

IMPORTANT DATES

Tuesday, October 22: Board of Education Work Session, High School Small Aud. 6 PM.

Thursday, October 24: Conference Day, K-8.

Friday, October 25: Conference Day, K-12.

Monday, November 4: SHTA SOCIAL, Los Habaneros restaurant. 4-6PM.

Tuesday, November 5: Election Day—No School for Teachers or Students

SHTA news

October 21, 2013

ISSUE NO. 2

Message From the President

I would like to start out my report on a grateful and celebratory note. It is a pleasure to recognize the outstanding work of three of our colleagues and fellow SHTA Members; Andrew Glasier, Lena Paskewitz, and Addie Tobey. These three teachers have taken on the significant task of organizing, planning, and executing the peer evaluation component of our OTES evaluations. They have attended countless meetings, presented at all of the buildings in the district (while promising non-existent t-shirts!), fielded numerous phone calls and continually answer questions via email. All the while, all three have maintained their high level of commitment to the students of Shaker Heights in the halls and classrooms of our schools.

Andrew, Lena, and Addie are leading us into a new and exciting aspect of professional education, the establishment of teachers as active collaborators in the formative and evaluative aspect of teaching. For most of our history as educators, we have been the recipients of evaluation from administrators. Now we are beginning to take the reins as active participants in the evaluative process with our peers, a bold new direction that Andrew, Lena, and Addie are helping establish.

I also would be remiss in not acknowledging the importance of Erin Herbruck in this process. Erin has been a tireless advocate of the peer evaluation process from Day One. She has been there right beside Andrew, Lena, and Addie and has been the bridge between central administration, building administration and teachers. We have seen Erin become one of the finest members of the central administrative team in the district, and I would argue the state and beyond. Erin is a testament to how impactful an administrator can be after they have been a long-term teacher. I applaud Erin's efforts as well.

We know that the road will not always be smooth, but it will be worth it. Andrew, Lena, Addie, and Erin are guiding us to a new plateau and there will no doubt be bumps along the way. However, I encourage you to thank all of them for taking the lead in this journey and increasing the professionalism of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association. They most certainly deserve it.

October has been a month full of small, but significant meetings. I teleconferenced and corresponded with Dr. Hutchings concerning building scans and the role of School Board members. Dr. Hutchings reassured me that scans are non-evaluative and board members are there only to observe. Also, Dr. Hutchings will accompany board members during their building scans. I met three times with negotiations team members to review the contract and assemble the negotiations survey. I worked with Past President Becky Thomas to revise and email out negotiations survey. I corresponded with Stacy Elgart and Becky Thomas to update membership lists. I also attended Edward Jones/Brady Krebs reception and presentation with members

of the investments committee Matt Zucca, Bill Scanlon, Todd Keitlen, Chante Thomas-Taylor, and Past VP Dollye Finney. Finally, I attended Dr. Hutching Advisory Committee team meeting to listen and give input on his 90-day entry plan.

As always, feel free to contact your representatives and your officers, including myself, with any issues or concerns. We are here to help and represent you. Thank you to all of those who were able to complete our negotiations survey. It will serve to inform our negotiating choices this year and next. I wish you all the best as we continue our professional duties as educators in the Shaker Heights City Schools.

*Respectfully submitted,
John Morris, President*



MORE IMPORTANT DATES

Wednesday, November 6: Board of Education Regular Meeting,
High School Small Aud. 6 pm

Thursday, November 7: SHTA Executive Board at Woodbury
4:30

Monday, November 11: SHTA Representative Council Meeting
@Boulevard at 4:30

Tuesday, November 19: Board of Education Work Session @High
School Small Aud. 6 pm

Wednesday, November 27: Hanukkah Begins at Sunset

Wednesday, November 27 to Monday, December 2:
Thanksgiving Recess

EVALUATION COMMITTEE

The Evaluation Committee will be meeting Tuesday, October 29th. Please contact SHTA committee members with any praises, suggestions or concerns about the new evaluation process:

Deanna Clemente- Milne-WO Art

Megan Dora- HS Science

Andrew Glasier- HS Social Studies

Lena Paskewitz-FE grade 3

Addie Tobey-MS English

Reports from the Executive Board

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I hope you are all doing well. I know you all have been extremely busy this past fall with the many responsibilities you have as educators. I know you all have been waiting patiently for the opportunity to win the coveted SHTA Fellowship Grant. I hope that each of you has received an application from your building representatives. These awards are designed to promote professional development and can be used to attend workshops, for payment of dues to professional organizations (except the SHTA), journals or professional materials. The winners are selected via random drawing. The deadline for submission this year is noon Friday November 1st, 2013. Send entries to Matthew Zucca, Fernway School. Multiple entries will be disqualified and only members of the Association are eligible for participation. Forty recipients will be chosen and awarded \$100 each. Winners will be notified by school mail and their names published in the November newsletter. If you need an application contact your building representatives or contact me at #4692.

If you have not already done so I would like to encourage each of you to contribute to the PTO Council Annual Drive. The Association has forged a close working relationship with PTO. The PTO annually sponsors teacher grants and participates in a number of teacher-sponsored events.

I am currently working with the *Night for The Red and White* Committee. The event is scheduled for **Saturday, March 8, 2014 at 7:00 pm**. The event will be held at **The Tudor Arms hotel** at 10660 Carnegie Avenue in University Circle. Please consider both making a contribution to the Silent Auction and attending this event. The ticket price remains \$90 to staff.

I have also attended Dr. Hutchings' Advisory Committee meetings, PTO council meetings, the last Investments Committee meeting, and the Association's negotiating team meetings.

Thank you for your continued to support your fellow members and the Association. Feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

*Respectfully submitted,
Matthew Zucca*



TREASURER'S REPORT

On Wednesday, October 16th the Investments Committee (made up Matt Zucca, Chante Thomas-Taylor, Todd Keitlen and me) met with Brady Krebs, our Edward Jones advisor to discuss the Association's investments. We continue to experience a rising fund amount due to our conservative, balanced strategy.

I am in the process of switching our financial records from the old Excel spreadsheet system Tom Patrick handed down to me to the Quickbooks accounting program. It has been a learning process and I have been meeting with our accountants, Edward Hawkins & Co., LLC to learn the system.

I hope everyone's OTES evaluation is going well and I hope everyone is keeping an eye on the administrators to ensure the correct procedure is being followed.

*Respectfully submitted,
Bill Scanlon, Treasurer*



PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

If you are currently enrolled with Kaiser for your health insurance, you may want to read the following link to a news article: <http://www.ohio.com/business/catholic-health-partners-making-changes-at-kaiser-permanente-1.430735>. Catholic Health Partners was scheduled to take over Kaiser earlier this month. They do not plan to make any changes in coverage at this time. However, beginning with the Open Enrollment period on November 1st, you may choose to switch to Anthem. Also, if you stay with Catholic Health Partners now, you could still change later if they change their coverage plans significantly.

Open Enrollment is also the time when a member may decide to participate in the Flexible Spending program. Money saved on taxes is just one benefit. The Flex plan serves as a medical savings account, and helps a family budget when there is an unexpected medical bill. It also can be used to pay for child care with tax-free dollars. Contact Sue Garber (after November 1) to sign up for Flex and to notify her of any changes in your family insurance situation from the previous year. For more advice on open enrollment, read this link to an article from Forbes: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/ashleaebeling/2013/10/11/8-costly-benefits-mistakes-employees-will-make-in-2014-open-enrollment-season/>

Section 20.05 of the contract (see below) allows for up to 10 sick days to be used by a new parent. Using additional sick days does require a doctor's note concerning the health of the mother and/or the baby. Without this note, additional days off are considered unpaid days by the administration.

"b. Pregnancy and Delivery Support Leave

An employee whose spouse or qualified domestic partner is pregnant may use available sick leave for up to two (2) weeks at the time of confinement and delivery."

