



SPECIAL NEW TEACHER EDITION
August 2007



*Cheryl Bost,
 TABCO President*

BULLETIN

Professional Publication of the Teachers Association of Baltimore County • Affiliated with the Maryland State Teachers Association and the National Education Association ~3.2 million men and women dedicated to helping students achieve

TEAM TABCO welcomes you to Baltimore County Public Schools

Congratulations on your new job. After years of preparation, you are ready to put your ideas, plans, and enthusiasm into action.

The Teachers Association of Baltimore County (TABCO) is here to help you succeed. As the only union officially representing Baltimore County teachers for over 80 years, we count many improvements in working conditions and salaries among our continuing successes.

TEAM TABCO has 6,000 members, is affiliated with the Maryland State Teachers Association (MSTA), numbering 67,000 members, and the National Education Association (NEA) with 3.2 million members. This is our unified team, sharing your vision for children and education.

A vision can be described as a picture of what ought to be—where we are going. Think of it in relation to the way people put together a jigsaw puzzle. Most people open the box and dump the pieces on a table. They turn all the pieces right side

up and then look for the corners, arranging them in four corners. Then they put the box on the table to use the picture as a guide—their “vision” of what it will look like.



Our vision for BCPS teachers and students is to advance the quality of public education by empowering ourselves to secure those conditions which enhance professional growth, morale, and the general welfare for the educational employees, the students and the community, in order to maximize excellence and equity in the public schools. *Together, we can put the pieces in place to make our vision become reality.*

We invite you to join us.

Check out the ideas and articles inside to help get you started—then check out our website for even more helpful information.

www.mstane.org/tabco

What can TABCO Membership do for YOU?

It's as simple as **1-2-3**

1 TABCO HELPS YOU GET AHEAD IN YOUR CAREER:

- through opportunities to participate in workshops and conferences, where you'll meet and learn from the leaders in the teaching/learning field. To be a success, learn from the “masters,” with your Association's help;
- through its information resources, sample discipline models, sample lesson plans, innovative ideas from colleagues, TABCO, MSTA and NEA websites, and monthly publica-

tions from the local, state and national level;

- through over 40 free workshops on current education topics offered at the annual MSTA Convention;
- by keeping you informed of the current changes in curriculum and instruction in the county, state and nation.

2 TABCO PROVIDES JOB SECURITY:

- through negotiating and enforcing the *Master Agreement*, our contract with the school system;
- through our members-only long term disability coverage that protects your income when your sick leave benefits run out;

- through confidential professional advice on observations, evaluations, and more, provided by trained staff.

3 TABCO DEFINES YOU AS A RESPECTED PROFESSIONAL:

- through the setting of professional standards that require all TABCO members to practice their profession at the highest levels of efficiency and integrity. The words “TABCO Member” tell your peers and administration that they're working with someone who is committed to deliv-

*Support yourself
 and your chosen profession by
 joining TABCO today.*

MEET YOUR UNISERV DIRECTORS—TABCO'S PROFESSIONAL STAFF: dedicated to assisting our members



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An important benefit of TABCO membership is access to our professional staff. These experienced advocates are available to advise or assist members with a wide variety of issues. Although many issues can be addressed at the work site by the Faculty Council, our UniServ Directors are our resident experts on all aspects of the Master Agreement.

Vice President Christine Beard's Corner



Welcome to the teaching ranks of the Baltimore County Public Schools. The Teachers Association of Baltimore County (TABCO), your professional association, is delighted you have chosen to teach here. You have taken on a large responsibility and your emotions are probably off the scale. It's to be expected that you are excited, nervous, and

anxious, as you begin this grand and rewarding adventure called teaching.

Relax. You will be fine. Here are a few tips to remember.

- ▶ Ask for help from colleagues. Remember, at one time, they too were first-year teachers.

- ▶ Laugh at your mistakes and learn from them.

- ▶ Do your best to be organized

- ▶ Plan ahead.

- ▶ Keep in touch—visit TABCO's website: www.mstanea.org/tabco

- ▶ Respect your students and set high standards. They will strive to meet those standards.

- ▶ Communicate with parents. Remember, they want to hear about their children.

