

# AEL Leadership Forum

VOLUME 15, ISSUE 1

JULY 2022

## UPCOMING EVENTS

July 1, 2022  
New Officers &  
Board Members  
terms begin

**AEL Executive  
Board Meetings**  
are held monthly.  
The schedule for  
2022-23 will be sent  
later this summer.

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

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## Ahern Doesn't Have All the Answers, But She Believes You Do

### *New AEL President Tracey Ahern Takes the Helm on July 1*

Tapping into the wealth of knowledge of AEL members to establish work environments throughout the county that enable administrators to foster stellar educational experiences for students, is Tracey Ahern's primary goal. President of AEL.

"There are so many brilliant minds in this administrators' group," says Ahern. She believes AEL needs to look within its ranks to craft ideas to help tackle the complex challenges principals, assistant principals, and coordinators face in post pandemic education. While she is fired up to take on the challenge of leading AEL, she knows she can't do this alone. Ahern plans to find ways to draw AEL members into greater involvement with the organization.

The new AEL President sees her role as facilitator. "I want to bring people together so we

can share ideas and opinions," she says. Building on foundation established by previous presidents Edie Picken and Will Myers, she wants to strengthen communication as she believes that will "build us up and make us stronger."

For Ahern, it all started with communication. She graduated from University of Maryland - College Park with a Communications degree but a desire to go into education. While living in Ocean City, she stopped by the guidance office at Salisbury University to find out what she would further study to become a teacher. The staff there told to become a guidance counselor instead. She earned a Masters in Counseling and began working in Charles County. She came to AACPS in 2000.

Tim Merritt, Principal at High Point Elementary

has known Ahern for more than 18 years. He regards her as an



AEL President Tracey Ahern

excellent listener who always asks lots of questions to get to the root of any problem. "Tracey has always sought to exhaust every resource and option available to us as a school system in order to help a child," says Tim. "She is level-headed and analytical in her approach to a problem."

#### **AEL Involvement**

Ahern likes to understand how things work. So when now retired AEL member

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## All the Answers...

*Continued from page 1*

**“Tracey has always sought to exhaust every resource and option available to us as a school system in order to help a child.”**

*Tim Merritt, Principal,  
High Point Elementary*

and former elementary school principal Sharon Ferrelli, encouraged her to be a AEL Cluster Rep, Ahern was game.

“Sharon made me do it,” she jokes. But the experience for Ahern was one of inspiration. “There is a small group leading the charge,” she says. “I was able to see up close these volunteers and their commitment to their Unit II colleagues.” She learned about who AEL members were and what they needed. She watched in awe as Louise DeJesus, Will Myers and Edie Picken, among other leaders, took on the challenge of

representing the interests of Unit II colleagues year after year.

She stayed involved because she wanted to support this group in what they were doing “because what they are doing matters.”

Looking ahead, Ahern wants to use the momentum created by the those leaders and grow AEL in numbers and voice.

“I want to build more involvement – so AEL members can see how it’s done and will realize that every voice counts and everyone can make a difference,” she says. AEL meetings are so much

easier now that we are all accustomed to meeting virtually, she says. Members will get amazing insight attending our meetings and we have so much gain from listening to members.

“One of the things I love about involvement with AEL is that I have met administrators I would have never had contact with before. Because of my involvement with AEL, I know administrators from high schools, middle schools, other clusters... Knowing those people and being able to call them with questions when needed is so valuable to me.”

## 2022 Election Results

Congratulations and thank you for your service... here are the newly elected officers of AEL:

- President: Tracey Ahern**
- 1st Vice President: Troy Hermann**
- 2nd Vice President: Brian Love**
- Secretary: Natalie Marston**
- Treasurer: Ryan Sackett** (returning)
- Director-At-Large: Stacey M. Smith**
- Director-At-Large: John Wojtila**
- Cluster Representatives:**
- Richard Rogers** (Annapolis)
- Gina Davenport** (Arundel)

- Kellie Anderson** (Board of Ed)
- Stacy Herbert** (Broadneck)
- Shanna Cahoon** (Chesapeake)
- Alexis McKay** (Crofton)
- Tamara Kelly-Molock** (Glen Burnie)
- Erica Garren** (Meade)
- Shira Dowling** (Old Mill)
- Tamika McPherson** (Southern)
- Kerri Buckley** (South River)
- Shannon Motsco** (Special Centers)

There are three open Cluster Rep positions: North County, Northeast and Severna Park. If you care interested in serving, please contact Bob Ferguson at leafman65@gmail.com

# Swan Song

By Edie Picken, AEL Immediate Past President

So we are finally reaching the end of a grueling time. We experienced a pandemic, made the best of hybrid learning, and returned to almost normal schooling. Above all, we remained steadfast to what it is we have committed ourselves to do: Provide an exemplary education to every student who enters the doors of our respective schools. To all of you, you should be proud of the hard work you have put in during these times, and those times preceding what we have experienced. I commend all of you for your dedication.

