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TOTALLY AWESOME EDUCATORS FOR CHILDREN EVERYWHERE

Tidewater Association for Early Childhood Education

Dear Wonderful TAECE members:

We know this school year has been a difficult one as we seek to navigate the ever changing COVID safety protocols while providing a high-quality education to our children and supporting their families. Let us encourage you to keep taking one day at a time. You matter in the classroom and in the lives of the children in your care.

When I was feeling a bit low this year, one of my kindergarten students provided the extra motivation I needed. As I was tying her shoelace, she turned her head away from me and appropriately coughed into her elbow. I praised her and thanked her for not coughing on me. Her most precious reply was, "Why, Mrs. Bell! I don't want you to get sick, then you couldn't come to school, and I want you here." Out of the mouths of babes came the encouragement I needed to press on.

Your children and families want you in the classroom as well. It may not always feel like it, but you are needed.

Despite COVID protocols, TAECE was able to provide our summer/fall 2021 safety trainings and our fall Dino-mite make-it-take-it workshops all in person. However rising COVID numbers this winter and additional responsibilities placed on our teachers and support staff caused difficulty for us to attract the number of quality presenters we needed to provide a spring workshop as we had originally planned. The good news is that in our efforts to provide our current members with that additional value and needed trainings we are excited to announce:

- Those early childhood educators and centers with current 2021-2022 memberships will receive **free renewal** for the 2022-2023 school year.
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- We encourage each of you to **apply for the Alice Powell Grant** which provides a maximum of \$500 towards a project of your choice that will improve your teaching ability and/or your classroom. Examples include taking classes toward your CDA, other college coursework, creating a classroom library or a STEM lab. What does your school need? Applications can be found at our site [TAECE.net](https://www.taece.net) under the "More" tab. The forms are **due by April 15, 2022**.

- We will offer our ever popular **Childcare Safety Trainings** again as the 2022-2023 academic year begins. Look for more information in the near future regarding the required classes, locations, dates and times.
- We are planning to offer a **fall conference "Learning Faces in Natural Spaces"**. These workshops will focus on providing outdoor classrooms on a budget and beyond. More information to come!

Let us know how we can serve you further. Remember you are needed in the lives of your children.

Blessings,
Laurie Bell
2021-2022 TAECE Board President
lauriebell1@cox.net