



Cookie people represent educators at Legislative Breakfast—baked by Eastern Technical HS students—see pages 4 & 5



BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 2009 ♦ UNITY...NOW MORE THAN EVER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: WE ARE THE PEOPLE

The theme of our recent legislative breakfast was “We are the people,” showing that in our community not only are we educators, but we are also caregivers, consumers, parents, taxpayers, volunteers, voters, and more.

This theme may sound very “constitution-esque” as it is very similar to how our nation started, “We the people... in order to form a more perfect union...” In reality it is very similar. Leaders came together over two hundred years ago to determine how to create a collective nation under one set of rules. Our country has continued to grow and evolve from that time.

Our goal for our legislative breakfast each year is to bring about a more perfect union centered on public education in Baltimore County. To bring together leaders from state and local government, school system leaders, association leaders, and leaders from our buildings in order to dialogue about the wants and needs as educators that will result in a better working and learning environment in all of our schools for all of our students.

It is imperative that those making decisions that impact public education hear from those directly working in our schools. It is equally important for them to know that we are

not only educators, but that we are the public that they often refer to in campaign speeches. Elected officials and public school leaders are accountable to the communities they serve and we are a part of those communities.



Cheryl Bost
TABCO President

Working collaboratively with elected and system leaders is essential to advocate for the needs of our educational system and ultimately our students. Some of the needs we shared on behalf of all educators are the following:

- ▶ To begin to alleviate the high turnover rate of quality educators, teacher salaries must be increased to become more competitive. This is still as true during tough economic times as it is during prosperous fiscal times. BCPS realized a surplus of \$22 million from FY08 and Baltimore County Gov't realized a surplus of \$118 million, while telling employee groups that

See “We are the people,” page 2

Data for data's sake?

“Teachers feel they don’t have time to teach,” said Danitra Bundy, teacher at Seven Oaks ES, summing up the bottom line in the ongoing struggle with testing expectations.

Bundy was among a group of teachers who joined TABCO President Cheryl Bost for a discussion of the issues with school system representatives Mandi Dietrich (Special Projects), Dr. Jonathan Brown (Curriculum & Instruction) and Stacy Shack (Assessment). Bundy went on to express concerns over the time lost from instruction and the jaded attitude manifesting in students burned out over excessive testing.

Bost requested the meeting with the system in response to the many teachers who have related problems with testing requirements. In particular, ESAL (Elementary School Assessment Liaison) and Reading Specialist Dr. Brenda Rainwater-Bryant compiled significant data detailing the impact of AssessTrax and its associated testing and timeline requirements which are accompanied by a raft of paperwork, on both teachers and students.

Several of the global concerns include:

- Amount of testing vs. time for instruction

- Assessment readiness—item/question accuracy; alignment with curriculum
- Implementation—training; technology and equipment availability; time required for inputting data; ability to meet timelines/windows
- Practical application—time for re-teaching, time for teachers to analyze data



One of the questions posed to teachers in the focus group was, “What drives instruction-- testing or student learning?” Anyone familiar with the pressure placed on school staffs to reach the desired test scores can have no doubt about the true answer to such a question. Teachers responded with specifics such as “short cycle” timing, which drives instruction in most subjects.

Two “a-ha” moments that occurred during the meeting had to do with communication. BCPS representatives were sur-

See “Data for data's sake?” page 2

“Data for data’s sake?” (from page 1)

surprised to learn that the *Superintendent’s Bulletin* is not routinely shared with all teachers; a tool that was set up to be an effective way to send news and information. Another revelation was the confusion over terminology, that is, the usage of terms such as “short cycle,” “unit test” and “benchmark,” which refer to various things depending on the content area, the system area (Northeast, Southeast, etc.) and even the school site. President Bost emphasized that the message varies on this topic,

as on many others, depending on location in the system. “It appears that there is not a clear communication system, especially regarding testing and curriculum information,” she said.

Mary Frantz, Cedarmere ES; Mark McDonald, Perry Hall MS; Barbara Tyler, Mars Estates ES; and I were the others comprising the teacher contingent. The system contingent appeared receptive and interested as we presented input on both specific and general concerns; they said that they are currently involved in a process of reviewing various aspects of assessments. They stated that they are beginning with benchmarks, doing item analysis, and “plan to do more articulation” with teachers about the tests.

