

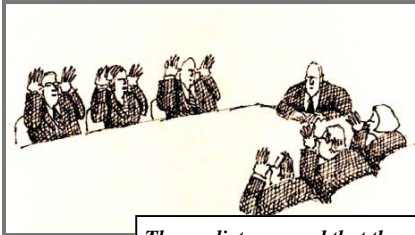
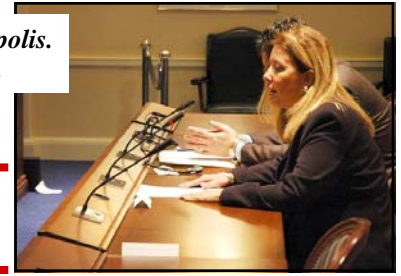


# BULLETIN

MARCH 2009

UNITY...NOW MORE THAN EVER

President Bost testifies in Annapolis.  
See President's Message, below.



The mediator sensed that the negotiations were in trouble.

decisions;

a fair judge. 2. legitimately sought, pursued, done, etc.; proper under the rules: a fair fight.

Through MSTA, all local associations are working hard to pass the **Fairness in Negotiations Act** in both the state senate and house of delegates. This bill would enact a FAIR process to settle disputes at the conclusion of negotiations for school systems and local associations. It may seem that this is common sense, but not to school system leaders who don't want employees as part of the decision-making process.

Currently both parties (school system and associations) can open articles within their agreements as topics of negotiation, or in some years the entire contract is open. Typically there are two months (one meeting a week) in which to "negotiate" items brought forward. At the end of that time, either party can decide to request a declaration of impasse. The parties have to request to be declared at impasse from the state superintendent

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Fairness is a core value; does management practice what it preaches?



Cheryl Bost  
TABCO President

and it can be granted or denied with no time limit. If impasse is declared, the parties usually select a representative from their respective sides and a neutral party to serve on a three member mediation panel. Arguments are heard from each side and the panel makes a ruling. After the ruling is made, the Board of Education can unilaterally deny the mediation panel's recommendation with no explanation. Currently, this is true for both language issues and fiscal issues in the state of Maryland.

We witnessed this exact process last year over our push for a minimal 2% salary increase (approximate cost \$9.5 million). It took ten months from the time we sat down for our first negotiations meeting until the Board of Education unilaterally turned down the mediation panel's recommendation to include

See "Fairness is a core value," page 2

## New ES report card piloted—special area grading at issue

~Angela Leitzer, Bulletin Editor

News from those working with the piloted elementary report card, set to be implemented system-wide for the next school year, indicates that most of the stakeholder groups are expressing few problems but not complete satisfaction with the new document. A survey conducted within the pilot group yielded the following results, according to Jean Wilson, Principal on Assignment who is the lead person on the project:

▶ 90% of the 1270 Grade 2-5 parents who responded were *somewhat* or *very satisfied* with the new report card, with **62% very satisfied**.

▶ 77% of 226 teachers, resource personnel, and administrators who responded were *somewhat* or *very satisfied*, with **30% very satisfied**.

▶ 93% of the teacher/resource personnel/administrator group was *somewhat* or *very satisfied* with the electronic template, with **44% very satisfied**.

Asked to comment on how he felt about his involvement as a committee member and piloting teacher, TABCO Treasurer John R. Wilkins told us, "The process used in creating the new

elementary report cards has been very inclusive. Comments and suggestions made by the teachers on the committee were accepted, valued and in most cases implemented. I'm also happy to see that comments made by all groups on recent surveys are being used to make mid-pilot modifications to the document."

Having taken a look at the document that is being piloted, I calculated that a grade 3 report card contains about 39 core subject grades per student (multiplied by 28 students that comes to 1,092 grades each term for a 3rd grade teacher) which begs the question: what is the teacher time required to come up with 39 *high-quality* grades for each student on each report card?

On the other hand, as a special area teacher, I continue to be incensed at the system for reporting on student progress in art, music, physical education and library. For grades one and two this is a single number that represents a student's "effort." For grades three through five, the report card offers an oppor-

See "New ES report card," page 2

**“Fairness is a core value”**  
(from page 1)

the 2% salary increase for the last month’s pay and add to the base for 2009-10 with an estimated cost of \$1 million.

