Good afternoon, my name is Linda McLaughlin and I am the President of the Education Association of Charles County.

January was a busy month, topped off with some winter weather. EACC had our annual Legislative Reception on January 16th at St Charles High School. Thank you to Board Chair McGraw, Vice Chair Wilson, Board members Lukas, Brown, Battle-Lockhart and Hancock for attending our reception to discuss legislative priorities with our EACC reps and members. We enjoyed the discussions and hearing your input and opinions on budget, discipline, and the need to support our early career educators. We were thrilled to hear that there will be more Town Halls in place for educators’ voices to be heard and look forward to learning the dates for those.

EACC was represented on January 19th at the annual MSEA Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration by Linda McLaughlin(EACC President), and another EACC member. The celebration included a performance by the dance team from Wise High School (Prince George’s County). The Keynote speaker Dr. Kaye Whitehead spoke passionately about being an educator and that we have to make a commitment to make a world that we want our children to live in.

EACC had a table full of educators at the January 21st Charles County NAACP Martin Luther King, Jr. Prayer Breakfast at North Point High School. Representing EACC were President Linda McLaughlin, EACC Executive Board members Cheryl Ervin and Sean Heyl, EACC Building Rep Ruby Lacy, and EACC member Lisa Williams. Dyotha Sweat, recently elected Charles County NAACP President, and the Keynote Speaker Joe Sampson, “The Black Eagle,” spoke decisively and profoundly about defeating hate and staying “woke” as a call to action, to keep the Dr. King Dream and legacy alive. It was an event full of fellowship and inspiration.

The 439th Maryland General Assembly Session convened on January 9, 2019. Much of the legislation and action this session is revolving around the Kirwan Commission. We hope to see legislative movement and support around the implementation of preliminary recommendations that relate to salary increases for educators, expansion of pre-K, career-technology education, community schools and additional funding for at-risk students. Other legislation that we support includes:

- reinstituting local control over the school calendar (HB 437/SB 128).
- adding two active teachers and a parent to the State Board of Education (HB 87/SB 529).
- a living wage requirement for education support professionals (HB 479/SB 424).
- the creation of the Trauma-Informed Schools Initiative (HB 256/SB 223).
- the prohibition of spending federal, state, or local funds to arm or train school employees to use firearms on school property (HB367/SB 536).

We continue to oppose:

- the BOOST program. $10 million is reserved in the Governor’s budget for the state’s private school voucher program known as BOOST. There is no evidence showing improvement educationally for students who go from public to private schools via this program.
- the Public Charter School Facility Fund that creates dedicated funding exclusively for charter schools statewide (HB 156/SB 172).
- the creation of a political appointee position that establishes a school oversight program as an inspector general in a new unit of government (HB 45/SB 92).
- the attack on collective bargaining rights to make Maryland a right-to-work state (HB 126).

The EACC has already had two successful Lobby Nights on 1/28 and 2/11. Our upcoming Lobby Nights are 3/25 and 4/1. Please come with us!

On March 11th MSEA is holding the **March for Our Schools** in Annapolis. We need to put pressure on the General Assembly to make serious progress this legislative session and not let up over the year until they end the underfunding of our schools. So, we’re going to Annapolis to march to make sure that every student in every neighborhood has a great public school and an equal opportunity for success.

We have secured buses to attend this March for Our Schools. We already have 136 people signed up to attend, but we want more. We want to fill our buses and the streets of Annapolis with educators, parents, students and community stakeholders. Our massive numbers and presence along with our voices will send the strong message to the General Assembly that **Our Kids Can’t Wait**. Please join us on our buses to Annapolis on March 11th and sign up to bring a friend (or 10) with you. A sign-up form is available on our website, [www.teameacc.org](http://www.teameacc.org) or you can sign up on [www.MarchForOurSchools.com](http://www.MarchForOurSchools.com). Thank you for considering the resolution to support the March 11th March for Our Schools in Annapolis. We look forward to both your support and your presence marching alongside us in Annapolis.