

Exciting and Challenging Times



Bill Lawrence,
Executive Director

The 2014–15 school year has been an exciting and challenging one for BCPS and CASE. Our membership has grown by almost 20% and we have reached the Agency Fee threshold. We will institute a fee amount in the coming months. I know that this is a controversial item and am available to explain the process to any who have questions.

On another note, as I have traveled around the county for the past two years, I am often confronted with what I call “The Question.” I will attempt to answer “The Question” with the facts as I understand them and provide guidance as we move forward in our quest to provide outstanding service to the BCPS community.

“How Do I Stay Out of Trouble?”

This query greets me in many schools and offices during my visits. It indicates a belief that this administration targets, disciplines, assigns, and demotes employees for arbitrary reasons. I have heard concerns regarding age discrimination, disrespect for CASE and the Master Agreement, hostile work environment, and a general distrust of the administration.

The Problem

There are members of the administration who have not worked in a collective bargaining environment before and appear to have little regard for the process. With no real student data points to determine administrator effectiveness, there is often a focus on ancillary things that lead to negative actions toward an employee. These are not violations but are perceived by some members as simply a desire to demonstrate power and influence. This creates an unstable situation in which employees are afraid of actions that are not FAIR, REASONED or CONSISTENT.

Help Us Help You

If you have concerns about a hostile work environment, I want to hear from you. To help you better, I am collecting examples of issues and experiences to determine if patterns exist. Please use your personal email to contact me at execdirect@case-bcps.org.

Your Response

So given this situation, here are some tips and possible answers to “The Question.”

1. Honesty Above All Else

In all cases conduct yourself at the highest possible ethical and professional level.

2. Email

Never use your BCPS email account for personal messages. It is not “your” account and is subject to review at any time.

3. Understand and Observe the Rules of Procurement

Whether caused by malicious intent or ignorance of proper procedure, these violations may result in discipline. In December, 2014, CASE and the Office of Internal Audit hosted an informational meeting that addressed this issue (see notes at <https://www.bcps.org/OFFICES/audit/site-support/InternalAuditPresentations.html>). The finance office also gave presentations to principals and assistant principals.

4. Get CASE Involved

Get us involved early in the process. In most cases a resolution can be worked out. If you have an issue with another CASE employee, please contact the CASE office rather than the administration. We have had excellent success mediating conflicts and avoiding disciplinary action.

5. Ask Someone

If you are not clear on a course of action, contact your Zone Assistant Superintendent or your immediate supervisor for guidance. In several instances the failure to follow policy or procedure has been due to a lack of training or knowledge of current guidelines. It is easier to ask advice than to be subject to discipline for making the wrong decision.

Now More Than Ever

This message is not a criticism of the administration—this is how we believe you can stay out of trouble. In this somewhat uncertain environment, CASE is your only defense. If you haven’t joined CASE yet, now, more than ever, is the time.



There are no “I Erred Cards” at BCPS. Even employees with first-time violations are being disciplined.

Spring Legislative Reception

April 16, 2015, Liberatore's Ristorante



Members Tom Evans, Cathy Gantz, Steve Mackert, and Board Member Penny Parker



Councilman Julian Jones, Executive Director Bill Lawrence, Councilman David Marks, and County Executive Kevin Kamenetz



Councilman Julian Jones greets members



County Executive Kevin Kamenetz with Member Dr. Isetta Melton



Executive Director Bill Lawrence talks to Bill Watt and Jeff Graham of Robert W. Baird & Co.

CASE Open Enrollment July 1 to August 31, 2015

For a limited time you can join CASE and take advantage of exclusive membership benefits like:

- Admittance to two annual dining/meeting events
- Scholarship Program for dependents of CASE employees
- \$10,000 accidental death and dismemberment policy
- Free financial planning with Robert W. Baird Company
- CASE attorney for qualified workplace issues
- Discounted legal fees for any family situation

Baltimore County Education Budget

The County Council reviewed and took action on the final budget for FY16. CASE is pleased to report the funding for our five percent COLA for the 2015–16 school year has been approved. We appreciate our County Executive and County Council who made it a priority to fully fund our negotiated raise and the entire BCPS education budget.

Characterstics of Great Leaders

"Outstanding leaders go out of their way to boost the self-esteem of their personnel. If people believe in themselves, it's amazing what they can accomplish." - **Sam Walton**