

## IMPORTANT DATES

**Thursday, May 22:** District Recognition Reception @ SHHS Upper Cafeteria, 3:45 pm

**Monday, May 26:** Memorial Day, Schools & Offices closed

**Thursday, June 5:** Senior Project Teacher Reception @ SHHS, 5:00 to 5:30 pm (For teachers & students only)

Senior Project Showcase @ SHHS North Gym, 5:30 to 7:00 pm

**Thursday, June 12:** Last Day of School for students

**Friday, June 13:** Close of school, Clerical day

# SHTA news

May 21, 2014

ISSUE NO. 8

## Message From the President

It's my pleasure to begin the year's last SHTA Newsletter with two pieces of good news. First, as you know by now, the levy passed with more than 61% support from our community. This is testament to the quality education our district provides to the students, families and community we serve. We look forward to seeing these funds continue to support the programs and professionals who make our schools the defining asset of our community.

Secondly, it is my pleasure to announce that I will be giving out several awards at this month's recognition reception. The recipients of **The SHTA President's Service Award** are Andrew Glasier, Lena Paskewitz, and Addie Tobey for their phenomenal work on the Peer Evaluation Committee and as Peer Evaluation Co-Coordinators. I will also be giving **The SHTA Lifetime Service Award** to Gary Raymont for his distinguished service to Our Association. Please plan on attending our Recognition Service Tea on Thursday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> to celebrate our award winners, retirees, newly tenured teachers, and to recognize the milestones our peers and colleagues have met.

Lena Paskewitz is a 3rd grade teacher at Fernway. She has taught in the district for fourteen years, both at Mercer and Fernway. Lena has been an SHTA member for fourteen years. She served as alternate building representative at Mercer for one year and head building rep for five. She has also served as Legislative Chair, Salary Tenure Chair and Public Relations Chair for the Executive Board. Lena has served on the Performance Compensation Committee for two years, the Evaluation Committee for three, and is a recent member of our Teacher Leadership Endorsement Cohort. Lena's work as Peer Evaluation Co-coordinator is an example of her dedication to Our Association.

Addie Tobey is a 7<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at the Middle School. She has taught in Shaker for seventeen years. She has been an SHTA member for these seventeen years, as well as working on the Teacher Evaluation Committee for the past two. Addie's work as Peer Evaluation Co-coordinator is an example of her dedication to Our Association.

Andrew Glasier is an 11<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at the High School. He has taught in the district for fifteen years. Andrew has also been a member of the SHTA for fifteen years. Andrew was part of the 2003-2005 Evaluation Committee, a High School Representative and Head Representative, Performance Pay and Evaluation Committee Member, and the editor of Our Newsletter. Andrews's work as Peer Evaluation Co-coordinator is an example of his dedication to Our Association.

Gary Raymont is a 34-year veteran of the Shaker Heights City Schools, with one year at Chardon, and a 31 year member of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association. Gary taught 5<sup>th</sup> grade for six years, 6<sup>th</sup> grade for one year, and taught kindergarten for 28 years. He has played roles such as head representative, Vice President, Professional Rights and Responsibilities Chair, and Negotiations Team member for 5