Having taken on the role of President of AEL during this time, I will say it was not only an experience but an education. I want to especially thank Rick Kovelant and Will Myers for their support and guidance through the past two years. One of the things I need to share with you concerns Negotiations. It was very clear to us on the Negotiating Team, composed of Ryan Sackett, Becky Blasingame-White, and me at the end of it all, that we fought for what we believed we were due. What we came away with was the

ongoing stance of the Board of Education to fail to negotiate and to basically tell us “Take it or leave it.” Under the current leadership, there was clearly a lack of respect for the hard work and ever increasing workload placed on us. We got what we could and prepared to face the same as we engaged in the current Negotiations. The Negotiating Team changed, by adding Rick Kovelant to the team along with me, Ryan Sackett and Will Myers. All of us have experience over the years with this process. Once again, we were presented with same; however, we took the stance that we have had enough and are now prepared to go to impasse. We asked for your input, went to the table again, and as typical the Board’s negotiating team presented the “Take it or Leave it” stance. AEL has had enough.

Going to impasse does not

guarantee that we will get more; it only means that we will not get any less than what



is already on the table. It simply means we have to continue to fight for what we deserve.

With a new superintendent taking the helm, we have much more to learn about how this will work as AACPS forges ahead under new leadership.

A second thing I need to share with you is that there are many in Unit II who have engaged in some poor decision making which has led to a number of cases moving to the Office of Employee Investigations under the leadership of Sarah Kivett. I have had a wonderful working relationship with her, and she and I have had many conversations about the decision making that has led to many finding themselves needing representation by AEL. It is imperative that you as leaders in your respective buildings make good decisions regularly, and

**“Going to impasse does not guarantee that we will get more; it only means that we will not get any less than what is already on the table.”**

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## Swan Song...

*Continued from page 3*

**“...I can tell you that there are many, some of whom are now regional superintendents, who served on the AEL Board or who participated in AEL business who were promoted. Never fear having a voice.”**

when in doubt, seek collaboration from other leaders in the building to make certain that what you are about to decide is appropriate. We have an obligation to meet the expectations set forth for us in leadership positions and to take that seriously. In all honesty, though we were under incredible pressure and stress during these unusual times, we must take our roles seriously and meet our responsibilities with fidelity. I implore you to work closely with one another to make sure that you are not viewed negatively in the roles you hold.

My third, and last, observation is that in my role as AEL President, I worked to the best of my ability to represent you with the most honest, reliable, dependable representation I could provide. As an Assistant Principal with many responsibilities that you understand, it was incumbent upon me to be in constant contact with our Executive Director Rick Kovelant, Sara Kivett, and above all Superintendent George Arlotto. Dr. Arlotto provided time for each of the heads of the bargaining units to interact with him

monthly to share concerns. I applaud him for giving us that time. In each of my meetings with him I forged the concern over workload and the need to get 504s off the plates of Assistant Principals due to the multifaceted responsibilities we must meet. I shared concerns that Unit II employees felt they could not step forward for fear they would meet with reprisal. I appreciate those who shared with me these concerns and provided the specifics to the superintendent. If given the time to generate the list, I can tell you that there are many, some of whom are now regional superintendents, who served on the AEL Board or who participated in AEL business who were promoted. **Never fear having a voice.** If Unit II personnel do not begin to speak up about concerns, we will never be able to move forward. I watched all Board meetings and during those live meetings I was regularly emailing the Board members. You **CAN** do that with no fear reprisal. **PLEASE** make your voice heard.

As I prepare to retire,

though I will continue to participate on AEL's Board as President Emeritus, I want to congratulate those who have been elected to represent you. You are in good hands and I am excited that so many people stepped up to run for office. I am hopeful that more of you will become involved and attend AEL meetings as your new President, Tracey Ahern, takes the helm starting July 1. Troy Hermann will be an excellent 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, as will Brian Love as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President. Natalie Marston will continue as your Secretary with Ryan Sackett as Treasurer. Stacey Smith and John Wjotila will be outstanding Director's-At-Large, and your Cluster Reps should make sure that you are well informed. Please make sure to check the AEL website at [www.aelaacps.org](http://www.aelaacps.org) for information.

Thank all of you so much for your support and kind words during these last two years and I wish all of you a safe, well rested summer and new school year 2022-2023. It has been an honor to serve you.