- ▶ Join TABCO. Take advantage of the expertise and knowledge that your TABCO building representative, officers and UniServ Directors can provide.

- ▶ Before you know it, June will be here and you will have successfully completed your first year of teaching.

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AUGUST 2007
The newsletter of the
Teachers Association of Baltimore County,
an affiliate of the Maryland State Teachers Association
and the National Education Association

TABCO Bulletin

TABCO TOWERS
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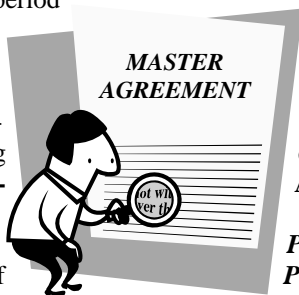
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Know YOUR contract rights before you step into the classroom

SCHOOL DAY FOR TEACHERS: The regular school day for teachers shall be seven (7) hours in duration. This period shall extend from 15 minutes before the time for starting scheduled activities for students and shall not extend beyond 15 minutes after the time for dismissing regularly scheduled students. **Article 10.6**

OBSERVATION PROCESS: If you are having difficulties with the observation process call your TABCO UniServ Director at TABCO. Request the following from your administration: ask for an *Assistance Plan* as soon as difficulties arise; ask for a meeting with your program supervisor, your department chair, your mentor, and your prin-

icipal for the purpose of clarification. Ask, "What do you need from me to have a successful observation?"



LUNCH: Teachers are guaranteed a 30-minute duty-free lunch time. **Article 10.11**

PLANNING/PREPARATION: All classroom teachers shall have time during the school day for individual preparation and planning related to their assignment. Individual teacher preparation and planning periods shall not be imposed upon, except in the case

of unforeseen circumstances, or by the agreement of the teacher. **Article 10.11.1**

PERSONAL BUSINESS LEAVE: Each teacher shall be entitled to up to three (3) days per year for urgent personal business leave. A written statement of intent to be absent shall be submitted to the principal (or other appropriate administrator) at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the expected absence...Urgent personal business leave may not be used on consecutive duty days except as otherwise indicated by this agreement or with permission of the principal (or other appropriate administrator). **Article 12.14**

TABCO MEMBERS: If you believe you are being treated unfairly, or have a question or concern please call your TABCO UniServ Director at 410-828-6403.

Establish good communications with parents to manage / improve discipline in your classroom

When to communicate with parents _____

1. Teachers should establish positive communications by sending home positive notes or writing comments on papers. The more communication between parents and teachers, the less problems.
2. Parents should be contacted at the first sign of a problem.
3. Problems usually appear in two areas — learning and discipline.

How can you contact parents? _____

1. An effective way to reach parents is to mail a note home. Many parents will take action on their own to ensure that problems do not continue. Be sure to use a plain envelope for this purpose, since students are smart and many of them beat their parents to the mailbox.
2. If you have problems reaching the parents at home, contact their office or job site.
3. Phone calls should be made to the parents if problems continue.
4. If one parent isn't cooperative, call the other.
5. Still no action? Call the emergency number for the student. Many times you will get a grandmother.
6. Use caution when putting your thoughts in writing (email or notes). Maintain a professional, objective

tone. Your words can come back to haunt you!

7. When you have exhausted all means of reaching the parents, it is time to request the help of the administration.

Tips for communicating with parents _____

DO:

1. Address the parent by name and, if talking in person, look him or her in the eye.
2. State the problem in specific terms, ask for help, and state the consequences. For example, "If Johnny doesn't do his homework he will fail this course. He and I need your help to ensure this doesn't happen."
3. Offer specific ideas on how parents can help.
4. Summarize the conversation at the end and reiterate what you and the parent have agreed to do.
5. If possible, end the conversation on a positive note.
6. Follow up the conversation with a note.

DON'T:

1. Apologize for bothering the parent, minimize the problem or belittle your abilities.
2. Downplay the consequences of the

student's behavior.

Conferences _____

1. Don't hold a conference if you are not prepared for it. If a parent enters the class during the day for an unscheduled visit, greet him/her pleasantly, but suggest another time for a conference. Explain that you want to give him/her your full attention and can only do so when the class is not present or your other responsibilities have been attended to.
2. When a parent calls for a conference:
 - Be ready
 - Answer questions and offer suggestions for improvement
 - Remember, you can always ask for a break if one is needed — you might even go to the restroom.
 - If threatened, ask for an end to the meeting. If the principal is not present, ask that the meeting be moved to his/her office.