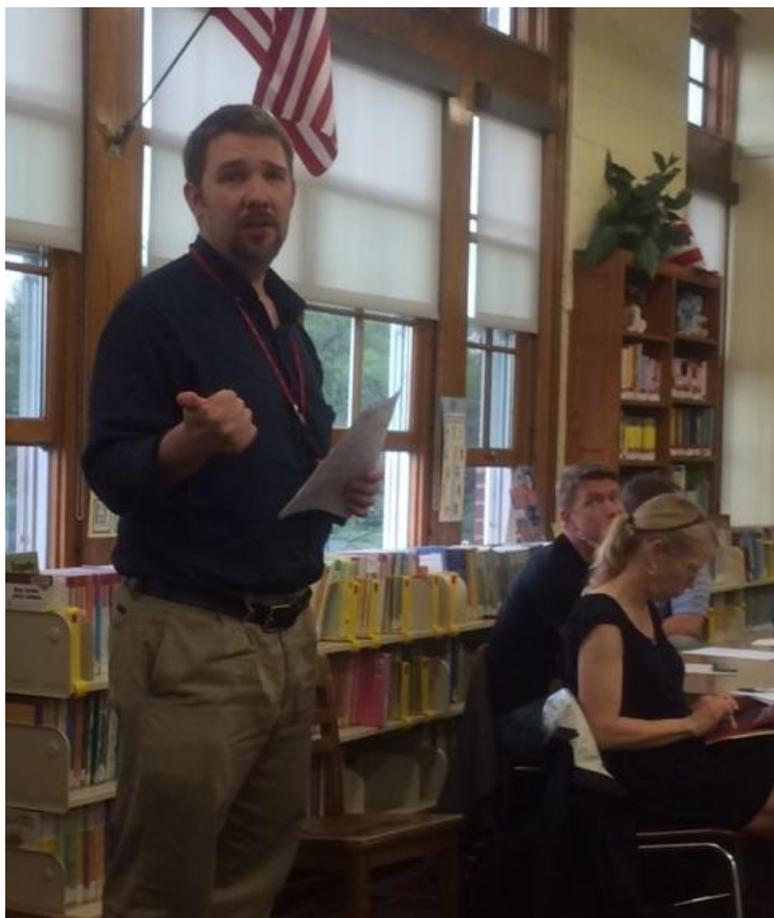
contracts. Gary tirelessly worked on maintaining our medical benefits, especially for teachers preparing for pregnancy leave. In fact, Gary's line, "If you are planning to have a baby, call Gary Raymond" has now become legendary. It is a true pleasure to award Mr. Raymond this Lifetime Service Award.

On the business end of my job, it's been a very busy month. I met with Marla Robinson, Bernice Stokes, Lisa Scott, Greg Hutchings, Erin Herbruck, and Matt Zucca concerning district issues, principally evaluation. The evaluation and peer evaluation committee will continue to refine the process for both peers and administrators by defining and quantifying the evidence necessary to substantiate each designation.

I intervened with a legal issue at the high school. I worked on supporting the levy by sending out a reminder email to the members. I sent out email concerning taking action on HB 229. Thank you to those members who took action on this issue. We will need to remain vigilant as we approach another election in November.

I would like to wish all of you a restful and happy summer. I hope that you take time to re-charge, renew and reconnect with your families and loved ones. I also know that many of you will be taking part in Summer Writing and Professional Development. Thank you for your continuing dedication and professionalism. Next year is going to be a challenging one, with new administrators, mandates, and a crucial November election. I hope that this summer you will consider ways that you can become more involved with Our Association. There are ample opportunities. As always, it continues to be an honor to serve as President of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association. I look forward to seeing many of you on Thursday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> as we acknowledge our peers and our retiring colleagues. As we begin our summer feel free to contact me with any questions at [morris\\_j@shaker.org](mailto:morris_j@shaker.org).

*Respectfully submitted,  
John Morris*



**SHTA President John Morris gives his report at the May Representatives meeting @ Onaway school.**

# Reports from the Executive Board

## VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is an honor and a privilege to serve the SHTA as Vice President. This has been a busy year in the office of the Vice President. My duties have included serving as a representative to the PTO Council with this year's co-presidents Jennifer Goodall and Jennie Kaffen. Please join me in welcoming incoming 2014-15 co-presidents Jeff Isaacs and Tracy Peebles. They will join us at the monthly SHTA Representative Council meetings the next school year.

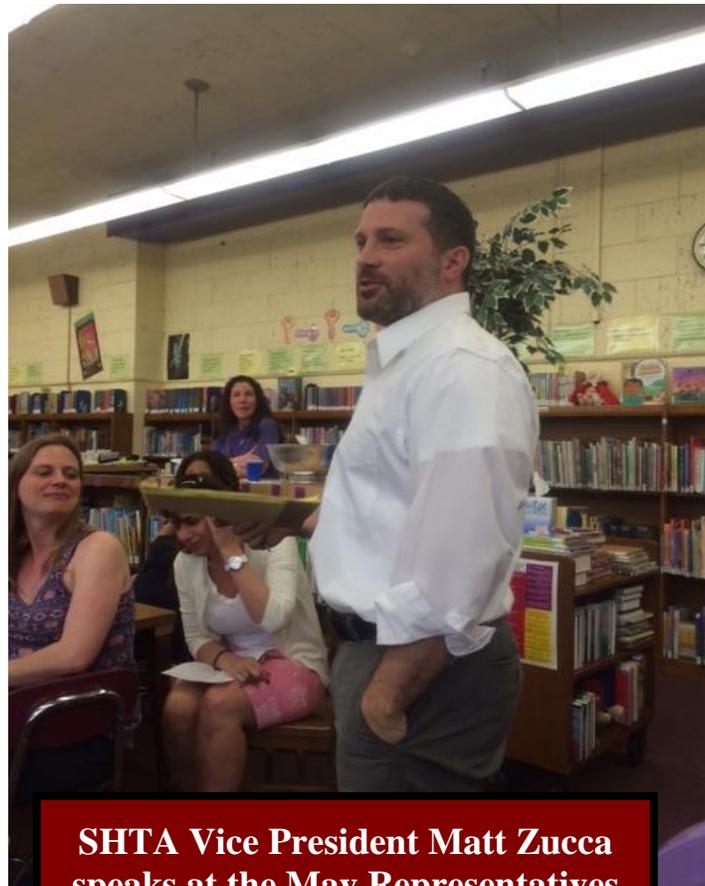
As a member of the Investments Committee, I assisted in monitoring the Associations' funds that are closely approaching the \$1,000,000 mark. I attended planning meetings with the other members of the Committee, Bill Scanlon, Todd Keitlen, and Chante Thomas-Taylor.

