



# IMPORTANT EASMC UPDATE

January 2025

## REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY



We held our January Rep. Assembly in hybrid format on Jan. 14th. Superintendent Smith and Ms. Tammy McCourt joined us for a discussion about the FY26 SMCPs proposed budget. Below are a few key takeaways from the discussion.

- A top priority is funding the negotiated agreements for all three bargaining units (EASMC ESP, EASMC Certificated, and SMASA). Funding the negotiated agreements includes our salary steps and COLA.
- A few positions will have to be cut from the budget, but those will be covered by natural attrition (retirements, resignations, etc.).
- The salary increases built into Tiers 2 and 3 of the career ladder scale will remain as they are part of the negotiated agreement. However, the special \$7,000 stipend received this year by teachers working in Blueprint schools and pursuing their National Board Certification cannot be funded again next year.

We are grateful for the decision the County Commissioners made in the spring to increase tax revenue to fund our schools, and we are optimistic that they will follow through with that promise to fully fund the SMCPs budget. However, it is important that you stay tuned in to our regular EASMC updates and attend your site's 10-minute meetings.

## WERE YOU UNABLE TO ATTEND OUR REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY?

You can watch the SMCPs FY26 budget presentation from the January 15 Board of Education budget work session on the St. Mary's County Board of Education YouTube channel.

[Click here](#) to watch.



# State Budget Challenges and the Potential Impact on Public Education

The Maryland Budget crisis has been in the news a lot lately. How did we get here? Increases in Maryland residents qualifying for and accessing Medicaid and a slower economic growth post-pandemic are just a few of the reasons. As the General Assembly begins their work with the Governor to create a balanced budget that is a requirement in Maryland law, your elected officials in Annapolis need to hear from you!

On the table are proposals that would reduce the per pupil funding that school districts are scheduled to receive next year and pause any increases planned for the following three years. This funding serves as the **foundation for school budgets** to support staffing, resources for students, programs, and to fund the daily operations of the school system. Everything from electric, heat, building repairs, staffing, curriculum, activities, etc. are all supported through the per pupil allotment that each district gets from the state. Another proposal on the table to help balance the state budget is to transfer the full cost of state pensions to the locals.

As education professionals, we can not be the first line solution for budget tightening. Sign up for one or all of the lobby nights that are being sponsored by EASMC (see below) or the ESP statewide lobby night organized by MSEA. Training, a light meal, and talking points will be provided. Don't miss this chance to take a stand for your profession and for the students we serve every day.

## Upcoming Lobby Nights

MSEA ESP Statewide Lobby Night – February 10th, Annapolis

EASMC Lobby Night – February 24th, Annapolis

EASMC Lobby Night – March 24th, Annapolis







**JOIN US FOR**

## **LOBBY NIGHTS IN ANNAPOLIS**



**Join your colleagues in  
Annapolis and tell your story  
about working conditions,  
educator pathways, planning  
time, and livable wages.**

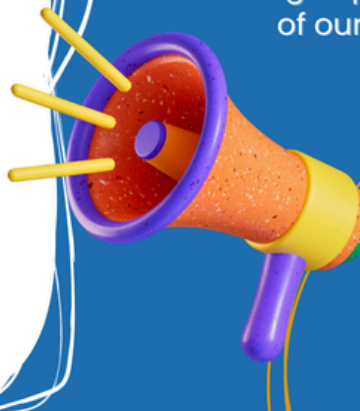
**Monday, February 24**

**Monday, March 24**

Meet at the EASMC office at 4:00 p.m. to  
engage in training and a light dinner.

Respond by February 19 to the link below  
so we can plan appropriately.

Want to learn more about  
EASMC/MSEA's focus for lobbying  
and what happens on a lobby visit to  
Annapolis? Plan to attend the  
Government Relations Committee  
meeting on Wednesday, January 29  
at 4:00 p.m. in the EASMC office. Be  
sure to sign up to attend one or both  
of our lobby nights!



### Questions?

Email EASMC Legislative  
Chairperson, Tiffany Thompson at  
[tmthompson@smcps.org](mailto:tmthompson@smcps.org) or EASMC  
Board Liaison, Dwayne Hancock at  
[dwhancock@smcps.org](mailto:dwhancock@smcps.org).

**Deadline to sign up is February 19!**

**Click [HERE](#) to RSVP!**



# Support Staff Fighting for Equity, Fairness, and Safety

**ESP Lobby Night:  
February 10!**



MSEA support staff members and partner unions from around the state are locking arms in solidarity! JOIN US FEBRUARY 10!

We're asking our elected leaders for:




- A dedicated seat for education support staff on the Maryland State Board of Education
- A \$25/hour minimum starting wage for all education support staff
- Transparency and accountability for public employee safety by expanding workplace safety and health protections

New to  
lobbying?  
Don't miss our 101!

