

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Darryl L. Williams, Ed.D. ♦ Superintendent ♦ 6901 North Charles Street ♦ Towson, MD ♦ 21204

May 11, 2021

Ms. Cindy Sexton, President
Teachers Association of Baltimore County (TABCO)
1220-C East Joppa Road, Suite 514
Towson, Maryland 21286

Dear Ms. Sexton:

The purpose of this letter is to provide a second response to your e-mail dated April 16, 2021, regarding TABCO's Representative Assembly and Board of Directors approving a work-to-rule activity beginning Thursday, April 22, 2021.

1. All internet issues for in person and hybrid learning are resolved.

Action Asks from BCPS:

A recognition that there was insufficient bandwidth to address the needs of hybrid instruction that impacted instruction. It is anticipated that it will be fully corrected over the summer.

The understanding that "Internet issues" covers more than just complete outages but also issues that significantly degrade performance. We cannot say the issues are resolved if all educators do not have full and consistent access to all resources in all workspaces. Full access to Google Meet is a necessity.

To address the issues while the fixes are occurring BCPS will:

- a. Give immediate notification (within 1 hour of first report) of parent/student/teachers of systemwide or widespread interruptions including if it is within BCPS' control or third-party control. And a similar notification when the problem has been resolved. **Mutually agreed upon.**
- b. If planning or case management time is lost due to lack of Internet access, educators shall work with their administration to recover that time. **Mutually agreed upon.**
- c. Designate a work group with TABCO to best identify and/or correct other technology concerns that are interfering with instruction. Examples may include,

but are not limited to projectors, port replicators, help desk concerns, accessing programs, etc.

BCPS is receptive to the creation of a cooperative workgroup with TABCO to troubleshoot some of the technology concerns that cite-based staff are experiencing. The workgroup will begin meeting no later than the week of May 24, 2021. BCPS, prior to the ransomware, had begun preliminary work on its next comprehensive technology plan. This plan will help to guide the next five years of BCPS' technology direction. TABCO's collaboration in this process and advocacy for its funding would greatly assist in creating a landscape to facilitate instruction in BCPS.

- d. Develop a very simple data collection form from the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) that is sent out at the end of each school day asking teachers two questions: Did they experience any network connection issues that day and, if so, for approximately how many minutes were they unable to teach due to Internet issues? This would not be acted on but to identify trends.

The DoIT would be happy to receive a daily report, collected by TABCO, regarding the teacher's daily technology experience. As the reasons for individual interruptions vary widely, this data would not assist in resolving systemic issues.

2. If the district moves to 4 days of in person learning the district will develop a plan that allows for the option of an in person learning cohort 4 days a week and a separate cohort for virtual instruction.

Action Ask from BCPS: A formal statement that there will be no concurrent instruction next year.

The Design Team is currently working on planning for the 2021-2022 school year. The plan shall take into consideration the need to provide virtual instruction for those families seeking this option. The Design Team is exploring options for ways to provide separate cohorts for virtual instruction when possible. It is difficult to commit to 100% separate cohorts without knowing the specific number of students requesting the virtual option and the impact on individual schools and courses. TABCO and BCPS shall create a memorandum of understanding that shall delineate specific parameters around when it would be acceptable/appropriate as well as supports that would be in place for those educators who may teach concurrently.

3. The district will reimburse all staff for 100 minutes of lost planning time that occurred on Thursday, April 8 and Friday, April 9, 2021. This reimbursement will be paid at each member's per diem rate.

Action Ask from BCPS: The recognition that it took much extra work and unpaid time not only on these two days, but also when educators were sent an instructional plan for Monday April 12th. That plan was sent after the duty day on April 9th. BCPS shall either reimburse the lost planning time or provide an equal amount of time to educators. Some suggestions on how this can be done might include: eliminating a faculty meeting, making a Wednesday PD voluntary, or adding planning time to another duty day.

BCPS leadership recognizes that our educators had to adjust their instructional plan for Monday, April 12, 2021, due to the Internet access issues. Educators made the necessary adjustments to their instructional plans having limited notification and insufficient planning time. We appreciate the willingness of our educators to make these necessary shifts in their instructional plans to provide meaningful instruction to our students without full access to the normal instructional resources. In appreciation of the personal time our teachers surrendered to adjust to Internet access issues, BCPS is asking its principals to return time to our educators by eliminating a faculty meeting between May 17 – June 10, 2021. The decision as to which date will be selected shall be made at the school level to accommodate school level events. Principals will work with their staff to identify the faculty meeting to eliminate and notify the staff. Additionally, educators may use either the May 19, 2021, or May 26, 2021, professional development day to make up the lost planning time.

4. The district will rescind all excessing of staff since the County Executive has funded all the positions and there will be no reduction of staff for FY22.

Action Ask from BCPS: A formal communication to everyone who has been excessed that we are going through the steps for ppt because that is the standard process at this time of year. Given that the reduction in enrollment was systemwide and that our schools are being held harmless for enrollment, the possibility exists that you will end up having the position at your school restored.

We are continuing to follow our established priority transferred teachers (PTT) procedures that are part of the normal yearly staffing process. Employees identified as a PTT should feel free to reach out to the Office of Staffing with any questions or concerns. All staff identified as a PTT will have a placement for next year. In accordance with the TABCO Master Agreement 14.3 – Involuntary/Excess, PTTs may return to their former school(s) if a position becomes available at the teacher's former school on or before July 25, 2021.

TABCO still reserves its right to the grievance or appeal process.

5. If anyone on the list of 2500 staff who were included in the data breach experiences an instance where their personal information has been used fraudulently, they will receive a

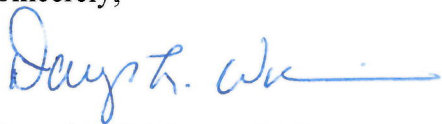
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half day of other board business to manage the situation. This will be in effect through June 30, 2022.

All employees should provide their supervisor with a copy of the letter identifying them as one of the 2,500 staff members impacted. In addition, the staff member should also provide a form of documentation indicating the issue related to the data breach that they are attempting to address. All personal information should be redacted from the documentation provided.

We look forward to continued communication and partnership as we provide the best educational opportunities and learning environments for the students of Baltimore County Public Schools. Again, thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Darryl L. Williams", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Darryl L. Williams, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Baltimore County Public Schools

VIA E-MAIL AND FIRST-CLASS MAIL

Copies to:
Members of the Board of Education of Baltimore County