## GEN-ER-OUS “jen (er) ush” adj.

*By Rick Kovelant, AEL Executive Director and General Counsel*

**“These individuals, who have dedicated their careers to the education of Anne Arundel County Public School students are apparently not worthy of receiving what they lost...”**

When we left the negotiation table prior to the last session, I was struck by a comment made on behalf of the BOE by Ms. Rawles, the Board’s chief negotiator. In fact, I was so amazed at the comment that I wrote it down in BIG FAT LETTERS so I would remember not only what was said, but the spirit and intent of the words. That comment was to the effect that the Board’s economic package, as presented to AEL was “GENEROUS.” Thinking to myself that I may have missed exactly what the word “GENEROUS” meant, I took it upon myself to look up its definition just to make sure it was applicable to the BOE’s proposal. Among the more favorable definitions of this word are, “liberal in giving,” “marked by abundance or ample proportions” and the ever-popular defini-

tion of “characterized by a noble or kindly spirit.” As to the last definition, it means something that is seen as magnanimous and kindly. I know that at times, we are all capable of choosing the wrong words to express our feelings and beliefs. In this case, however, I am not so sure the BOE, or at least its representative, believes this was the wrong use of an adjective to describe their proposal (a noun).

Now that I believe I know the full definition of the term “GENEROUS,” I can apply its meanings to the proposal that the BOE has so “generously offered.” First, the BOE has elected not to extend its generosity to paying for the missed 2015-2016 school year makeup step to those Unit II employees (in all now approximately six individuals) who now occupy the 40<sup>th</sup> step on the salary

scale. These individuals, who have dedicated their careers to the education of Anne Arundel County Public School students are apparently not worthy of receiving what they lost, while their colleagues, who also lost this compensation, are being paid back what they were previously owed per the Negotiated Agreement. I don’t believe that exemplifies liberal giving, an ample proportion, or being magnanimous or kindly. In fact, I believe it is just the opposite (“stingy”). The same is true of the BOE’s proposal that Step 40 employees are not entitled to receive an equivalent of a step movement on July 1, since there are no more steps available for their movement. Interestingly, equivalent dollars have been paid in

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# GEN-ER-OUS ...

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the past to other bargaining groups. As to Unit II employees, certainly not an exhibit of a noble or kindly spirit and far from being “magnanimous” ( really pretty “petty”) if one considers the dollars associated with making everyone whole in both cases would cost no more than \$12,000.

Second, the BOE proposal to eliminate Challenge School Pay in its entirety is not only far from generous, it is disingenuous. Eliminating the stipend, and only funding a COLA for these individuals is akin to the old phrase,

“Heads I win and tails you lose.” Are there any takers who would choose to lose their stipend compensation for a COLA adjustment that would reduce the dollars in their paycheck?

Finally, the term “GENEROUS” is also defined as “an ample proportion.” The only “ample proportion in the BOE’s plan is the ample compensation the Superintendent and Unit VI take for themselves. If you want to understand what the term “GENEROUS” really

means, look at the salary increases for Unit VI and the Superintendent over the last four school years. The BOE negotiating team (consisting primarily of Unit VI employees) has always been aware of the term “GENEROUS.” After all, it consistently applied to the compensation they themselves received! Unfortunately, using the term “GENEROUS” to describe the compensation being offered to Unit II employees is misplaced and is clearly a non sequitur.

**“If you want to understand what the term ‘GENEROUS’ really means, look at the salary increases for Unit VI and the Superintendent over the last four school years.”**

## Free Help When You Need It:

## Don't Know Where to Turn? Call Rick

If you need help, advice or just need to ask a question, please remember to contact **Rick Kovelant**. He is AEL’s legal counsel and has a wealth of experience in assisting our members. He is a valuable resource and **available to you as part of your AEL membership**. He can be reached at 443-848-8022.



# AEL Spring Social

Thanks to all who attended the first in person AEL Social in more than two years, June 2 at Hel-las in Millersville.



## Happy Retirement!

Many thanks for your years of service and your dedication to the students of AACPS. The following educational leaders were recognized at the Spring Social.

**Rebecca Birus**

**Melissa Brown**

**Beth Burke**

**Mike Dunn**

**Susan Gallagher**

**Barry Gruber**

**Karen Kakoda**

**Welton Lilley**

**Tim Merritt**

**Donna O'Shea**

**Edie Picken**

**April Rishert**

**Monica Sayers**

**Renekki Wilson**

## AEL Mission Statement

The Association of Educational Leaders exists to ensure all Unit II employees are fairly and equitably treated in the course of their employment.