Both organizations spent well over \$9,000 to complete the process that led to no resolution. At the same time that BCPS officials put forth tough fiscal times as a reason not to fund the approximately \$1 million mediation panel award, BCPS ended FY08 with a \$22 million surplus that could have been used to fund the increases and Baltimore County Government ended FY08 with an unrestricted General Fund balance of \$118 million that could have been used. (Both are projecting additional surpluses for FY09.)The truth was in the numbers!

The Fairness in Negotiations Act can level the playing field, bring both sides to the table to have true negotiations on a multitude of issues, establish a fair resolution process, set in place a timeline for the process, and apply **binding arbitration**. Our hope is that Baltimore County Public Schools may finally address all issues relevant to workload, retention, and the like.

The new legislation would put in place a fair and timely process in order to resolve disputes as a result of the negotiations process. It does not change the items COMAR outlines for bargaining. (Class size, calendar, and assignment are illegal topics.)

Briefly, HB1243 and SB673\* call for one of the parties to state a desire to enter into mediation at the conclusion of the specified negotiations time frame. Each side would follow a process to select a mediator whose cost is paid equally by both sides. After a set amount of time, if resolution is not found, one party can state the desire to move to arbitration. At such time, a neutral arbitrator is selected and each party presents their final best offer. Hearings are held, then the neutral arbitrator hands down a ruling that is binding on both parties. If several issues were part of the package, the ruling can be portions of both offers or one party’s offer in its entirety. The ruling cannot change the fiscal relationship already in place with fiscal authorities.

Unfortunately, our system leaders are not working with us to bring about this fair process. In February, our very own BCPS Board of Education unanimously voted in opposition to the legislation. Maryland school superintendents are also strongly opposed to the bills. Some of their arguments include cost of funding the process and the costs that systems could possibly incur as a result of binding arbitration.

As we see it, failure to understand the costs that are incurred when issues negatively impacting our working and learning environment are not addressed is one major factor causing us to have the third highest teacher turn-

over rate. Ultimately the fear is of a FAIR process in which to negotiate and solve disputes and improve working conditions to help retain teachers. How dare we ask for a FAIR process?!

I was proud to testify on behalf of TABCO members and members throughout the state at the House Ways and Means Committee hearing for HB1243 this month. Testimony was also provided for SB673. MSTA and local presidents from across the state are visiting Annapolis each week, making presentations to delegations, and meeting privately with senators and delegates. We will continue to do so to see these bills through. But we need your help!

We need your voices as educators, tax payers, and voters. I am asking every member and non-member to write a letter and an email to your senator and three delegates asking them to support HB1243 and SB673. Even if you don’t live in Baltimore County, your Maryland elected officials need to hear from you across the state. It’s quick and it’s simple! Go to [www.mstanea.org](http://www.mstanea.org) and click on “legislative,” then click on “contact your legislators.” Also, your TABCO Association Representative at your school has held or will be holding a “10-Minute Meeting” on this topic. If you didn’t attend the meeting to write your letters, please see them to do so now. It’s not too late! **Let your voices be heard for binding arbitration and a fair negotiations process!**

\* HB1243 and SB673 address additional rights and can be viewed in their entirety on the General Assembly website at <http://mlis.state.md.us/>

**“New ES report card”** (from page 1)

opportunity to give a letter grade and an effort number only twice a year. I cannot help but question the reasoning behind offering 39 separate grades in some areas, while providing nothing but “effort” —or nothing at all—in others.

Jean Wilson’s survey report does state, “Suggestions were made by parents and teachers to provide quarterly feedback about Grade 3-5 student progress in the special area subjects.” To implement this suggestion will require approval by the “executive leadership team.”