I served as the Teacher Liaison for the staff in assisting with *The Night for the Red and White*. *The Night for the Red and White* was again a huge success this year. Much of the success of this event is due to the efforts of our staff. Again I thank for supporting this event.

Please join me in continuing to congratulate The Shaker Heights Teachers' Association Fellowship Winners

### Fellows of the SHTA: 2013-2014

Tina McCauley	Boulevard
Alison Bradford	Boulevard
Kevin Hill	Boulevard
Tara Strachan	Boulevard
Megan Loomis	Boulevard
Robyn Feinstein	Mercer
Karen Tritt	Mercer
Sara Yurman	Onaway
Cissy Burns	Onaway
Naomi Loges	Onaway
Martin McGuan	Onaway
Laura Robbins	Onaway
Kristin Koenigsberger	Onaway
Pamela Luksenburg	Fernway
Michelle Berggrun	Fernway
Andree Hassell	Fernway
Amy Hannah	Fernway
Jean Reinhold	Fernway
Kristina Hayward	Woodbury



**SHTA Vice President Matt Zucca speaks at the May Representatives meeting @ Onaway school.**

Tom Deep	Woodbury
Aisha Mason	Woodbury
Lee Appel	Woodbury
Nancy Kippen	Woodbury
Daniel DeJohn	Woodbury
Carola Drosdeck	Woodbury
Sagar Patel	High School
Emily Shrestha	High School
Sarah Manary	High School
Robert Schneider	High School
Valerie Doerson	High School
David Klapholz	High School
Carole Kovach	High School
Bernadette Thoennes	High School
Bill Scanlon	High School
Joseph Houser	High School
Susan Isler	High School
Tony Cuda	High School
James Schmidt	High School
Christine McBurney	High School
Karen Tuschman	High School



In order to receive reimbursement this school year, your documentation must be submitted to me by June 2. Payments will not be made over the summer break. Reimbursements will resume in the fall.

Finally, I would like to thank John Morris for his tireless efforts to maintain a strong Association. There are many behind the scenes situations where John negotiates and advocates for members individually and for the Association as a whole. He is an exceptional leader.

It has been a pleasure and honor working with the Officers, the Executive Board, the Building Representatives and all the Association members. I wish all of you a restful summer. The fall will present us with many challenges, but we will be ready.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Matthew Zucca*

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Before the May Executive Board meeting I prepared a budget for the 2014-15 fiscal year. I presented that budget to the Executive Board with zeros written in for salaries. The Executive Board approved the budget for presentation to the Representative Council the following week. The Representative Council discussed the budget and voted to have the budget reflect a 3% increase to the salaries of the six salaried Association employees. The Council voted to increase the per-meeting remuneration by 3% as well. The budget was then approved for placing the May 19<sup>th</sup> ballot.

The current financial report is included.