Article XXI (Protection of Teachers and Students) includes the following line: *"It is the intention of the administration to support teachers' efforts in maintaining orderly classrooms and in protecting them from unruly students."* If any member does not feel safe or is concerned about the safety of other students, they should go to their head-building representative and schedule a meeting with the building principal to address their concerns. While a team-oriented approach is recommended, it is ultimately the administration's responsibility to provide our members with a safe teaching environment free from bullying and intimidation.

*Respectfully submitted,
Mike Sears, chairperson*

PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT

So far, this has been a busy month of meetings for me. I attended the Board of Education work session and regular meeting as well as the meeting of the Finance and Audit Committee. I also was at all of the meetings of the Negotiating team and assisted with the preparation of the survey. I helped with distribution lists and membership cards. I especially want to thank Gene Tournoux, Math Department Chairperson at the High School, for taking the time to review financial information with me. The strength of the SHTA depends on the participation of the membership.

*Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Thomas, Chairperson*

POLICY COMMITTEE

Our association will have many decisions to make in the coming months. In light of this, our present constitutional focus will be on Article V - Membership in our Association. Section A stipulates that: **Any certificated employee of the Shaker Heights City School District who is employed as a teacher becomes a member upon payment of annual dues.** And furthermore, part 2 of this section adds: **Each member has the individual right to participate in the affairs of the Association and to attend the regularly scheduled meetings of the Representative Council.** If you want to contribute with your opinion, you must first contribute with your dues. We should encourage our colleagues to do both.

*Respectfully submitted,
Tim Kalan, Chairperson*

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Hello everyone. We will be having a FALL HAPPY HOUR at Los Habaneros Mexican Restaurant on Monday, November 4th, from 4-7pm. (**FLYER AT END OF NEWSLETTER**) Please come and enjoy some time with your colleagues. Los Habaneros is located next to Fresh Market in the Van Aken shopping plaza. Hope to see you there!!!!

*Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Lewis, Chairperson*

MEMBERSHIP/ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Payroll deduction for SHTA dues began with the October 1st paycheck - \$30 per pay for 10 pays. For those who paid by check, thank you for your payment. Or, if you have not yet done so, please submit your check for \$300 to your building representative. Membership cards will be distributed this week.

*Respectfully submitted,
Stacy Elgart, chairperson*

TEACHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Please remember that my role with the Association is not just to assist new teachers and their mentors. Please contact me to discuss any aspect of the evaluation process or any other area of your employment in Shaker Schools as you move towards tenure within our district. I can be reached through the district e-mail (smith_st@shaker.org) or at Lomond (295-6385)

*Respectfully Submitted,
Steve Smith, Chairperson*

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

In the wake of the government shutdown, it is important for all of us to stay current on the voting records of our elected officials. The 2014 elections are a year away, but most candidates have their campaigns out in full force. As our elected officials make the rounds in the community, it is essential that we challenge them to preserve the rights and issues that advance public education. Ohio Federation of Teachers has a nice spreadsheet which records each state level congress member's vote on bills passed in the current session. For instance, you can view how Capri Cafaro voted for House Bill 153, which cut \$3 million dollars from public education. You can access the Ohio Senate voting scorecard at http://oh.aft.org/files/senate_scorecard_2012.pdf and the Ohio House of Representatives voting scorecard at http://oh.aft.org/files/house_scorecard_2012.pdf.

Legislation, such as HB 153, directly impacts our ability to teach by blocking teacher's access to Ohio Achievement Assessment data and, thus, limits our ability to properly prepare our students for the tests.

Plunderbund, the online magazine, published a recent article titled, *Ohio's Republican-passed law impedes teacher improvement and student learning*, condemning this legislation stating, "Since 2011, the invaluable test materials and item analysis reports have not been released due to Ohio House Bill 153...In fact, HB 153 was the same bill that implemented the very teacher evaluation system that, supposedly, was designed to improve teaching and learning in Ohio" (October 12, 2013). Education legislation must have the student's best interest at heart and must be grounded in research-based instruction practices. The voices of experienced teachers in the field need to be raised above the din of the current destructive initiatives created by HB 153.