*Report Card*

**Art:** N/I\*

**Library:** N/I\*

**Music:** N/I\*

**Ph. Ed.:** N/I\*

\*N/I: not important enough to assess

A conservative estimate of time that a student spends in special area subjects is 119 hours per school year. Do we really mean to say—to parents, to the public at large, to students themselves, to ourselves as a community of educators—that those 119 hours of a student’s learning life are of negligible importance? Not worth reporting on? There is much that could be said about the message that this sends, but just like trying to teach the history of art and cultures in 50 minutes a week, I am limited here!

As always in a advocacy-related publication, I must exhort you to action: act now to address your concerns about this document. I suggest: contact Board of Education members—ask why the new report card aims to give parents *less* information in some subjects.

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**District III~Lisa Norrington, Ann Ritchey, Barbara Tyler Member-at-Large~Stacey Enty**

# NOTES & news briefs

Check out President Bost's emails with timely updates and news!



## SPARKS GRADUATES

Have a look at our second group of SPARKS for this school year: Andrea Andrek, Powhatan ES; Lauren Catts, Sandy Plains ES; Trisha Dunn, Patapsco HS; Beverly Folkoff, Powhatan ES; Julie Hendricks, Mars Estates ES; Vanessa Hudson, Chesapeake HS; Laurie Justice, Chesapeake HS; Cheryl Lovick, Hebbville ES; Kathryn Short, Owings Mills HS; Holly Sturm, Mars Estates ES; Laura Thacker, Hebbville ES; Marisa Laur, Patapsco HS. We look forward to seeing these fine ladies at many more TABCO functions. Thanks to all of them and to their SPARKS trainers: Cheryl Bost, Lisa Norrington and Brad DeSantos. If you know of a teacher member with less than five years who might be interested in this networking workshop, please email cbost@mstanea.org. Names will be collected for invitations to the next session.



### *In memory of...*

*Karen (Kaye) Randolph Watson*

"Kaye was a dynamic, dramatic woman who brought life and spirit to Bedford Elementary. She will be deeply missed by all who knew her," said colleague Andrea Lauber.

**Robert Kirkpatrick**, former art department chair at Perry Hall HS and his wife **Paulette Kirkpatrick**, former English Department chair at Perry Hall HS, who were killed in an automobile accident in February.

**Raynette Fiorentino**, former art teacher at Red House Run Elementary, who passed away on 1/5/09.

*We mourn the loss of our colleagues  
and extend condolences to their friends and families.*

The Bulletin will include notices to memorialize the passing of our members. Please notify us (email bookends@comcast.net with the name, school and death date of any TABCO member who should be listed). We cannot be held responsible for the omission of information that we have not received.

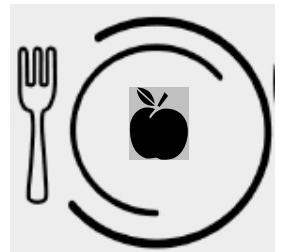
## Plan now to attend the TABCO - BACE - BCPS Annual Retirement & Recognition Dinner & Awards Program Thursday, May 7, 2009

**Martin's East**  
9000 Pulaski Highway  
Baltimore, MD 21220

Social (cash bar) 5:30 to 6:15 pm  
Recognition Dinner 6:15 pm

\$38 (retirees receive one free dinner)

**Recognition  
and Rookie  
awards will  
be presented!**



## Staffing and Transfer Process underway for 09-10

Principals have received their staffing allocations for the coming year and discussions should be underway with staff members, especially those whose assignments may be impacted. The second year of **Transfer Fairs** will be conducted to give teachers who are voluntarily or involuntarily transferring an opportunity to network with school administrators. Those dates are (see page 4 for locations):

March 31—Elementary School Fair  
April 1—Middle School Fair  
April 2—High School Fair.

Other noteworthy dates are:

April 14—last date for teachers to amend Declaration of Intent forms for inclusion in countywide dissemination  
April 27-May 1—Secondary school principals finalize staffing positions  
May 4-May 8—Elementary school principals finalize staffing positions  
May 15—Excess notification letters sent to teachers by Office of Personnel.

Watch for the updated **TABCO Transfer Guide** coming soon—each Association Representative will receive two copies that may be reproduced for members in the buildings. Call your UniServ Director at the TABCO Office if you need assistance with transfer issues.