Some of the activities I performed while fulfilling my duties as Treasurer this year are listed below:

- I attended OTES training.
- I attended every Executive Board Meeting and every Representative Council Meeting throughout the year.
- I maintained our insurance through Musgrave Insurance.
- I met with the Investment Committee and Brady Krebs, our Edward Jones advisor, twice this year, once in the Fall and once in the Spring to evaluate our Edward Jones investments and make changes that were deemed necessary.
- In the Fall I attended a union summit with other local labor organization leaders.
- I met with representatives from Key Bank to explore investment opportunities for Association funds.
- I met with our accountants at Edward Hawkins & Co. to prepare the books for the audit of the 2012-13 fiscal year. I also met with them to complete the paperwork for our Form 990 tax filing.
- I collected donations through the PAC of SHTA for the Committee for the Shaker Schools, and sent two checks in support of the May levy campaign.
- I communicated with the Shaker Heights Board Office to pay the salaries of our six paid Officers and Committee Heads, along with the relevant STRS and Medicare payments.
- I was a member of this year's Negotiations Committee.
- I paid the members of the Negotiations Team a portion of their salary for their work negotiating the one-year deal.
- I paid the S.H.T.A. Representatives their compensation for attending the meetings throughout the year.
- I prepared the 2014-15 fiscal year budget for approval by the Representative Council at the May Association meeting.
- I paid bills throughout the year and balanced the checkbook, reimbursing any Association expenses incurred by our members.
- I kept accurate record of our finances throughout the year, maintaining a paper record of every transaction..
- I met with and discussed Association business with the other Officers and Executive Board members throughout the year when needed.

This has been a challenging year for us all. The Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) handed down by our state politicians has been quite an adventure. And it would have been much worse without the dedication of Lena Paskewitz, Addie Tobey, and Andrew Glasier. This is why being a part of our Association is so important to me, and should be so important to you. We have mechanisms in place to keep an eye out for each other, and if we don't have them in place we figure out what's needed to create them. I hate to imagine how much more daunting our jobs would be without the support the Association provides us. Don't forget this, and feel free to spend some time reminding our colleagues who are not members of how important this is to you. I hope everyone has had a nice year, and has an even better summer.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Bill Scanlon*

# FINANCIAL REPORT

7/1/13

5/14/14

## COMPOSITE BALANCE

Balance 7/1/13	992,246.58
Receipts 7/1/13 to present	109,381.61
Change in Valuation 7/1/13 to present	<u>85,840.93</u>
	1,187,469.12
Expenditures 7/1/13 to present	-62,843.62
Expenditures charged to last fiscal year 2012-2013	<u>-1,493.42</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,123,132.08

## BANK AND BROKER RECONCILIATIONS

### A. KEY BANK (5/14/14)

Money Market	<u>101,267.08</u>	
Total Money Market		101,267.08
Business Interest Checking Account		36,861.82
Unposted deposits and transfers		<u>0.00</u>
		138,128.90
Less outstanding checks		<u>-8,260.53</u>
<b>TOTAL KEY BANK</b>		129,868.37

### B. EDWARD JONES (5/14/14)

Regular Association Account	544,930.65	
Advisory Solutions Account	<u>448,333.06</u>	
		<u>993,263.71</u>

<b>TOTAL</b>		1,123,132.08
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## Budgeted Accounts

	7/1/13					5/14/14
<u>Account</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Debits</u>	<u>Transfers</u> <u>out</u>	<u>Credits</u>	<u>Transfers in</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Accounting	<b>5,000.00</b>	7,346.96	0.00	0.00	0.00	-2,346.96
Compensation for officers, representatives, et al.						
President	<b>9,302.00</b>	4,651.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,651.00
Vice President	<b>5,581.00</b>	2,790.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,790.50
Secretary	<b>5,581.00</b>	2,790.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,790.50
Treasurer	<b>5,581.00</b>	2,790.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,790.50
P.R. & R. Chairperson	<b>5,581.00</b>	2,790.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,790.50
Editor	<b>4,653.00</b>	2,326.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,326.50
Building reps. and alternates	<b>10,000.00</b>	8,155.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,845.00
Conferences and meetings	<b>2,500.00</b>	2,842.20	0.00	149.21	0.00	-192.99
Fellowships and Grants	<b>3,500.00</b>	900.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,600.00
Insurance	<b>5,000.00</b>	5,295.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-295.00
Legal	<b>5,000.00</b>	4,309.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	690.25
Negotiations	<b>50,000.00</b>	6,054.20	0.00	600.00	0.00	44,545.80
Executive Board expenses	<b>500.00</b>	266.77	0.00	0.00	0.00	233.23
Officers' expenses	<b>500.00</b>	298.51	0.00	0.00	0.00	201.49
Payroll taxes	<b>975.00</b>	297.86	0.00	0.00	0.00	677.14
Publications	<b>200.00</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.00
Public Relations	<b>4,000.00</b>	5,851.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	-1,851.34
Social	<b>1,800.00</b>	211.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,589.00
STRS(TPO contributions)	<b>9,200.00</b>	2,875.53	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,324.47
General Fund	<b><u>0.00</u></b>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>134,454.00</b>	62,843.62	0.00	749.21	0.00	72,359.59