Respectfully Submitted,
Eileen Sweeney, Chairperson

SALARY TENURE COMMITTEE

Over the past month I have corresponded with our consul, Susannah Muskovitz, and Dr. Hutchings concerning the end of this year's contract. We met on Tuesday, October 15th to discuss an extension for next year's contract. Positive progress was made. We will meet again on Tuesday, November 19th.

Respectfully Submitted,
John L. Morris, President

Teacher Wins Grants for Program on KSU Shootings

High School English teacher and SHTA President **John Morris** has been awarded two grants that will allow him to bring a workshop he developed at Shaker Heights High School to a wider audience of students throughout the Cleveland area. The workshop involves staging and discussion of the David Hassler play, *May 4th Voices: Kent State 1970*, about the tragic events that unfolded when National Guardsmen fired upon Kent State University students protesting U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, leaving four students dead.

Morris received a grant from the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation's Grants-to-Educators Program, which provides support to projects that exhibit excellent teaching and require deep learning. Morris also received the Margot Stern Strom Innovation Grant from the Facing History and Ourselves Program, which stresses the importance of instilling intellectual vigor and curiosity along with facts and figures.

The play investigates different voices and viewpoints from this turbulent moment in American history, examining the roles of both bystanders and upstanders, as well as their place in the history of social protest in the United States.

The workshops will be presented in American history, literature, and theater courses for students throughout Northeast Ohio in spring 2014, as well as to the wider community

MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

October 14, 2013

FERNWAY SCHOOL

SHTA President, **John Morris** started the October 14th Rep. Council Meeting at 4:31P.M.

Chris Hayward, Principal of Fernway Elementary School welcomed SHTA members to Fernway.

Report from Dr. Hutchings:

Dr. Hutchings attended the Superintendent Round Table Meeting. There were 2 books that he wanted to share:

1. Reign of Error by Diane Ravitch
2. Finnish Lessons by Pasi Sahlberg

Dr. Hutchings' 90 day plan is posted on the website - progress report will be posted in the next week or two.

Dr. Hutchings has expressed an interest in attending all Rep. Council Meetings sharing updates and news.

Approval of the minutes from the September Rep. Council Meeting was accepted.

Administration Report

Dr. Stokes attended as part of the administration team. She thanked SHTA as an organization. Our OTES trainers helped in so many ways, thank you **Andrew Glasier, Lena Paskewitz and Addie Tobey** for all that you have done to make this process a smooth transition for all.

Our ability to work together makes Shaker so special – Our phenomenal staff surpasses many others. **District Improvement-** Math Achievement must be addressed. The district has hired Math Coaches, which allows for better communication.

Dr. Stokes said –“Thank you for everything you do! – **John Morris** has been wonderful; his ability to work with Central Office addressing issues and concerns is valuable.”

PTO Report

Jennifer Goodall, PTO representative, said PTO wants to support the classroom in anyway.

Officers Report

President, John Morris - Building Scans are not evaluative, strictly observational.

Board Members will be scanning the buildings with Dr. Hutchings.

He has assured SHTA that he will always be with the board member during this time.

Becky Thomas and Stacy Elgart have revised membership lists, reminding members to rejoin so that their voices be heard.

Vice President, Matt Zucca - He was absent for this meeting, his report will be in the newsletter.

Secretary, Darlene Garrison - Please be sure to sign in on the attendance sheet that is being passed around.

Treasurer, Bill Scanlon - Attended meeting with Edward Jones.

Executive Board Report

Past President, Becky Thomas - Attended several meetings during this month.

Teacher Education, Steve Smith - Highlighted items in the contract for new teachers to pay close attention to.

Policy, Tim Kalan - No report

Public Relations, Lena Paskewitz – There was no report on PR. She reported in her role on the Evaluation Committee. The district is developing a workshop for teachers on skills needed to be good evaluators. Fran Prohlman, Evaluation Consultant from Arlington , VA is a specialist on evaluations and worked all over the world. She is currently working in our district.