As we talked about the scoring process, it became evident that there are inconsistencies across the county in the way that tests are scored; a relevant concern is the inaccurate scoring of certain items that are scanned. Some teachers are aware of these problems, while others may accept the system’s scores and record them in their grade books, resulting in students receiving lower grades than they deserve.

Although many specific problems were discussed, the meeting did not end without time spent on the essential question—how much of this testing is really necessary? Dr. Rainwater-Bryant asks, “In these lean times should we be spending money on tests that are so poorly written; use tests that have no norms; spend this much time on testing when we are not required by the state or *No Child Left Behind* to do more testing, and utilize so much instructional time for tests that do not appear to be contributing to the quality of instruction (but, doing the opposite—taking up teacher instructional time and planning time)?” The information that she compiled indicates that time to address student needs may be taking a backseat to meeting testing timelines.

Although the number of tests was reduced last year, after TABCO led the way in highlighting some of the concerns noted above, there is still a major allocation of human resources to collecting and entering data. “*Data for data’s sake*” is how many teachers and administrators see it.

The PDK Audit of two years ago clearly stated that the system is data-rich, but information poor. TABCO’s position is that the testing process needs streamlining—testing less, and providing more time for data analysis and application to instruction in order to meet our students’ needs.

~Angela Leitzer, Bulletin Editor

“We are the people”

(from page 1)

▶ order to retain teachers and provide more time for educators to spend on instruction. Administering multiple mandated assessments takes time away from educating our students on needed skills. This is in addition to the increased amount of testing and paperwork being required for special educators.

▶ Special area teachers organized to advocate for arts education for all students. We must educate the whole child and not just the reading and mathematics portion. Developing a child’s artistic ability can motivate him to stay engaged in education and excel in all subjects. The consistent loss of special area teachers and the practice of pulling students from these classes is not beneficial for the future of our children.

These are just three of the issues discussed with our elected leaders and system officials. We covered many more items of need, including actions we want them to not take. We don’t want the cost of teacher pensions to be pushed back to the counties; we don’t want public dollars to go towards private education; we want to revise the impasse process; and we want to be listened to when decisions are made impacting public education and public educators.

The legislative breakfast is over for this year, but our lobbying and advocacy efforts must continue. Join us in our continued efforts in talking to and educating elected officials and school officials to do what’s right and be accountable to educators and our students.

- ▶ Join us on our Annapolis Lobbying bus trip on March 2, 2009.
- ▶ Become a cyber lobbyist through our website and MSTA’s website.
- ▶ tabco.mstanea.org
- ▶ www.mstanea.org
- ▶ Email Board of Education members and ask them to keep the salary increases in the proposed FY10 budget. (Brenda.stiffler@bcps.org)
- ▶ Read email updates for additional lobbying and hearing actions and take part in these actions.

All of our efforts are designed to build a “more perfect educational union (system)” in Baltimore County for educators and ultimately our students.

~Cheryl Bost, TABCO President

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TABCO Bulletin

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

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ASSOCIATION WEBSITES:

NEA

www.nea.org

MSTA

www.mstanea.org

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TABCO

NOTES & news briefs

STAY CURRENT: <http://tabco.mstanea.org>
NOTE! This is a change in our web address.



Meet our new TABCO UniServ Director

My name is **Natasha Eckart** and I am the new UniServ Staff liaison for the Southwest region of Baltimore County.

I am originally from Vermont, but I have lived in many cities across the country due to education and association work.

I received my BA and my Masters in Education from the University of Pittsburgh. I also spent my first two years teaching third grade in Pittsburgh City Public Schools.

Then I moved back home where I taught third and fifth grade for the next four years in Northfield, Vermont. I became an active member of VT-NEA and served as Building Rep for two years, and President of my local for a year. I was also a member of the Diversity Training Cadre for both VT-NEA and the NEA.

In November of 2007, I completed the NEA Affirmative Action UniServ Internship Program for Women and Minorities. I spent my first year as staff with the Fresno Teachers Association. After a year I decided that the West Coast wasn't for me and moved back east to be closer to my family.

