in either whole or half day. If she is leaving an hour early sometimes the school works out coverage for the class, or they have a substitute come in, but the substitute is paid for a half day.” Perhaps it is the half-day paid to substitutes that causes the confusion. In any case, Rhonda is a wonderful employee advocate, so if you ever have specific questions about how leave is computed, you can email her at [rkmeleen@smcps.org](mailto:rkmeleen@smcps.org).

### QUESTION:

I am curious as to what exactly goes into your HR file at Moakley. Would the formal observation with ratings such as effective, ineffective, etc. go in there or just the form at the end of the year?

### ANSWER:

The only thing that goes into your official personnel file relative to site observations is your midyear (usually these are done only for nontenured employees and those on plans of assistance) and end-of-year evaluations. Your observations are physically maintained at your work site only. However, your observations **ARE** housed electronically in an online database. It is our understanding that principals and supervisors can only access the performance records of their own staff members or subordinate sites (in the case of supervisors). EASMC has met

## ANSWER:

This is NOT fair and EASMC does NOT allow this to happen. With all due respect, the question quite simply is, "Why didn't you call us?" EASMC has always been extremely proactive in correcting issues raised by our A&S members. The challenge is that being nontenured in their A&S roles, administrators and supervisors are typically hesitant to allow EASMC to disclose their names when problem solving.

This inequity for promotions came to our attention in 2008 when a member was promoted from an 11-month assistant principal to a 12-month principal and actually took a pay cut when you calculated her per diem. We worked with Dr. Martirano and his staff to ensure a fair salary increase for that individual, and subsequently negotiated the following language during 2008-2009 negotiations. This language can be found in Article XII, Promotional Vacancies, Salary Computation (see [www.easmc.net](http://www.easmc.net)).

1. *Employees receiving a promotion will be placed on the new salary scale according to the following steps.*
2. *If the employee is currently in a ten-month or eleven-month assignment, the value of their current salary will be computed based on the number of months of the new assignment.*
3. *Based on the salary range for the newly assigned position, the employee will be placed at the first higher salary (as established on step 2 above) of the new schedule plus one step.*

We are very proud to say that this process ensures a fair salary computation for new A&S and guarantees a salary increase that considers the required duty months of the new position. Communication is key; we can't repair what we don't know is broken. In this case, one A&S member's courage and willingness to come forward resulted in advances for all of her silent A&S colleagues. Please contact us anytime you have concerns or suggestions. We will not disclose your identity without your permission to do so!

### *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](mailto:jtidd@mseanea.org)*



## **Not Ready to Embark on a Master's Degree? Consider a Graduate Certificate!**

Open to educators with bachelor's or master's degrees, a graduate certificate is a smart and efficient way to advance your career by acquiring skills and expertise in a specific specialty area.

A graduate certificate requires completion of 12 to 15 graduate credits within a 12 to 18-month time frame. The good news is that coursework completed for a certificate typically applies to a master's degree program at the same institution, should you decide to pursue that later.

Two NEA Academy online master's degree program partners, Walden University and UMassOnline, together offer more than 15 graduate certificates in such areas as: Instructional Design and Technology, Curriculum and Instruction, Organizational Leadership, Educational Policy, and more.

Get all the details to plan your path to career advancement - visit [www.neaacademy.org/graduate-certificate-programs.html](http://www.neaacademy.org/graduate-certificate-programs.html) today!