# ***EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS***

## **PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES REPORT**

As challenging as the 2013-14 school year was for teachers in Ohio, the State House education committee recently amended Senate Bill 229 in ways that could make life for Ohio teachers even more difficult. We have learned in the past three years that teachers have a new responsibility: advocating for ourselves by lobbying our representatives in Columbus and Washington, D.C. to pass laws that make sense for schools, teachers, and; most importantly, students. John Morris e-mailed all members a link: <http://www.plunderbund.com/2014/05/08/take-action-flood-house-education-committee-with-testimony-about-teacher-evaluation-system/> that describes both what is happening and how teachers can provide written testimony to the committee. If you have not already done this, you still have time and I strongly encourage you to take action. The latest news on the changes to the bill can be found in this article from the *Columbus Dispatch*. <http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2014/05/15/bill-on-teacher-evaluations-gets-more-tweaks.html>

While I personally remained neutral during the recent school levy campaign, I am happy that it passed with over 61 % of the voters in favor. The community of Shaker Heights values education, which makes it a rewarding place to teach. Thank you for supporting the students whose lives we are fortunate to be a part of each and every day we come to work.

Onaway Principal Amy Davis welcomed us to our last Representative Council meeting with several poignant remarks. She mentioned that the last week had been particularly stressful for all of us with OAA testing and OTES deadlines. Middle school progress reports were also due at the end of the week. She spoke about how teachers are the ones “in the trenches” making it happen for students every day. She quoted something I wrote in the last SHTA newsletter about administrators not being our friends. She talked about us being “partners” at the very least, even if we are not friends.

Dr. Hutchings delivered the Administration Report immediately after these welcoming remarks. He spoke about the need to build trust across the district, and he answered many questions from council members, officers, and executive board members. I’m sure it was a longer night for him than he expected. One thing he said struck me as unusual. He said, “We have incompetent teachers in Shaker Heights.” I prefer to think of teachers (and all professionals) as having strengths and weaknesses. I would never call one of my department members incompetent. I would never call one of my team members incompetent. I would never call one of my students incompetent. I would say they have strengths and weaknesses. I would say their weaknesses can be addressed and improved. Certainly, teaching is a tough job. If a person’s weaknesses outweigh their strengths, and they have been given a legitimate opportunity to improve; the school district may have to sever their relationship with that employee. I have been a part of situations like this in both my role as Grievance Chair and as a Department Chair. Even when this happens, we often say things like, “it just wasn’t a good fit” or “this person cares about kids, and maybe things could work out in another school district for them”. I don’t know what is accomplished by telling a group of Shaker Heights teachers that some of their colleagues are incompetent. But I do know three things. A comment like that makes it harder to build trust between the administration and the teachers. A comment like that makes it harder for us to be partners. A comment like that makes it *impossible* for us to be friends.

During the past year, I assisted members with three grievances. Two of them have been resolved, but the one about updating K-4 report cards is not complete. The grievant and I will continue to work with the administration to complete this process. I also met with the Negotiations team in the fall, and assisted John

Morris with the successful effort to extend the current contract one year. The team met again in the spring to work on a member survey for next year's negotiations. I attended Insurance Committee meetings about adding a coordinated Wellness program with Anthem's help. I went to training to become an OTES Peer Evaluator and participated as a peer evaluator. I assisted several members with maternity leave, adoption leave, paternity leave, sick leave, FMLA, worker's compensation, personal days, and other contract-related matters. At this time, the grievance committee has not filed any grievances about the May Summative Evaluations. We appreciated Dr. Hutchings' e-mail about the challenges we all faced during the first year of a new evaluation system. He also spoke to us during Representative Council about thinking about the first year as a trial. The results on new tests and writing SLO's were difficult to understand at first. We should all be better at the process during the second year, and we should continue to think about OTES as a model for growth as educators.

I'd like to congratulate Gary Raymont, Andrew Glasier, Lena Paskewitz, and Addie Tobey for winning awards from SHTA this year. Gary was an outstanding mentor to me in this position as I shadowed him for a year. Most of the knowledge I have about FMLA and maternity leave came from Gary. Imagine being on an evaluation committee and helping create a new system. Then imagine doing it right after the state passed a new law with many requirements that all schools districts have to follow. Then imagine creating a model for peer evaluation. Finally, imagine listening to all the questions, concerns, and confusion from your colleagues during the first year of implementation. Andrew, Lena, and Addie have done amazing work this year for our Association.

