

Bulletin Board

Start thinking now about colleagues whose outstanding qualities make them eligible for TABCO Recognition and Rookie of the Year Awards ~honoring some of our most outstanding colleagues and most promising newcomers, as well as community business partners and programs. More information and nominations forms will be coming soon. Let's celebrate US!

SAVINGS BONDS: Due to changes enacted at the Department of the Treasury, BCPS employees will no longer have the opportunity to purchase US Savings Bonds via payroll deduction. Letters to this effect were mailed to employees in August.

Sick Leave Bank:
Act now for 10-11 school year
Employees may join during the open enrollment period from July 1 to September 30.
Enrollments must be received by September 30 at 5:00 p.m. or postmarked no later than September 30. In the event September 30 falls on a weekend, applications will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on the first business day or if they are postmarked no later than the first business day following September 30.
 The purpose of the TABCO Sick Leave Bank is to provide sick leave to contributors of the bank after their accumulated sick leave is exhausted. Sick leave covered by the bank is for catastrophic illness, injury, or quarantine that makes an employee unable to perform the duties of his/her position. The bank may be used for maternity and maternity-related illnesses. The bank may not be used for illness or disabilities related to the contributor's family. Enrollment forms and further details are available on the TABCO website.

ASSOCIATION EVENTS

See www.tabco.org for more calendar information

September

- 1 TABCO Board of Directors Mtg.
- 6 Schools/TABCO closed—Labor Day
- 7 Board of Education Mtg.
- 9 Schools closed—Rosh Hashanah
- 14 Schools closed—Primary Election
- 21 Board of Education Mtg.
- 23 TABCO Representative Assembly

October

- 5 Board of Education Mtg.
- 6 TABCO Board of Directors Mtg.
- 13 MSEA Delegate Caucus
- 15-17 MSEA Convention
- 19 Board of Education Mtg.
- 20 TABCO Board of Directors Mtg.
- 21 TABCO Representative Assembly

November

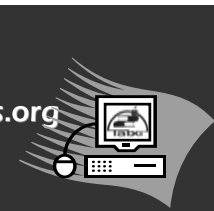
- 2 Schools closed—General Election
- 3 TABCO Board of Directors Mtg.
- 9 Board of Education Mtg.
- 11 District Meetings
- 15-19 American Education Week
- 23 Board of Education Mtg.
- 25-26 Schools/TABCO closed—Thanksgiving

Our sister organization, formerly known as BACE is now ESPBC (Education Support Professionals of Baltimore County):



ASSOCIATION WEBSITES:

NEA www.nea.org
 MSEA www.marylandeducators.org
 TABCO www.tabco.org



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TABCO Office Hours:
MONDAY—THURSDAY, 9:00 A.M. to 5:30 P.M.
FRIDAY—9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.



BULLETIN

SEPTEMBER 2010

UNITY...NOW MORE THAN EVER

Governor Martin O'Malley accepts the "Greatest Education Governor" award at the 2010 National Education Association Convention



"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not."



Angela Leitzer, Bulletin Editor

Another year begins, another set of challenges and changes awaits as we arrange desks, prepare materials and deal with the annual list of new expectations. Prioritized among our preparations for the new year *must be* attention to the staffing of the "branch office" of the Association at each work site. That is, the election of both TABCO reps and Faculty Council members, the key players in upholding the Master Agreement.

It would be difficult to describe the importance of a strong TABCO representative or Faculty Council member any better than by the phrase above, borrowed from Dr. Seuss. When there is at least one person willing to lead, one person willing to be the "expert" on the tenets of the contract (a qualification easily acquired by first, reading the darn thing, and second, attending the association rep workshop in August and monthly representative assemblies), one person who facilitates the organizing of what I am calling the branch office—then there is a foundation for appropriate action and a conduit for communication.

We hear lots of war stories from teachers in schools where the contract is violated on a regular basis; in a great percentage of those situations there is no Faculty Council and either no rep, or an inactive rep. Many times this absence of representation occurs because teachers fear they will experience retribution for representing the union; alternatively, complacency can be a factor, as can workload concerns.

Seasoned reps know that their knowledge base actually gives them a position of strength, coupled with the support of the Association in negotiating issues. Complacency is a tougher nut to crack—trying to motivate resistant adults to be proactive in preventing unforeseen problems, rather than reacting without a structure in place.

