

LocalLine

HIGHLIGHTS FROM MSEA LOCALS

Locals push back—one furlough day returned to school employees

Thanks to rigorous organizing by the Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County (TAAAC) and the Secretaries and Assistants Association of Anne Arundel County (SAAAAC), nearly 10,000 Anne Arundel County school employees recently gained back a furlough day imposed last summer. The furloughs—along with a pay freeze—were deemed necessary to help trim the \$40 million the county needed to balance the 2010 budget.

Last summer, the Local Associations reluctantly agreed to the furlough days over concern about the health care fund balance, which the district claimed was insufficient to cover 2010 claims. However, when the 2009 budget closeout figures were announced, a huge surplus in the same account totaled nearly \$12 million more than anticipated in the health care fund alone. More shocking, perhaps, was that additional surpluses totaled \$15.2 million—\$5 million in the instructional salaries category!

“We worked carefully with the district throughout the entire budget process, and at no time did they tell us about surplus funds,” said TAAAC president Tim Mennuti. “Fortunately, we monitor district expenses and revenues carefully on a daily basis, which is how we discovered the funds.”

The Locals worked hard to get the one-day furlough reinstated. Leaders, however, are still uncertain if any of the remaining furlough days are really necessary. “We thought it was interesting that the board of education took the money for the returned furlough day not from the identified surplus, but by making further cuts to the operating budget,” Mennuti added.



Left to right: WCTA PAC chair Sharon Chirgott, Senator Don Munson and WCTA board member Marilyn Young at the recent legislative breakfast hosted by WCTA and WCESP.

“If there was still enough money in the budget to fund a furlough day, it would appear that no furlough days were actually necessary. We continue to believe that in a down economy we should focus on retaining our outstanding workforce even if that means transferring funding from pet projects to payroll and benefits.”

Locals kick off annual pre-General Assembly legislative events

Locals on the Eastern Shore and in Western Maryland were the first to kick off the 2010 General Assembly session at legislative breakfast events last month. The events, scheduled by every Local Association before the state legislature convenes on January

13, are an opportunity for Association leaders and members to meet with their elected officials and share both local and statewide Association goals.

“At the top of our agenda were education funding needs, preserving maintenance of effort, protecting our pensions from possible cost shifting to the counties, and the Association’s fair labor negotiations bill,” said Washington County Teachers Association (WCTA) President Denise Fry. “MSEA President Clara Floyd and MSEA lobbyist Bob Rankin joined us for a morning of good food and casual conversations.”

“Both the Washington County Educational Support Personnel (WCESP) and WCTA hope this is the first of many opportunities for us to



KCTA President Terri Mullikin, left, and Cecil County member Ted Gorzkowski, right, flank Delegate Michael Smigiel (R-36). Delegates Smigiel and Richard Sossi, (R-36) joined U.S. Representative Frank Kratovil (D-1st) at a legislative breakfast event for members from Kent, Queen Anne’s and Cecil counties.

share our views and better understand the positions of our elected officials,” said WCESP President Janice Tucker.

On the Upper Eastern Shore, topics were the much the same as members met with Delegates Michael Smigiel (R-36) and Richard Sossi (R-36), and U.S. Representative Frank Kratovil (D-1st). “These events are critical because we can voice our concerns directly to our elected officials,” said Kent County Teachers Association (KCTA) President Terry Mullikin. “Both Delegates Smigiel and Sossi said it was important to hear real-life examples of inequities in the current labor negotiations law, but they both declined to take a position at the time.”

See your Local Association members in LocalLine!

- Big breakthrough with your board of education?
- Exciting success story?
- Rough negotiations?

LocalLine is the two-page feature in *ActionLine* dedicated to Local Association news and events. If you have an interesting story that features your Association or your colleagues, contact your Local Association office, your school representative or Casey Newton, 443/433-3631; cnewton@mseanea.org.

datebook

DECEMBER 2009

- 14** MSEA West Coordinated Bargaining Council (CBC)
- 19** Hanukkah Ends
- 24** Christmas Eve
- 24-1** *MSEA offices closed for holidays*
- 25** Christmas Day
- 26** Kwanzaa Begins
- 31** New Year’s Eve

JANUARY 2010

- 1** New Year’s Day
Kwanzaa Ends
Office closed
- 4** *MSEA office reopens*
- 12** MSEA East CBC
- 12-13** MSEA Board of Directors Meeting
- 13** MSEA General Assembly Open House
- 14** MSEA Urban CBC
- 16** MSEA’s MLK, Jr. Breakfast and Minority Achievement Awards
Martin’s Crosswinds, Greenbelt
- 18** Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Office closed
- 25** MSEA Lobby Night Annapolis
- 28** MSEA Joint Governance Staff Meeting
- 29-30** Organizational Leadership Skills (OAS) Cambridge

FEBRUARY 2010

- 1** MSEA Retired Advisory Council Meeting
MSEA Lobby Night Annapolis
- 6** I Can Do It! Training
MSEA Headquarters, Annapolis
- 8** MSEA West CBC
MSEA Lobby Night Annapolis
- 9** MSEA East CBC
- 11** MSEA Urban CBC
- 12-13** NEA Board of Directors Meeting
- 15** Presidents’ Day

Turn your life into ActionLine’s “MyLife”

Here’s what we need!

- Your name
- Your school or worksite
- Your grade/subject, work assignment or job title
- A brief bio of approximately 150-200 words
- Headshot
- How long have you been an Association member?
- How long an education employee teacher?
- 6-8 photos with captions!

Educators have such full and varied lives, but too often are seen as one-dimensional because of the visibility and enormous responsibility of their jobs.

We know that each life is filled with more of the things that make it exciting, fun and rewarding. *ActionLine’s* “MyLife” features photos and captions provided by a member to share the richness and diversity of our member’s lives. We’d like brief written comments about your life

and 6-8 photos with captions. *ActionLine* editors can edit the captions and crop photos if you wish. At least one photo should include activities in your school or worksite with students or colleagues. *Tip: Be sure your school has a photo release form on file for each student in any photo.*

For more information . . .

Contact Casey Newton, 443/433-3631, cnewton@mseanea.org, or send your story and photos to cnewton@mseanea.org, and you could be featured in an upcoming issue of *ActionLine*!

