

The e-Brief Monthly Newsletter

Published as a Member Service

April 2011

MABE at NSBA San Francisco



Maryland Association
of Boards of Education
invites you to a reception
Friday, April 8
5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Start your 2011 NSBA Conference by making
time to connect with Maryland colleagues.
Join Us!

The Palace Hotel - French Parlor
2 New Montgomery Street
San Francisco

Look for NSBA
workshops conducted
by Maryland
Presenters.
Click [here](#) for a
complete list.

Click [here](#) to see a
complete list of
conference
attendees from
Maryland.

Quick Links

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Education Association](#)

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Education Agenda](#)

Upcoming Boardsmanship Academy

**Change Schools, Not Children: The Research Base
for Eliminating the Racial Disparity in Schools**

**April 15, 2011, 9:00-noon, at the Howard County
Board of Education office**

Join Donna Graves, Director of the Diversity Training and Development Team in Montgomery County, for an in-depth, research based look at the challenges and opportunities boards and school systems have around the subject of equity.

Please contact Kathy Bennett at the MABE office to register.

Upcoming LSA Seminar

May 9, 2011, 9:00-12:30 at the Anne Arundel County Board of Education offices

Maryland's Revised Ethics Law and the Resulting Policy Changes Required

All Maryland Boards of Education must adopt ethics policies and practices that comply with the new Ethics Law (Senate Bill 315, 2010). They also must be knowledgeable about the ethics law as they make numerous individual decisions every day, each with potential legal consequences. Unless there is a basic understanding of those requirements and the resulting consequences, the board member and the school system will be at risk.

Seminar Speakers:

Jennifer K. Allgair, Esq., General Counsel to the State Ethics Commission

Robert A. Hahn, Esq., Executive Director of the State Ethics Commission

John R. Woolums, Esq., MABE's Director of Governmental Relations

Stephen C. Bounds, Esq., MABE's Director of Legal and Policy Services

[Registration form](#)

News from the MABE Black & Hispanic Caucus

The MABE Black and Hispanic Caucus would like to thank MABE members Kevin Jackson and Eugene Peterson for organizing the outstanding session on initiatives for academic achievement in Anne Arundel County.

Participants at the meeting, held in the Board Room of the Carole Parham Building in Annapolis, were warmly welcomed by the Superintendent, Dr. Kevin Maxwell. The session was devoted to the Achievement Gap, the PBIS programs at Meade and Annapolis High Schools and an overview of Hispanic Action.

Carlesa Finney, Director, Office of Equity Assurance and Human Relations presented the overview of progress in the county. Ellen Olsen spoke of Hispanic and ESOL results, including information on outreach to the parents and the community and a description of the Hispanic College Fair. Dr. Virginia Dolan presented a county-wide view of PBIS.

Dr. Darryl Kennedy reviewed the progress made in academics, attendance and the graduation rate at Meade High School in the last two years using PBIS and community support to energize and motivate his students to markedly increase the percentage of students in AP classes and on the honor roll. Dr. Don Lilley, Maryland Principal of the Year, was also present to include the progress made by the students at Annapolis High School. In addition, the Anne Arundel school system has hired a consultant, Mr. Charles Duckett, to work with student groups in each high school to challenge them to make excellence in education one of their goals.

This was another excellent program which exemplifies the initiatives around the state to enhance the educational opportunities of all of our students, particularly celebrating the advances made by the African American and Hispanic students in the state who make up almost 48% of all students in Maryland.

MABE Q & A - Members Sharing Experience

Welcome to a new column, MABE's Q&A. This is an opportunity for members to share best practices and experience, and gather information about the how other Maryland boards operate.

Each month, a question is posed in the newsletter with a request that members reply. Responses will be posted in the next newsletter, along with a new question.

Q: Does your board use a committee structure? If so, please briefly share details.

A: We have free standing committees such as citizen's advisory, food and nutrition, ethics, etc. We do not have sub-committees to look at such as policy, budget, etc. - *Tom Carr, Garrett County*

A: We don't use a committee structure. We determined some time ago that it was counterproductive for members to participate on any of our committees given that it stifled conversation and the group typically would look to the board member for their reaction/comments which would then steer the process. We have very few committees now (only for re-districting and special education). - *Cathy Allen, St. Mary's County*