In the book by Dr. Seuss, quoted here, *The Lorax*, deploring the indifference that has destroyed the environment, leaves behind a ray of hope in the word, "UNLESS."

See "Someone like you," page 2

Educators: the true leaders of reform



Cheryl Bost
 TABCO President

The education pendulum seems to be on warp speed lately. Somehow the *No Child Left Behind* reform, that was really "No Child Left Untested" is morphing into the *Race to the Top*. We're in a competitive society so making education a race apparently seems appropriate to our national education leaders. The one major, overlooked, flaw is that our country was built on making public education a right, not a race.

But just like all the previous reforms, it will be the educators on the front lines that will continue to instruct students at the highest level and weather us through the storm, taking from it the positives, and protecting public education from the negatives. Hopefully, this time we can insure our voices

"Education is a right, not a race."

are heard; fortunately, Governor Martin O'Malley is helping us to have a seat at the table when it comes to education reform in Maryland.

The Maryland State Board's *Race to the Top* application, that now has reached finalist status, was *not* developed through collaboration with educators from across the state, and holds within it initiatives that will drive quality educators out of our classrooms. Our students deserve better.

Through the Education Reform Bill passed in the 2010 Maryland General Assembly session, guidelines were adopted on three components of the *Race to the Top* reform initiative: tenure, teacher/principal evaluation, and incentives for low-performing schools. These guidelines provide for local mutual agreement (that is, granting the right for input from the local teacher associations) when it comes to linking student performance to teacher evaluations, among other provisions.

Following the release of the *Race to the Top* application, and seeing that educators had not been included as an equal partner, Governor O'Malley set forth an Executive Order convening the Maryland Council for Educator Effectiveness. I am honored to have been selected to represent all of you, along with other teachers from around the state, as a member of the council. Teachers make up a large portion of this

See "Educators, the true leaders," page 2

“Educators, the true leaders”

(from page 1)

council and will work diligently to ensure the voices of educators are heard and concerns addressed.

It's sure to be a rocky road with many trying to get their agendas through, but we as educators must stay focused on the task at hand, providing great public schools for all students while providing a fair, positive, and equitable learning and working environment. Trying to make teachers the scapegoats for society's ills or blaming them for the effects of poorly thought through initiatives that interfere with student achievement, must come to an end.

In the coming year, I will keep you updated on the work of the council as well as the discussions we hold locally on statewide reform components. **Please keep in mind that no changes to our current evaluation tool, process, nor timelines for any school, have been negotiated or agreed upon for the 2010-11 school year.**

We are facing another busy year, and I'm counting on all of you for support and activism when needed. As we witness over and over again, your voices do make a difference.

“Someone like you” (from page 1)

Unless someone (like you?) steps up and takes on the leadership role, what will be the consequences...planning time violations? Duties beyond those negotiated? Insufficient supplies to deliver instruction? Unhealthy working conditions? Denial of extra duty compensation? All of these issues were successfully arbitrated by TABCO last year—yet I wonder if schools remain where teachers are suffering in silence—and in ignorance of their rights.

The qualities that make for a first-rate TABCO rep are like those of any first-rate educator: content knowledge, dedication, communication skills, and a good attendance record. Each month, men and women who exemplify these qualities show up to TABCO meetings after a long day of teaching—or conduct Faculty Council meetings at their worksites—to keep those “branch offices” operating for the benefit of their colleagues. As a strong and effective organization, we cannot do without them; as educators, we are beholden to them.

So, as we begin another journey to another June, I hope we take a moment to appreciate those “who care an awful lot,” the reps, Faculty Council members, TABCO committee chairs and members and let's not forget the **super-UNLESS-ers**, our TABCO officers, and Board of Directors members.

TABCO volunteers welcome new teachers/new members at annual new teacher orientation

President Cheryl Bost, who was instrumental in bringing the TABCO presence to the new teacher meetings a number of years ago, spoke at the opening session again this year. After welcoming them to the profession, she spoke of the “4th R,” (in addition to readin', 'ritin' and “rithmetic), *relationships*, explaining the importance of building relationships with students, parents, and colleagues.

TABCO staff, board of directors, and many member volunteers offered information to the new hires as they moved between their sessions at Perry Hall HS.