When talking to parents —

- stay calm
- speak slowly
- keep it short
- don't become defensive or angry



GETTING STARTED IN THE CLASSROOM

CREATE A "FIRST WEEK" FILE: Develop a list of first week tasks as you complete them; include copies of all first week documents such as supply lists for students, letters to parents, student information forms, etc.; include photos of bulletin boards, and other reminders of first week activities. Use and update the file annually to effectively organize your time during each first week.

TO LEARN NAMES: Students sit in a circle on the floor. First student tells his/

her name. Second student tells first person's name and then his/her name. Proceed around the circle until all students have done this. Then the teacher recites all names.

IDEAS FOR LEARNING ABOUT STUDENTS:

1. "**NAME POSTER**" Make a long poster, using your name, lettering vertically. List, beside each letter of your name, something about yourself, using the letters as the beginning of the ideas.

Have students create their own posters to share with the class.

2. "**REPORTER'S FORMULA**" Each student interviews a person in the class he/she doesn't know, using "Who, What, When, Where, Why." Student writes a newspaper-style article about the person, then introduce the person to the class, relating the facts learned.

MAKING RULES: Teacher sets expectations for class and students, then asks students to define rules to meet those expectations. Class rules are made from

SPARKS

What is it? Who is it for? Is it contagious?

SPARKS is not an acronym for some educational term--it actually means what it reads, SPARKS! SPARKS is a training project that started in Washington State to socialize new members and "spark" their interest to stay in the profession and to become involved in the work of the Association. This training is designed for new teachers with 1 to 6 years of experience.

TABCO has sponsored SPARKS sessions for three years. Teachers with 1 to 6 years of experience are invited to join us for two days at MSTA Headquarters with an overnight in Annapolis. Participants learn about certification issues, financial planning, liability issues, and "What can TABCO do for YOU?" They even have time to teach each other on topics such as surviving your first year, conducting a successful parent conference, applying for

ASSOCIATION CONTACTS	
TABCO	410-828-6403
MSTA	800-448-6782
Websites:	www.msta.org
	www.nea.org
	www.mstaneaa.org/tabco

each other as the years progress. In addition, they help to rejuvenate some of us who have been involved for many years. Look for more SPARKS trainings in the future. Contact cbost@mstaneaa.org for more information.



grants, and much more. These groups of young professionals are energized to stay in teaching, to get active in the association, and to continue networking with

YOU are TABCO!
Each member of our Association makes up TABCO. Be an active member by joining a committee. Your involvement adds to TABCO's strength. Call today; ask, "How can I get involved?"
410-828-6403

Membership Application for TABCO, MSTA/NEA

2007-08

MAX. DUES: \$29.70 PER PAY

| PRINT

FULL-TIME

PART-

FIRST NAME	MIDDLE INITIAL	LAST NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	CIRCLE ONE
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER	HOME PHONE	HOME EMAIL ADDRESS	WORK EMAIL ADDRESS	
SCHOOL OR WORKSITE	LEVEL (EL, MS, HS)	POSITION	SUBJECT	
HOME ADDRESS	APT. #	CITY	STATE & ZIPCODE	

Check your salary level (for dues computation): More than \$35,070 \$17,535 to \$35,070 Less than \$17,535

PAYROLL DEDUCTION AUTHORIZATION: I hereby authorize continuing deduction of dues in the sum determined by the Teachers Association of Baltimore County (TABCO), the Maryland State Teachers Association (MSTA) and the National Education Association (NEA), each year, unless I revoke this authorization in writing to TABCO by such time as is designated in the TABCO/BCPS Master Agreement. In case of my resignation or termination, the board of education shall deduct the balance of my yearly dues from my final check.

DATE	SIGNATURE <input type="checkbox"/>	(RETURN TO <input type="checkbox"/> YOUR TABCO REP, OR TO <input type="checkbox"/> 'TABCO' VIA SCHOOL MAIL)
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