**Feb 6**  
(virtual)  
&  
**Feb 10**



[marylandeducators.org](http://marylandeducators.org)

 [marylandeducators](https://www.facebook.com/marylandeducators)  
 [marylandeducators](https://twitter.com/marylandeducators)  
 [@marylandeducators](https://www.instagram.com/marylandeducators)  
 [@MSEAeducators](https://www.linkedin.com/company/MSEAeducators)



**Get the details and  
register now!**

## **MSEA's ESP Lobby Night**

**February 10, 2025**

**5:00 P.M.**

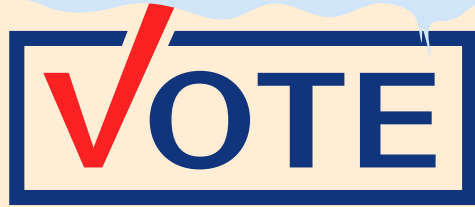
**MSEA Headquarters**

**Meetup:** 5 p.m. for dinner, training, and materials, then head to legislators' offices.

**Deadline to sign up is February 6!**

**Click [HERE](#) to RSVP!**





It's time for EASMC and MSEA elections! The link to vote, along with your personal MSEA ID number (needed to vote) will be sent to your **personal** email address on **January 27**.

EASMC will also send out a communication with the link, and you can get your MSEA ID from your building rep. or by emailing [jwaybright@mseane.org](mailto:jwaybright@mseane.org).

EASMC positions being elected:

- Board of Directors Member-at-Large
- MSEA Delegates
- NEA Delegates

Deadline to vote: **February 14, 2024**



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Jan. 27 – EASMC & MSEA Election Voting Begins
- Jan. 31 – Professional Development Day
- Feb. 4 – EASMC Board of Directors, 5:00 p.m.
- Feb. 5 – SMCPs Board of Education, 9:00 a.m.
- Feb. 10 – MSEA ESP Lobby Night in Annapolis
- Feb. 11 – EASMC Rep Assembly, 5:00 p.m. Zoom
- Feb. 11 – Commissioners Budget Work Session
- Feb. 14 – Happy Valentines Day!
- Feb. 14 – MSEA/EASMC Election Voting Ends
- Feb. 17 – President's Day – Schools Closed
- Feb. 19 – SMCPs Board of Education, 6:00 p.m.
- Feb. 22 – MSEA ESP Conference
- Feb. 24 – EASMC Lobby Night in Annapolis

# Let It Snow

## RA ATTENDANCE 1.14.25

These sites had representation at our January Representative Assembly. Ask your building rep. for an update!

BBES  
CPCS  
CHS  
DSS  
JAFCTC  
DES

GWCES  
GMHS  
GHES  
HES  
LES  
LMS

LMDES  
LPES  
MBMS  
PHES  
SRMS  
VA

WMES  
Retirees  
Leonardtwn Offices

## WHO CAN HELP?

Tel. (240) 309-4196



**Sarah Penrod, EASMC President, [spenrod@mseane.org](mailto:spenrod@mseane.org)**

Systemic Issues, Negotiated Agreement Questions, Rep. Assembly, Board of Directors, Committees, Public Relations, Policies, Program and Strategic Plan

**Dawn Pipkin, MSEA UniServ Director, [dpipkin@mseane.org](mailto:dpipkin@mseane.org)**

Negotiated Agreement Concerns, Staff Rights & Responsibilities, Discipline & Performance, Teacher Resignation, Allegations, Member Advocacy, Grievances

**Jennifer Waybright, EASMC Office Manager, [jwaybright@mseane.org](mailto:jwaybright@mseane.org)**

Dues, Membership, Communications, Web Site, Rosters, Calendar, Resources, Site Rep. Accreditation & Changes





# DID YOU KNOW?

## Hostile Work Environment

### What is a Hostile Work Environment?

Under Maryland law the definition of a Hostile Work environment includes the following:

- Unwelcome comments or conduct which is severe, pervasive, and unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance. This conduct must also be based on a protected characteristic.
- Protected characteristics include a person's race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

### What should I do if I am experiencing a Hostile Work Environment as described above?

- An employee's first step should always be to try and address the concern at the lowest level, letting their colleague know that the comments or conduct is impacting your ability to do your work. If you aren't able to get the behavior to stop, it should be reported to your supervisor or administrator. Depending on the nature of the problem Human Resources may get involved and conduct an official investigation.

St. Mary's County Public Schools' policies and regulations govern the expectations for employee conduct and professionalism.

#### *Policy GBCC- Professional Responsibilities*

"All Staff members are expected to maintain a standard of dress, personal appearance, general decorum, moral standards, and behavior that conforms with their professional status in the community."

*Regulation GBBC-R* goes on to say that staff should "serve as a positive role model for students at all times by avoiding conduct that rises to the level of immorality, misconduct, insubordination, or willful neglect of duty." Those terms all exist in the law and if proven to be happening could lead to employee discipline and termination.

In the event you, as an employee are part of an investigation based on a colleague's complaint, there is always a potential for discipline. If you are entering a meeting that could result in discipline you have a right to representation at that meeting. The best advice is to make sure that your professional conduct doesn't put you in a situation that could impact your employment or cause your colleagues to file a complaint.