We commit to accomplishing this mission on behalf of Unit II employees by ensuring:

1. Adherence to our Negotiated Agreement.
2. All Unit II employees are adequately and equitably compensated for their responsibilities and work load.
3. Personal and professional needs shall be respected.
4. Fair, consistent and equitable practices shall be adhered to when dealing with hiring promotions, assignments and evaluations.
5. Fair, consistent, equitable practices in dealing with matters relating to discipline and conflict resolution.
6. Fair, consistent, equitable practices in resolving school and community conflicts.

# MESPA & MSSPA membership lists

Attached to this newsletter are the current lists of AEL members who are also members of either MESPA & MSSPA, respectively. If your name does not appear on the list and you are of member of one of these organizations, contact Bob Ferguson at leafman65@gmail.com or 443-223-5645

## 2022-23 AEL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE/BOARD/STAFF

Tracey Ahern (2022-26)	President	(P, Odenton ES)	(o)410-222-6514	<a href="mailto:tahern@aacps.org">tahern@aacps.org</a>
Troy Hermann (2022-26)	1st VP	(AP, Meade MS)	(o)410- 305-2400	<a href="mailto:thermann@gmail.com">thermann@gmail.com</a>
Brian Love (2022-26)	2nd VP	(Admin, BMAH)	(o)410-761-8950	<a href="mailto:bllove@aacps.org">bllove@aacps.org</a>
Natalie Marston (2022-26)	Secretary	(P, Central Special School)	(o)410-956-5885	<a href="mailto:nmarston@aacps.org">nmarston@aacps.org</a>
Ryan Sackett (2020-2024)	Treasurer	(C, Secondary Mathematics HS)	(o) 410-2225383	<a href="mailto:rsackett@aacps.org">rsackett@aacps.org</a>
Stacey Smith	Director at Large	(P, South River HS)	(o)410-956-5600	<a href="mailto:smsmith1@aacps.org">smsmith1@aacps.org</a>
John Wojtila	Director at Large	(P, Rivera Beach ES)	(o)410-222-6469	<a href="mailto:jwojtila@aacps.org">jwojtila@aacps.org</a>

## REPRESENTATIVE DIRECTORS (14): CLUSTERS/FEEDER SYSTEM

Richard Rogers	Annapolis Cluster	(P, Mills-Parole ES)	<a href="mailto:rerogers@aacps.org">rerogers@aacps.org</a>
Gina Davenport	Arundel Cluster	(P, Arundel HS)	<a href="mailto:gdavenport@aacps.org">gdavenport@aacps.org</a>
Kellie Anderson	Board of Ed	(C, NCSP)	<a href="mailto:kjanderson@aacps.org">kjanderson@aacps.org</a>
Stacy Herbert	Broadneck Cluster	(AP, Magothy River MS)	<a href="mailto:sherbert@aacps.org">sherbert@aacps.org</a>
Shanna Cahoon	Chesapeake Cluster	(AP, Chesapeake HS)	<a href="mailto:secagoon@aacps.org">secagoon@aacps.org</a>
Alexis McKay	Crofton Cluster	(P, Nantucket ES)	<a href="mailto:amckay@aacps.org">amckay@aacps.org</a>
Tamara Kelly-Molock	Glen Burnie Cluster	(P, Marley ES)	<a href="mailto:tkelly-molock@aacps.org">tkelly-molock@aacps.org</a>
Erica Garren	Meade Cluster	(AP, Meade MS)	<a href="mailto:egarren@aacps.org">egarren@aacps.org</a>
Shira Dowling	Old Mill Cluster	(P, Rippling Woods ES)	<a href="mailto:sdowling@aacps.org">sdowling@aacps.org</a>
Open	North County		
Open	Northeast Cluster		
Open	Severna Park Cluster		
Kerri Buckley	South River Cluster	(AP, South River HS)	<a href="mailto:kbuckley@aacps.org">kbuckley@aacps.org</a>
Tamika McPherson	Southern Cluster	(AP, Southern HS)	<a href="mailto:tmcpherson@aacps.org">tmcpherson@aacps.org</a>
Shannon Motsco	Special Centers	(AP, Chesapeake Sci Point)	<a href="mailto:smotsco@aacps.org">smotsco@aacps.org</a>

There are several Open Cluster Representative positions, please contact Bob Ferguson for more information.

## STAFF

Rick Kovelant (Executive Director, Legal Counsel)	(c) 443-848-8022
Bob Ferguson (Administrator)	(c)443-223-5645; (fax)410-224-3345 leafman65@gmail.com
AEL Office, 2521 Riva Road, Suite L-2, Annapolis, MD 21401	(o)410-224-3311 (f)410-224-3345

# Maryland Elementary School

## Principals Association

Our records indicate that these AEL members are also members of MESPA.

