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A full color electronic version of this newsletter can be found on our website.

May 2021



The



# Advocate



## CONGRATULATIONS to Shelly Fitzgerald,

an Instructional Assistant working at Westernport Elementary school, for being selected as the **2021 ACEA Educational Support Professional of the Year!** Shelly was nominated by her colleague, Melissa Kealy, a second-grade teacher also at Westernport, and selected by our committee of retired educators. In her nomination, Melissa shared a plethora of roles that Shelly plays in the education of the students at Westernport from drop off and dismissal to serving as chairperson of the PBIS Committee: “She covers classes at any given time, she helps out on play duty even when she doesn’t need to, she assists in the office when needed, and she does anything to assist anybody. I have never met a harder working IA than Shelly.”



Happy  
Teacher  
Appreciation  
Week!

May 2-8, 2021



It has been a long-standing tradition of ACTA/ACEA to purchase and prepare bushels of fruit and candies for each work location of ACPS in celebration of National Teacher Appreciation Week in May. With the onset of the pandemic last year and the accompanying restrictions on public consumption of food items, ACEA members decided to graciously donate \$2,000 to the Western Maryland Food Bank, Inc., which represented the budgeted monies for the Teacher Appreciation Baskets, as well as additional contributions from 2020 Retirees. Unfortunately for a second year, we will not be able to do these baskets due to current health and safety guidelines in place. Nevertheless, ACEA knows that it has been an exhausting and challenging year for our members, and wants to make sure that you know that we truly appreciate you. So, while you won’t be getting the fruit baskets, we are preparing a special gift for each of our members to honor and thank you for your commitment and perseverance throughout the course of this year. As soon as they are ready, we will let you know how they will be distributed. On behalf of ACEA...

**THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO EACH DAY FOR YOUR STUDENTS, OUR COLLEAGUES, OUR PROFESSION, AND OUR ASSOCIATION!**

# UniServ Minute

Many of our members have weighed in to let us know how frustrated you were with the Board of Education's actions at their April meeting. Many of those frustrations have come in the form of questions. I'm going to do my best to answer those below.

1. Is it legal for the Board to take action in executive session without it being made public prior to voting on it?
  - The Board can vote on personnel and student issues that require confidentiality to be maintained. Any other material action must have the opportunity to be heard by the public prior to voting. So, things like the budget, policy changes and the calendar must have a public hearing prior to voting. To be clear, no one knows if/that the Board discussed or voted on the calendar. *They are allowed to discuss any issue in executive session but cannot vote.*
2. Were the motions made to reconsider the calendar "in order" along with the discussion?
  - Yes. Any voting member may bring a motion during the discussion of New Business or during discussion of Old Business if the motion pertains to some matter from a previous meeting. The motions to separate the calendar from the consent agenda and then to reconsider it later in the meeting were both in order. The motion to reconsider the calendar was in order and open for discussion prior to the vote by all members of the Board. Board members have no obligation to discuss the nature of a motion made in a regular or special meeting prior to that meeting. In other words, they don't have to give each other advance notice of a motion before they make it.
3. What happens when the Board doesn't follow statute?
  - The Board has an internal complaint process that can be found in their Policies and Procedures. (<https://www.acpsmd.org/cms/lib/MD01907365/Centricity/Domain/36/policy%20document/BCA%20-%20CODE%20OF%20ETHICS%20032013.pdf>) Any Allegany County voter can file a complaint through this process. And, of course, they can be held accountable at the ballot box.



**Thumbs-up and congratulations to ACEA Member, MSEA Delegate, NEA Delegate, and the 2021 ACPS Teacher of the Year!**  
*Nick Amick*

## Proposed ACEA Bylaws Amendments:

In accordance with ACEA Bylaws, ARTICLE XIV. AMENDMENTS, Section 1, the following amendments to the ACEA Bylaws were proposed by the ACEA Bylaws Committee, and recommended by the ACEA Representative Assembly at their March 15, 2021 meeting, as follows:

### ARTICLE IX. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Section 1.** The Board of Directors shall consist of the officers and seven at-large executive representatives ~~elected by region~~ **elected from and by the entire membership**, and ~~four~~ **two (2)** at-large positions reserved for and elected by Unit IV non-certificated members of the Association. ~~Each geographical region shall be composed of an approximately equal number of members.~~ It shall be the executive authority of the Association and shall have the power to employ staff.

### ARTICLE X. ELECTIONS

**Section 1.** Nominations shall be carried out through the following procedures: The president shall appoint a Nominations and Elections Committee comprised of a minimum of three (3) members of the Association at the ~~January~~ **October** Representative Assembly meeting, but no later than ~~January~~ **October** 31. No officers or members of the Board of Directors of the Association shall serve on the Nominations and Elections Committee. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall oversee the election of officers and representatives of the Association and prepare guidelines to include, but not be limited to: (i) open nominations; (ii) provision for the distribution and collection of nominating forms and preparation of the candidate slate; (iii) provision for the publication of the list of nominations prior to and during the election; (iv) provision for secret ballot election by the membership; and (v) provision for the tally of the ballots.

A vote on these changes will be taken at the May 17, 2021 ACEA Representative Assembly in accordance with ARTICLE XIV. AMENDMENTS, Section 2. Please provide any feedback or input regarding these changes to your building representative(s) before the May 17, 2021 ACEA Representative Assembly.

These amendments were proposed as a remedy to avoid any vacant regional seats.