# Bulletin Board

## JOB OPPORTUNITIES

**NEW! Towson Golf & Country Club** is looking for swim team coaches. Golf privileges, flexible schedule.  
www.tgcc.net  
410-252-8484x103, Tina Lutzi, General Manager

**Beth Tfiloh Camps** is seeking head counselors and instructors of camp crafts, singing, nature, sports, art, and swimming. The Owings Mills day camp runs Monday-Friday from 9 AM-4 PM for 8 weeks (June 22-August 14). Visit our website at [www.btcamps.org](http://www.btcamps.org) or phone 410-517-3451.  
**YOUR CHILD ATTENDS FREE!**

**Camp Milldale:** Summer Staff Needed—June 22 – August 15. Searching for staff and specialists to be part of our camp team in Baltimore County providing programs for children ages 5-15. Positions available—Counselors & Specialty Camp Staff: Senior Counselors, Special Needs Counselors, Adventure Camp Staff, Sports Camp Staff. Specialist Positions: Aquatics Staff, Arts & Crafts, Music. Interested individuals should contact Dianne Newborn at [dnewborn@jcc.org](mailto:dnewborn@jcc.org) or download a job application from our website at [www.campmilldale.org](http://www.campmilldale.org)

**The Community College of Baltimore County** is looking for instructors for its Summer Camp Program. Full-time positions are available on the Essex campus. Part-time positions available at other locations. Experience with summer camps preferable. Pay is \$24-\$29 an hour based on experience. Average 15-30 hours per week. Some Particular Needs: Forensics, Japanese Anime, Math Teachers, Keyboarding (Typing), Puppeteer, Web Page Design, World Traveler Class, SAT Prep. We are also looking for summer camp staff—morning and afterschool providers. Send resume to: [ARobinson@ccbcmd.edu](mailto:ARobinson@ccbcmd.edu) and/or [Irobertson@ccbcmd.edu](mailto:Irobertson@ccbcmd.edu). Please include subject area of expertise.

**Jewish Community Center's Noah's Ark Camp** is looking for teachers: We are seeking energetic, creative, outgoing individuals to be a part of our camp team. Our preschool camps in Owings Mills offer a fun-filled summer of indoor and outdoor play for ages 2 to 5. We are seeking: Teachers/Counselors with a degree in Early Childhood or Elementary Education as well as specialists such as Nature and Art. For more information please contact Gabrielle Burger, Camp Director at 410-356-5200 ext. 508 or at [gburger@jcc.org](mailto:gburger@jcc.org)

**DISCLAIMER:** *TABCO assumes no responsibility for representations made or services performed in advertise-*

### Association Events HIGHLIGHTS

*For a complete listing of Association events,  
see the TABCO website*

#### March

- 19—Retirement Workshop, Loch Raven HS
- 23—Annapolis Bus Trip
- 23 – 27—TABCO Election Week
- 26—National Board Workshop, TABCO Towers
- 27—TABCO Representative Assembly
- 31—TABCO Election Ballots Due
- 31—Elementary School Transfer Fair, Crowne Plaza, 5-7 pm

#### April

- 1—Middle School Transfer Fair, Perry Hall MS 4:30-6:30
- 2—High School Transfer Fair, Oregon Ridge 3:30-5:30
- 6-13—Spring Break – Schools closed
- 10 & 13—TABCO Closed
- 14—Schools/TABCO Reopen
- 21—Homebuyers Seminar, Loch Raven HS
- 23—Representative Assembly– Parkville HS 4:00
- 25—Third Annual KidCare Walk, The Avenue at White Marsh

## TAX INFORMATION

**TABCO member dues amounts for 2008:** Salary above \$35,070—\$598.80  
Salary between \$17,535-\$35,070—\$490.00

Salary below \$17,535—\$408.60

*For tax information for anyone working less than full time, please call the TABCO office.*

## ASSOCIATION WEBSITES:

NEA  
[www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org)  
MSTA  
[www.mstanea.org](http://www.mstanea.org)  
TABCO  
<http://tabco.mstanea.org>

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