A: Our board does use a committee structure. We have two board committees and board members serve as board liaisons to other district committees. Our board committees are: Curriculum and Instruction; and Facilities and Finance. Three board members serve on each. Our other committees are: Family Life Advisory Committee; Insurance Council; Special Education Advisory Committee; Career Tech. Advisory Committee; Education That is Multi-cultural; Endowment Fund Committee. All of these committee have one board member each serving on them. We also have the Nutrition Committee with one board member and the student member serving. - *Katie Groth, Frederick County*

A: We have several committees. We are currently a 12 member Board and to review, as a committee of the whole, in detail items the Board must address would be cumbersome, time consuming, etc. Ethics Committee is as needed and appointed by the President for a specific duration and / or task. Standing Committees, open to the public are: Building and Contracts Committee, meets at least Monthly. Policy Review Committee, meets Monthly. Curriculum Committee, meets approximately Monthly. Communications Committee, meets as needed. - *Rodger Janssen, Baltimore County*

Question for the next newsletter: Does your board have a handbook that is specifically for your local school board? If so, how was it created and is it updated on a regular basis?

Please send your reply to Sandi, sbarry@mabe.org.

School Board New Today features Baltimore City



Baltimore City Schools Chairman Neil Duke (l) discusses the school system's success at the 2011 NSBA Leadership Conference.

One of the most successful governing bodies in American education today is the board of Baltimore City Public Schools. But that wasn't the case just a few years ago.

As recently as 2003, student academic performance and graduation rates were declining, the school system had seen five CEO's come and go in six years, and financial insolvency was on the horizon. And, instead of focusing on academic success, the school board was guilty of managing operations. [More ...](#)

Risk Management in our schools

What is \$82,000 worth to you?

If you could secure an additional \$82,000, what would you spend it on?

Slips, trips and fall injuries are the most frequent type (over 40% of all lost time claims) of employee injury suffered by the Members of the Group Self Insurance Fund, and when they involve "lost time" (15% of all claims), they are the most expensive, averaging \$20,500 in "insured costs".

What is a "Lost Time" Injury? It is when an employee who has suffered a work related injury has missed more than 3 days of work as a result of that injury and is entitled (by State Law) to compensation for lost wages from their employer for that injury.

What is a "Slip and Fall Injury"? This is when an employee, during the course of performing the duties of their job slip on a level surface, stairs, curb, ladder rung, or trip over something under their feet, and injure themselves. The employee averages 51 years old, and usually will fall after the slip or trip. Occasionally they will suffer an injury from the slip or trip alone without actually falling. In essence, this quick analysis is a result of the claims process. The MABE claims adjusters work with school personnel to "code" claims, so between the two parties, a decision is made if the injury is a slip, trip or fall, and is coded as such. Injuries most frequently are sprains strains and contusions of the knee.

On average it takes 10 days to report these injuries to MABE. This is longer than ideal. When a claim is not reported immediately and a claims adjuster does not make contact with the injured employee right away, the employee may be unsure of his or her status, and feel seeking legal representation would benefit them.

What are "Insured Costs"? They are the medical payments, indemnity payments for lost wages, and other expenses associated with handling the workers compensation claim. It does not include "Uninsured Costs" to an organization that is associated with the accident and resulting injury. These are typically estimated to be 4x the insured costs and include things like time taken to tend to the injured employee, completing paperwork, communicating with doctors and claims adjusters, as well as the costs to hire substitutes to complete the injured employee's workload. More difficult to capture are the "Hidden Costs" to students in the classroom if their regular teacher is not able to work, and to fellow employees whose productivity is impacted. These are examples of some of the uninsured and hidden costs. There often many more and this is a good topic to use with staff.

So the true cost to an organization for a lost time slip and fall injury is actually closer to the \$82,000 listed in the title of this article. This is not easy money to access, but it is obtainable. Discussing this topic and asking staff to put costs to each item associated with an injury whether "Insured", "Uninsured" or "Hidden", is a valuable brainstorming activity that raises awareness among employees and emphasizes the impact of employee injuries.

Employee injuries are a business expense that can and are being managed, but to effect a change, it takes everyone within a system to understand the value of preventing not only the workers' compensation claim, but more importantly the accident and injury that precede it. It is a "Cultural Thing", and takes more than one person to make this type of change. A goal needs to be established, communicated, training provided, and status updates to track progress needs to be provided to all. Most important of all is to involve employees in this process. Is it worth it?

We all agree that the education of our children is why we are here, but as we go through the daily motions of our work day, what and why we do some things can become cloudy. It is important for all employees to work together to prevent accidents and especially slips trips and falls - these, the most frequent and expensive type of injury so we can more effectively direct our limited and valuable assets towards the education of our children.