I am excited to be a part of Team TABCO and look forward to working with all of our members.

Thank you for welcoming me into your Association family.



President Bost has an assignment for you!

But please *don't* attend your school's assigned Board of Education meeting if:

- × You just don't know what to do with all that money you are making;
- × You are sure that BCPS leadership always knows what is best for you and your school;
- × You think that passivity and indifference have always proven to accomplish great things...



Or NOT! See you on:

February 24, 2009

(Work session- no public comment- 6:30 pm)

Kingsville ES, Colgate ES, Norwood ES, Cromwell Valley ES, Cedarmere ES, White Oak ES, Winfield ES, Warren ES, Arbutus ES, Edmondson Heights ES, Golden Ring MS, Catonsville MS, Chesapeake HS, Pikesville HS, Home and Hospital

March 10, 2009

7:30 pm

Glenmar ES, Dogwood ES, Halethorpe ES, Middlesex ES, Seven Oaks ES, Berkshire ES, Sandy Plains ES, Lutherville ES, Reisterstown ES, Westowne ES, Middle River MS, Herford MS, Catonsville HS, Dundalk HS, Fifth District ES

March 24, 2009

(Work session- no public comment- 6:30 pm)

Orems ES, Victory Villa ES, Battle Monument, Seneca ES, Jacksonville ES, Hernwood ES, Woodbridge ES, Randallstown ES, Gunpowder ES, Summit Park ES, Lansdowne ES, Cockeysville MS, Woodlawn MS, Randallstown HS, Overlea HS

NOTES:

- If you feel you need to change the date for your school, that's fine—just let us know.
- Try to wear your school logo shirts or TABCO logo items when attending.
- If schools are closed or afternoon activities are cancelled due to inclement weather, then the Board of Education meeting will be rescheduled, usually later that same week.

If you would like to talk on an issue during a meeting with public comment, please let Cheryl know and she can work with you for either her slot or a public comment slot.

You are a part of TEAM TABCO



Amy Haukdal, ESAL at Westowne ES, sent us the picture, above, as a reply to our question about ESAL responsibilities and says, "...hopefully the attached photograph will give a clear picture of how much is involved. The photo shows the assessments received in one day to be counted and sorted for the teachers. Our school only has three classes in each grade 3-5. Can you imagine what a larger school ESAL has to do?" Thanks, Amy—a picture really IS worth a thousand words.

2009 Legislative Breakfast sends the message →



Pictured with our members, top to bottom: Delegate Emmett C. Burns, Jr.; Southeast Area Assistant Superintendent Jean Satterfield; County Council member Joe Bartender and Board of Education Member Rodger Janssen; County Executive Jim Smith and his education

WE are the people: educators are taxpayers, consumers, parents, community activists, volunteers, neighbors, and yes—voters



It takes a village...to educate elected officials and system leaders about the things that teachers and para-educators know. Pulling together resources that ranged from student-baked gingerbread cookies and big paper versions of Leonardo da Vinci's perfectly proportioned man to nametags that attendees personalized with labels identifying their roles in the community, TABCO leadership, staff, and you—the people—delivered the message. YOU are the people who make up their constituency; your roles, influence and involvements extend far beyond your school jobs.

President Bost delivered a slam dunk of a speech that responded to excuses with the message that we have both the right and the responsibility to ask for wages and working conditions that will benefit the entire system by retaining a quality work force in Baltimore County. She delivered strong remarks addressing the decimation of the arts in our schools, and the decline of much-needed vocational programs for our students. She reiterated concerns about the impact of excessive assessments on the time left over for actual teaching and working with students.

Superintendent Joe Hairston's remarks meshed with the event's theme, "We are the people," when he stated that "This year the focus is on people," in reference to plans for his then-upcoming budget proposal. He declared his intention to "work in the spirit of collaboration and as a team."

One teacher was overheard telling a delegate about her concern regarding the suggestion that teacher pensions might be pushed back to the counties for funding. He answered that he is not on a finance committee. Her response was, "it doesn't matter—we are going to hold all of you responsible."

This annual opportunity to communicate directly to and with those who determine our working conditions is a major benefit of membership. Take advantage!



