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

October 2026

The ACEA Advocate

Welcome New ACEA Members!

Unit 1

Morgan Cuthbertson	**WS**
Janice Hare	**JD**
Stefanee Stewart	**CCTE**
Ashley White	**WS**

Unit 4

Molly Dawson	**WS**

ACEA Retirement Seminar

If you are an ACEA member considering retirement this year, in the near future, or in a few years, please plan to attend one of our virtual informational sessions on Wednesday, October 28, at either 3:30 p.m. or 4:30 p.m. If interested, please email Kim at ksloane@mseanea.org for the virtual link and associated documents. Additional sessions will be held in January and April or reach out for other scheduling options.

Seasons of Change

For the first time in a number of years, fall is poised to present a spectacular display of color as the leaves change from greens to shades of crimson, chartreuse, orange, and gold. While we have come to embrace this seasonal change thanks in large part to fall festivals and pumpkin spice, there is also another very important season of change to embrace…democracy.

Democracy is a form of government in which political power is vested in the people – you and I - who elect representatives to conduct government through competitive elections. During this equally colorful season of signs and advertisements, we tend to miss just how spectacular this concept and reality of representative democracy truly is. It provides each of us with the power to make change on a regular basis with time and resources to evaluate all candidates by VOTE! You should already be aware that ACEA completed our endorsement process this summer to assist our members with identifying pro-public-school candidates.

And while we have done our due diligence in this regard, it is now up to you – the members – to act upon the opportunities that have been identified for you. Please check your personal email for details about our ACEA "Treat and Meet" scheduled for Sunday, October 18. Make sure you do your candidate research and vote in the November 3 election wherever you live because voting is a powerful right to be exercised each and every opportunity you have.

The democracy season will come to fruition on Tuesday, November 3 and is the reason schools and offices are closed that day. Please make a plan now to cast your vote on or before November 3. We also have opportunities for members who wish to actively support our ACEA efforts now through election day on our website or by calling or emailing the ACEA office. Remember, it takes "u" and "i" to make a "union".

★ Every Election Matters ★

VOTE!

★ Your Vote Matters ★

In solidarity and service,

Kim

ksloane@mseanea.org

2027 Nominations and Elections Committee Timeline
For Election of ACEA Board of Directors, and MSEA and NEA Delegates

- **September 14** - Present timeline to Board of Directors for approval
- **September 28** - send *Notice of Nominations and Elections* Postcards for ACEA Board of Directors, MSEA and NEA Delegates to membership via U.S.P.S.
- **September 30** - Nomination forms available on our website at www.aceamsea.org for ACEA Elections and through MSEA's website at marylandeducators.org for MSEA Election.
- **November 10 -** NEC presents report of nominees received to date to the RA and accepts nominations from the floor.
- **November 20** - nominations due to the NEC committee in the ACEA office or postmarked by 4:00 p.m.
- **December 1-4** - NEC Committee meets to review nominations and prepares notifications to nominees to submit bios and photos to MSEA for publication, as well as for *The ACEA Advocate*, and invites each nominee to address the January 12, 2027, ACEA RA. In addition, the NEC will prepare the ballot information in accordance with MSEA instructions and submit it by the deadline of January 9, 2027.
- **December 12** – Deadline for nominees to submit bios and photos to MSEA and ACEA for publication.
- **January 2027**- Publish list and/or biographical information of nominees in the January Newsletter.
- **January 11** - NEC presents the final report of nominees received to the RA; nominees are invited to address the members of the ACEA RA; recommendations to membership are decided.
- **January 25 -February 12, 2027** - Electronic voting window. Voting will take place from 9:00 a.m. on January 25, 2027, through 5:00 p.m. on February 12, 2027, when voting closes.
- **February 16** – The MSEA NEC meets to verify election results and notify ACEA.
- **February and March** - The results are shared with the membership through email, newsletter and/or the website.

NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN for the 2027 ACEA and MSEA ELECTIONS!

This photo was captured during an MSEA RA in Ocean City by one of our ACEA Delegates. If you would like to be an ACEA Delegate to the MSEA Representative Assembly in Ocean City next October 2027, you must complete a nomination form NOW! These are available on our website at https://aceamsea.org/2027-acea-election-resources/ to be downloaded, completed (self-nomination is permitted) and returned to ACEA before the nomination window closes.

Similarly, if you would like to be considered as a delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly in Indianapolis during the summer of 2027, you should complete BOTH an MSEA Nomination Form found at https://marylandeducators.org/elections-nominations/ (for possible state funding) as well as the ACEA Nomination Form (for possible ACEA funding).

Please note that you MUST be elected to attend and be funded, but you can decline to attend if elected and unable to do so. Questions? Call ACEA at 301-729-8280.

DID YOU KNOW?

Article 5.2 Personal Life of your contracts state:

Religious or lawful political activities of a member outside of the worksite shall not be grounds for discipline nor discrimination. The personal life of an employee shall be the concern of and warrant the attention of the Board only as it may affect the employee's performance of her/his job.

Here are some tips from the NEA Know Your Rights: Free Speech and Social Media for Educators:

*DON'T include your educator role in your bio or handle: Maintain clear personal/professional boundaries.

*DON'T post during school/working hours: share content only on your own time.

*DON'T use school accounts or logos: NEVER imply that you speak for the school or system.

*DON'T air personal workplace grievances: Only posts that address broader public concerns are protected.

*DON'T employ inflammatory rhetoric: Stay clear of community backlash that could impede school operations.

*DON'T encourage student walkouts: Avoid promoting disruptions to the school day.

*DON'T share identifiable student information: Always obtain written parental consent before posting student photos, videos, or other identifiable information.

Sign up for the free NEA member course to learn more about how to engage in protected off-duty speech while minimizing exposure to online threats such as doxxing.