The number of new hires was down significantly this year over previous years, being somewhat fewer than 500. Over the two days of sessions, over 225 new TABCO members were recruited from among their ranks.



Above: Mars Estates ES music teacher and new TABCO member, Serafina DeVita, is welcomed by TABCO board member Barb Tyler, a teacher at MEES, and President Cheryl Bost, former MEES teacher.



Above: UniServ Director Ray Suarez offers his expertise and advice. Left: UniServ Director Kathy Wyatt welcomes her daughter, Kellee Parrott, to BCPS and TABCO. Kellee will teach Spanish at Milford Mill Academy.



NEWS & NOTES

Lending a helping hand—TABCO assists gulf coast educators

Cheryl Bost, TABCO President

August 29, 2005 marked a horrific natural disaster for many along the gulf coast. That is the date that Hurricane Katrina, a category five hurricane, devastated much of the gulf coast and killed thousands.

Those of us far removed from the area watched helplessly as children and families were plucked from their flooded homes, huddled at the New Orleans Convention Center and Super Dome, and sought refuge on bridges and overpasses. The destruction was unlike any we had ever seen on U.S. soil; exposing our nation's ill-equipped preparation for saving human lives in a natural disaster.

Here at TABCO, we did not sit idly by in the days after this devastation. We called upon educators and their families throughout our education community, raising \$10,000 in a separate fund within our KidCare foundation. Our goal was to be there when national resources were no longer on site.

For the past few years we have sought connections to help, but nothing had panned out, because so many of the schools remained closed and many others became private charter schools. We were very careful to make sure our money would directly impact those in need. Our chance came this year when the NEA Convention was set to be held in New Orleans. We used this opportunity to join in with NEA's student and retiree outreach program to help Belle Chasse High School, now greatly impacted by the oil spill in the gulf as well.

Hundreds of NEA volunteers swooped in and refurbished the school in July—from painting to building fur-

niture to even laying sod in the court yards. The weather was very hot and humid, but the work was done by the many volunteers.



At the same time, Executive Director Bob Anzelski, TABCO Board member Lisa Norrington, and I delivered \$500 in school supplies and a check for

\$7,000. The school's principal and staff were completely surprised and very appreciative of the donation. Unanimously, they asked for two large sheds to be used to store athletic equipment. The sheds have been ordered and are on the way to the school. The other \$2,500 was donated to the MSEA effort to rebuild a public library and provide needed books.

It was a remarkable feeling to be able to assist in the recovery of (now) two natural disasters, while representing the many Baltimore County educators who dug into their pockets and donated to the cause back in 2005. Baltimore County educators once again helped those in need. We at TABCO are very proud to have played a part in the giving.

Your member benefits—workshops for both vets and rookies

Both the IPD (Instruction & Professional Development) and Member Benefits committees have been working to develop plans for member education for the coming year. These sessions, which are free to TABCO members, include many of the topics that have been extremely popular in previous years. Each workshop provides expert advice on topics to make life a little easier for our members and/or help them prepare and plan ahead.

Working with our endorsed vendors, including attorneys and financial experts, the committees have proposed the following topics for the upcoming months: observation and evaluation; parent involvement; special education; classroom management; stress management; home-buying; retirement planning; estate planning; elder care; identity theft prevention; and saving and investing.

These workshops are a terrific benefit—for members only—take advantage of these free services. Watch for dates, times, and locations here in the Bulletin, in committee flyers, and through President Bost's frequent email communications.

99.5% of the votes cast on contract changes came in YES, resulting in ratification of the proposals on the ballot, which went out to an all-member vote in June.

Changes coming in health benefits

As explained to TABCO reps last April, changes in healthcare benefits are pending. Employees will be experiencing another open enrollment period this fall, designed to align our benefits year with the calendar year. During the fall open enrollment, all of the plans and carriers approved through the re-bid and selection process will be available for your selection except that the Keystone plan will no longer be available.

Future changes in providers are not expected to impact the level of care.; all negotiated plan designs will be carried over to be delivered by any new vendors, including prescription plans.

Most physicians are expected to accept the new plans, but members are urged to become informed about the plans that are accepted by their personal physicians. Other than that, no one needs to do anything at this time.

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