Pictured with our members, top to bottom: with President Cheryl Bost and Pete Skeels—Delegate Stephen Lafferty and Senator Jim Brochin; Government Relations Chair Abby Beytin with Senator Kathy Klausmeier and her daughter Krista, a physical education teacher; Delegate Dan Morhaim with Doug Dunkle; Board of Education member Rodger Janssen with TABCO Negotiations Co-

TABCO GENERAL ELECTIONS 2009

March 23-27, 2009

OFFICES TO BE FILLED:

President, (2-year term)
Vice President, (2-year term)
Board of Directors (District I) - 3-year term (1 position)
Board of Directors (District II) - 3-year term (1 position)
Board of Directors (District III) - 3-year term (1 position)

QUALIFICATION: You must have and maintain active membership in TABCO. Those seeking office may represent any teaching level or position.

CANDIDATES must certify that they subscribe to the general statement of candidate ethics.

The election packet must be obtained by the candidate in person at the TABCO office.

PETITIONS: Those seeking office must obtain at least 75 signatures of TABCO members. The signatures must be obtained from at least 3 schools, with no more than 38 signatures from any one school. Only original signatures on the 2009 petition forms are valid.

DEADLINE: All required election packet materials must be in the TABCO office by 5:00 p.m., Thursday, February 26, 2009.

See the election packet for a complete list of requirements.

TABCO NEA DELEGATE ELECTIONS 2009

Delegate election for the 2009 NEA Representative Assembly in San Diego, CA, July 1-6, 2009

- Any unified member may nominate himself/herself or any member for the position of delegate.
- The Nomination/Biographical Form may be obtained by contacting Teresa McDowell, 410-828-6403, x226 or tmcdowell@mstanea.org and supplying your name, school and email.
- **The completed form must be received at the TABCO Office by 5:00 p.m., February 26, 2009. The elections will be held during the week of March 23-27, 2009.**

“SPARKS”

Take a look at the future!

Congratulations to the November SPARKS graduates: (Left to right)
Tanya Sepela– Randallstown HS
Sarah Ervin– Windsor Mill MS
Frank Soda– Sandy Plains ES
Elizabeth Golob– Halstead Academy
Kristen Senft– Charlesmont ES
Amy Peterson– Milbrook ES
Scott Hobbs– Patapsco HS
Nina Tice– Milbrook ES
Melissa Informa– Patapsco HS
Teresa Needer– Towson HS

SPARKS is a program designed to help newer teachers learn more about their profession and the association. They also begin to have a broader network of colleagues from throughout the county. If you're interested in becoming a SPARKS participant, please contact your TABCO UniServ Director or a SPARK for details.



Special thanks to SPARKS trainers (not pictured): **Lisa Norrington**– Patapsco HS, **Brad DeSantos**– Perry Hall HS, and President **Cheryl Bost**. Thank you to MSTA for additional funds to carry out this program.

Application Process begins for ANNUAL TABCO SCHOLARSHIPS

Once again, TABCO is making available four scholarships to children of members.

Don't forget that if you have been a TABCO member for 3 consecutive years prior to making application and you have a child entering college or already in college, he/she is eligible to apply for the four scholarships offered annually by TABCO.

Those Scholarships include:

COOPER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP (\$500)

In memory of Clarence G. Cooper, Superintendent of Baltimore County Schools (1920 to 1946)

EDWARD GUY STAPLETON SCHOLARSHIP (\$500)

In memory of the Superintendent of the Schools of Baltimore County (1949 to 1961)

M. ELLEN LOGAN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP (\$500)

In memory of M. Ellen Logan, TABCO's First President, and in honor of former Baltimore County teachers, through the generosity and dedication of persons who actively work to further the education of youth.

ALVAN A TESTONI MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP (\$500)

In memory of Alvan A. Testoni, to be awarded to an individual pursuing a career in elementary education.

Scholarship applications are available from the Association Representative in your building or by calling Jacque Gerhardt at TABCO (410-828-6403).

Questions may be directed to Stephanie Foy, Scholarship Chairperson, at sfoy@bcps.org.

Don't forget—the deadline for application is April 1, 2009.

