

To: TABCO Association Representatives
TABCO Members

From: Cheryl Bost
TABCO President

Date: August 25, 2005

RE: BCPS Employee Attendance Monitoring Program (EAMP)

Simply stated, TABCO was not involved with, did not support in any way, nor negotiated any part of the BCPS Employee Attendance Monitoring Program being implemented this year.

In June, TABCO/BACE Executive Director Bob Anzenc and I met with representatives from Risk Management and Staff Relations and were informed about the new program and verbally told the highlights. At that time, we shared our concerns with the BCPS representatives. We were not given a written copy of the detailed program to be implemented at that time.

Immediately following this meeting, we discussed what had been explained to us by BCPS representatives with Jim Whattam, MSTA Legal Council. On June 9, 2005, BCPS was officially given notice of our opposition. Excerpts from this letter state:

“This is to formally place the Board on notice that it is the position of TABCO and BACE that any attempt by the Board to unilaterally implement these proposed policies and procedures would constitute a violation of the Board’s statutory obligation to bargain concerning salaries, wages, hours and working conditions.”

“ Therefore, any attempt by the Board to unilaterally impose these proposed changes in the utilization of the sick leave benefits contained in the contracts between these organizations and the Board will be met by the filing of an appeal with the State Board of Education alleging that the Board of Education of Baltimore County has violated its statutory duty to bargain. Furthermore, any attempt by the Board to discipline employees pursuant to these new policies will be considered a violation of the negotiated agreements, and grievances will be filed regarding any such actions.”

At this point, we must wait for an individual administrator to begin implementation of this plan before we can proceed with the appeal. If any member in your building is confronted with this policy, please have that person contact the TABCO office immediately.

It is important to remember that BCPS Rule 4153 has historically given building administrators the responsibility to address individual employees whose sick leave and family illness leave is considered “questionable or excessive.” It is the responsibility of the building administrator to address these individuals; instead BCPS is attempting to

implement a unilateral policy for the abuses of a few. As educators, we know it is not good practice to be punitive to the whole for the mistakes of a few. It is not the responsibility of all administrators that some building administrators have not done their duties appropriately, that is, addressed those employees abusing their sick leave and family illness leave.

Furthermore, as educators we are reminded constantly to use positive reinforcement and incentives in preference to punitive measures with our students. This holds true in life as expressed in the old saying, "You get more flies with honey than with vinegar." Currently, BCPS has nothing in place as an incentive for employees to retain their sick days. Upon retirement credit is given for only 2 years of sick leave and even then the employee must have accumulated between 517-538 days of sick leave to equal 2 years of credit. Education employees should be offered the opportunity for incentive programs to encourage them to save their days.

EAMP raises many red flags and brings into question the motives and professionalism of the 23rd largest school system in the United States. The large majority of our employees are dedicated, loyal, and extremely hard working individuals and deserve to be treated as such.

TABCO, as your professional association, will be standing up for your rights on this issue and many others as we progress throughout the year. This is a time to stand strong as members. Encourage your non-members to join TABCO to become part of the solution and show their support for our profession. Help bring them away complaining in the faculty room to being visible and proactive for solutions. As you talk to colleagues, please feel free to share this information and restate the first sentence in this letter, **TABCO was not involved with, did not support in any way, nor negotiated any part of the BCPS Employee Attendance Monitoring Program being implemented this year.**