Legislative, Eileen Sweeney – She compiled information concerning elections dealing with education and elected officials' positions.

Membership/Elections, Stacy Elgart - 390 members have joined SHTA. Updated lists along with membership cards are being passed around

Publications, Andrew Glasier - Items for newsletter due Wednesday at midnight. A Guest Writer about why tutors should be a part of the union will be included.

Legal Aid, Chante Thomas-Taylor – Absent for meeting, John Morris stated that there was no report.

Social, Wendy Lewis - Monday, November 4th SHTA gathering at Los Habaneros 4-7.

Professional Rights and Responsibilities, Mike Sears - Nothing about maternity or paternity leave. Therefore, nothing to report.

Salary Tenure, John Morris - Tomorrow at 4:30 meeting with superintendent and legal to discuss a one-year extension.

Building Reports

Boulevard- Staff feels overwhelmed with OTES. Principal conducted a meeting and thus far it has been very helpful. Principal has been very sensitive to staff needs, especially on the really HOT days. The staff really appreciated her attentiveness.

Fernway - This Friday, Kent State students were observing. This was not voluntary; principal said that it came from Central Administration.

Lomond - No report

Mercer - No report

Onaway - Staff had an opportunity to ask questions or just vent about OTES. They felt that it was helpful to have that opportunity.

Woodbury – Printers are down and the principal is handling that. Medical lists for students are not given to the members. Is it the teacher's responsibility to print them out from DASL?

Middle School - No Report

High School - Survey feedback, some questions needed to be clarified.

Old Business - none

New Business - Thank you Erin Herbruck for all of your help!
Andrew Glasier, Lena Paskewitz and Addie Tobey a round of applause to thank you for everything you have done with OTES.

Good of the Order - Thank you to Fernway for a delicious meal.
Congratulations to John Morris for the two grants you have received. Check out Shaker.org for more information about the grants that John was awarded. We are proud of you.

Executive Session

Meeting was adjourned at 5:31PM

*Respectfully submitted,
Darlene Garrison, Secretary*



**Special Thanks to
the Fernway SHTA
Representative
Michelle
Berggrun
For hosting.**

JUST LET ME TEACH!

This newsletter is a publication of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association, an independent organization of professional educators in the Shaker Heights City School District. Signed editorials represent the opinion of the author(s) and may or may not reflect the thinking of other officers or members of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association. Members and friends of the Association are invited and encouraged to express their opinions or share information via this newsletter.

To President Obama, because you allowed a non-educator to be Secretary of Education, because you followed the path of so called corporate reformers that call for the privatization of public education, because you have swallowed the unsubstantiated hoax that American public education is in a downward spiral, because you have abandoned equitable funding of education for competition, because you have encouraged the private education industry and for-profit educational services with your policies, because you have continued with policies that have allowed for 23% of American children to live in poverty, I say...

JUST LET ME TEACH!

To Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, because *Race to the Top* is antithetical to good educational policy of cooperation and is only marginally different from the failed practices of *No Child Left Behind*, because you insist that student test scores be part of teacher evaluations, no matter if the teacher may have different students from year to year, because you believe that charter schools are better than public schools, because your focus has been on the tiresome and ineffectual use of standardized tests which has destroyed creativity as well as student and teacher engagement, because you fail to examine and learn from the mistakes of corporate reforms that take monies away from schools and put them into the hands of corporations, I say...

JUST LET ME TEACH!

To Governor John Kasich, because you assaulted collective bargaining and the teaching profession in general, because you see

competition as a way of making public education better, because you fail to address the issue of child poverty in Ohio, because you have pushed for more standardized testing, an unfunded mandate that costs districts hundreds of thousands of dollars and destroys teacher designed curriculums, because you see the answers to education by punishing those that care the most, I say...

JUST LET ME TEACH!