Board of Directors vacancy filled

Congratulations to Stephanie Foy, teacher at Villa Cresta ES, who was elected to serve out the remainder of the District II term vacated by Cathy Cerveny. Stephanie currently serves as the chairperson of the TABCO Scholarship Committee and has served on the Negotiations Team in the past.

TAX INFORMATION

TABCO member dues amounts for 2008

Salary above \$35,070

Dues \$598.80

Salary between \$17,535-\$35,070

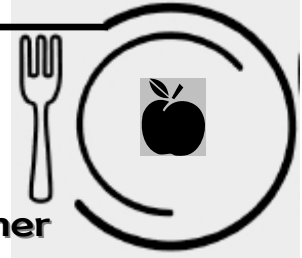
Dues \$490.08

Salary below \$17,535

Dues \$408.60

If you have additional questions, please call the TABCO office (410-828-6403).

Plan now to attend the TABCO ~ BACE ~ BCPS Annual Retirement & Recognition Dinner and 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 and our retirees will be honored.

Note: follow-up information for all award nominations is due to TABCO by February 23. Nominators will be notified when award recipients have been selected.



Association Events HIGHLIGHTS

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

February

16—Schools closed (President's Day)

19—Technology Workshop, Perry Hall HS 4:30 pm

26—District/Area Mtgs. for Association Representatives

March

19—Retirement Workshop, Loch Raven HS

23 - 27—TABCO Election Week

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

BULLETIN BOARD

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

NEW! Beth Tfiloh Camps seeks head counselors and instructors of campcraft, 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 or phone 410-517-3451. **YOUR CHILD ATTENDS FREE!**

NEW! 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 or download a job application from our website at www.campmilldale.org

NEW! 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 a 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 and/or lrobertson@ccbcmd.edu. Please include subject area of expertise.

NEW! Jewish Community Center's Noah's Ark Camp looking for teachers: We are seeking energetic, creative, outgoing individuals to be a part of our camp team. Our pre-school 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

Needed: Retired or Other Certified Teachers

To work two days a week in private schools with Title I academically needy students. Teachers are needed in the areas of reading and math during the school day. The current rate of pay is \$27.30 per hour. Please contact Carol Ann Ruth at the Office of Title I for more detailed information: 410-887-3487.

TUTORS: Subject area teachers needed to tutor secondary math, chemistry, physics, biology, SAT prep., English, reading, Spanish, French, Latin, special education, and elementary subjects. Please contact professionaltutoringservice@comcast.net or 410-486-3464.

DISCLAIMER: TABCO assumes no responsibility for representations made or services performed in advertisements published here.

TABCO/BACE TELEPHONE & EMAIL DIRECTORY 410-828-6403 fax: 410-337-7081

ELECTED LEADERSHIP:

TABCO President Cheryl Bost	ext. 229	cbost@mstanea.org
Vice President Christine Beard	ext. 224	cbeard@mstanea.org
Treasurer John R. Wilkins	ext. 223	jrwilkins@mstanea.org
BACE President Gloria Collins	ext. 227	gcollins@mstanea.org
BACE Executive Director: Bob Anzels	ext. 225	banzels@mstanea.org

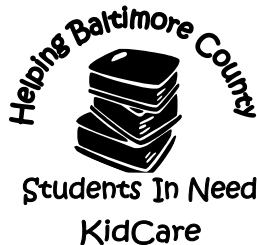
UNISERV DIRECTORS:

Southeast Area: Debbie Banaszekiewicz	ext. 234	dbanaszekiewicz@mstanea.org
Northeast Area: Linda Kane	ext. 236	lkane@mstanea.org
Southwest Area: Natasha Eckart	ext. 235	neckart@mstanea.org
Central & Northwest Areas: Ray Suarez	ext. 230	rsuarez@mstanea.org
BACE: Kathy Wyatt	ext. 233	kwyatt@mstanea.org

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Stacie Strickland	ext. 240	sstrickland@mstanea.org
Marcelle Wilson	ext. 232	mwilson@mstanea.org
Ray Prematta	ext. 238	rpremata@mstanea.org

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



So far this year **\$8,480** has been disbursed to **213** students. Keep our needy kids in school—contribute via check or payroll deduction. Somebody needs you!



In memory of... 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.