Please let Bob Ferguson (leafman65@gmail.com) know if you are on the list and shouldn't be or if you are not on the list and should be....

Abell	Emily	Assistant Principal	\$425.00
Allen	Keri	Assistant Principal	\$425.00
Barnes	Lorie	Principal	\$475.00
Bennett	Jennifer	Principal	\$475.00
Boysaw	Shirlette	Principal	\$475.00
Carr	Toni	Principal	\$475.00
Clapper	Bradley	Assistant Principal	\$425.00
Cordts	Thomas	Assistant Principal	\$425.00
Curley	Elizabeth	Assistant Principal	\$425.00
Dilliard	Thomas	Principal	\$475.00
Dowling	Shira	Principal	\$475.00
Fee	Amy	Assistant Principal	\$425.00
Fox	Lenora	Principal	\$475.00
Gagnon	Eileen	Principal	\$475.00
Garris	Heather	Principal	\$475.00
Gordon	Christopher	Principal	\$475.00
Gormley	Mary Beth	Principal	\$475.00
Harris	Colleen	Principal	\$475.00
Kauffman	Shauna	Principal	\$475.00
Kennedy	Charlita	Assistant Principal	\$425.00
Koennel	Lisa	Principal	\$475.00
Lambden	Tara	Principal	\$475.00
Lancaster	Janet	Principal	\$475.00
Marston	Natalie	Principal	\$475.00
MATTHEWS	TARYN	Assistant Principal	\$425.00
McKay	Alexis	Principal	\$475.00
Miller	Jamie	Principal	\$475.00
Moore	Raquelle	Principal	\$425.00
Morgan	Michelle	Principal	\$475.00
Myers	Susan	Principal	\$475.00
Nee-Jackson	Sandra	Assistant Principal	\$425.00
Otte	Jason	Principal	\$475.00
Passwaters	Regina	Principal	\$475.00
Perunovich	Tammy	Assistant Principal	\$425.00
Prater	Tracy	Principal	\$475.00
Roach	Jessica	Principal	\$475.00
Sayers	Monica	Assistant Principal	\$425.00
Shafran	Stacy	Principal	\$475.00
Smith	Wendy	Assistant Principal	\$425.00
Snyder	Kristy	Principal	\$475.00
Stanzione	Todd	Assistant Principal	\$425.00
Swain	Quinn	Principal	\$475.00
Terry	Kimberly	Principal	\$475.00
Walker	Rodney	Principal	\$475.00
Wild	Lisa	Assistant Principal	\$425.00
Williams	Rebecca	Assistant Principal	\$425.00
Wooleyhand	Christopher	Principal	\$475.00
CORNELIUS	AMY	ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	\$425.00

# Maryland Secondary School Principals Association

Our records indicate that the following AEL members are also members of MSSPA.

Please let Bob Ferguson (leafman65@gmail.com) know if you are on the list and shouldn't be or if you are not on the list and should be....

ALVEAR, JESSICA	\$370.00
ANOFF, LOUIS	\$370.00
BIEBER, MATTHEW	\$370.00
BROPHY, KATHLEEN	\$370.00
BUCKLEY, KERRI	\$370.00
CASE, EVE	\$370.00
COLBERT, TIARA	\$370.00
DAVENPORT, GINA	\$370.00
DENNEY, HANNE	\$370.00
EDWARDS, BERNARD	\$370.00
ELLIOTT, PHILLIP	\$370.00
FEUERHERD, KATHRYN	\$370.00
FOSTER, BETH	\$370.00
FULLWOOD, TAWNYA	\$370.00
GORSKI, STEPHEN	\$370.00
HARMON-MALONE,	\$370.00
HERBERT, STACY	\$370.00
KRZYS, MEGAN	\$370.00
LINDLEY, GEORGE	\$370.00
LYONS, MICHAEL	\$370.00
MANBECK, CHARLETTE	\$370.00
MANBECK, SCOTT	\$370.00
MOSES, KIMBERLY	\$370.00
MURPHY, ARTHUR	\$370.00
NESBITT, CLARK	\$370.00
ROSE, JOE	\$370.00
ROSER, COURTNEY	\$370.00
SMITH, LINDA	\$370.00
SMITH, STACEY	\$370.00
SMITH, STACY	\$370.00
SUMMERS, EUGENE	\$370.00
THOMAS, SARA	\$370.00
WHITING, EUGENE	\$370.00
YORE, JOHN	\$370.00