To the Ohio Legislature, because you have passed so many mandates at once that distract from the art of teaching and require endless bureaucratic paperwork, because you feel that siphoning money away from public schools to the hands of private corporations while failing to address the true issues in education, because you require teachers to constantly test students without thinking about how that affects the students, the teachers and the culture of public education, because you force teachers to test children as young as six, because you make exorbitant rules for teachers to keep their license as opposed to requiring higher standards to get into the profession, because you have continued to ignore the Ohio State Supreme Court and continue to force schools to rely on inequitable funding, because you fail to address the poverty of children in our state, a statistic that correlates to performance of a school, I say...

JUST LET ME TEACH!

To the for-profit education industry, for lobbying state legislatures to create more charter schools that have little oversight and often fail to include the neediest of students, more standardized testing which narrow curriculum to testable subjects, more bureaucratic paperwork, for more online-schools, more time-abusive evaluation procedures, more "market-competition" answers to issues and leads to more and more teacher time spent on endless inputs and paperwork instead of collaboration and planning, because you fail to release the formula that is used to calculate the idiocy known as "value-added", I say...

JUST LET ME TEACH!

To school board members, because you fail to see a main factor in Shaker Heights' recruitment of quality staff stems from the once competitive salary, that has fallen behind many surrounding districts, because you fail to see that implementing the strategic plan, International Baccalaureate, Ohio Teacher Evaluation System, building scans, and other mandates all at once

distorts the ability for an organization to do these things exceeding well as is the Shaker way, I say...

JUST LET ME TEACH!

To parents, because some have yet to return a call, because some go to administrators instead of us when your child tells you something about class that may or may not be true, because some leave character education and behavior management completely to the schools, I say...

JUST LET ME TEACH!

To students, I apologize to you because other adults feel they understand better than teachers how to teach, I apologize to you for having to administer a multitude of tests that are meaningless and in many cases harmful to the creative nature of learning, I apologize for not being able to spend more time on curriculum you are interested in and to build more projects which require 21st Century skills that would

better prepare you for adulthood because of state and other mandates, I apologize to you for not being able to spend more time with you because of the increase in class sizes, I know you say...

JUST LET THEM TEACH!

AG

GUEST WRITER

Dear Colleagues:

I am writing on behalf of the tutors in the Shaker Heights City School district. Although our district designates us as “tutors” we are all certified teachers with teaching responsibilities in our buildings.

There are a variety of tutors who teach in our district. Some of us teach Reading Skills and must obtain reading endorsements, as all teachers of Reading in Ohio must. Some of us are ELL teachers who teach English language learners and must be evaluated based on Student Learning Objectives (SLO’s) as other teachers in the district are. Others are Intervention Specialists, who may have the same teaching caseload as Intervention Specialist Teachers, with the same background and degrees, yet are classified and paid as tutors. Our roles and responsibilities have grown significantly this past decade, and we are recognized as teachers both under state law and by other school districts and unions in the area.

We are asking to join the collective bargaining unit as we are currently excluded in the recognition clause of the SHTA contract. In addition, we are paid using a salary schedule that at its highest point does not match Step 1 of the Teacher’s salary schedule. Our contracts are year to year and we have no ability to obtain continuing contract status, negotiate for equitable pay, or obtain the benefits of collective bargaining. We work side by side with our teacher colleagues, who may not be aware of these inequities. We have been voiceless and we have not had a seat at the negotiating table in this district. We ask for your support in the upcoming months as we work to obtain inclusion in the district’s teachers’ union.

Thank you for your fair consideration of this issue and I thank the Shaker Heights Teacher’s Association leadership for allowing me to submit this letter.

***Respectfully submitted,
Monica Triozzi, ESL Tutor***

COME ONE, COME ALL
LET'S CELEBRATE FALL WITH

SHTA AT

LOS HABANEROS

MEXICAN RESTAURANT

20255 Van Aken Blvd.

Shaker Hts.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 4

4-7PM

(Please note, we do not have work Tuesday, Nov. 5, due to elections)

Prizes and Appetizers provided!

Hope to see you there!