I want to thank the entire SHTA membership for giving me the opportunity to serve in this position. I enjoy the work and meeting so many colleagues from different buildings. Have a nice summer.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Mike Sears, chairperson*

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

As the SHTA Public Relations Chair this year, I have worked to promote the Association through community advertisements, support of student programs, and teacher appreciation efforts. I have attended Executive Board and Representative Council meetings to keep membership informed about PR efforts and to take part in Association discussions.

Arrangements for advertisements in *Shaker Life Magazine*, *The Shakerite*, and *The Gristmill* were made. Student support was given through contributions to the Woodbury Art program and the Middle School Scholars program. Teacher Appreciation gifts for members were distributed during Teacher Appreciation Week in early May. I have enjoyed serving the Association as the Public Relations Chair.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Lena Paskewitz, chairperson*

## **(the NEW) EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

As the new Evaluation Chair, I will continue to represent the Association on the District Evaluation Team, with other teachers, to work with administration on teacher evaluation goals, processes and procedures. I will keep all members informed of this work through monthly meeting reports and newsletter submissions, as well as individual communication as needed.

When we began work on revising the evaluation system three years ago, before OTES even existed, one of the goals from the outset was to provide a better way to support professional growth of teachers on continuing

contracts. The existing system adequately served to help administrators evaluate non-tenured staff, but it did a poor job of engaging teachers in meaningful work to improve their practice.

Shortly after our work began, OTEs reared its head. Our work turned to meeting mandates while simultaneously trying to meet our original goals. This process is on-going. I will continue to advocate for an evaluation system that promotes growth in practice as its central purpose and respects, and even raises, the professional nature of our work. The success of the Peer Evaluation pilot is an encouraging step towards this goal.

It is my hope that continued efforts to reach these goals will include:

- Establishing an Association committee consisting of a representative from each building to communicate evaluation concerns
- Revision of forms and processes with the focus on how to better engage teachers in meaningful, growth oriented work
- Growing the Peer Evaluation program
- Working to eliminate or change practices that undermine our professionalism or create a negative or punitive atmosphere

This work will require all of us to be a part of the process of change and I look forward to working with all of you. Please do not hesitate to share concerns, suggestions, and reflections about your successes and challenges with evaluation as we move forward in the process.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Lena Paskewitz, chairperson*

## **PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

As you know, the SHTA Constitution & By-Laws list an Executive Board position for Past President. This position has not been filled for many years as our Past Presidents have retired and moved away. When I retired and decided to stay in the area, President John Morris discussed having me serve on Executive Board as Past President. I am happy to assist John and his leadership team with questions about past practice, issues in buildings, inquiries from teaching colleagues, and providing an SHTA presence at evening meetings.

In addition to attending Representative Council and Executive Board meetings, I attended more than 25 other meetings including regular meetings of the Board of Education and several of their work sessions, meetings of the Finance & Audit Committee, and Insurance Committee meetings.

From being at these meetings, I reported information to President John Morris. I alerted him to the Finance & Audit Committee's recommendation for a 6.9 mill levy—a number achieved by removing employee raises from the Five-Year Forecast. As a result, John worked with a group of SHTA members to present their concerns at the December Board of Education meeting where the levy amount was being presented. I also communicated the settlement of the Office Max tax dispute, the receipt of the Medicare reimbursement, and the decision by the Board to place those monies into the Capital Improvement fund and not the General Fund.

After the April 17, 2014 meeting of the Finance and Audit Committee, I reported to John that members of the committee discussed employee raises as part of future Five-Year Forecasts. Committee Member Amy Fulford (who is also on the Board of Education) said “Our salaries have dropped to near the bottom of the pool we compete with... We can't hold salaries flat... It can't be zero for the next six years.”

The Committee decided to present the May Forecast without employee raises. The next revision of the Five-Year Forecast will be discussed in the fall. Hopefully, employee raises will receive consideration at that time.

This year I also worked with several teachers on OTES and discipline issues and I assisted with negotiations. I continue to serve on the editorial board for the SHTA Newsletter and to maintain our website, [shtaweb.org](http://shtaweb.org).

After 35 years of teaching in Shaker and more than 20 years of involvement in SHTA, it is important to me to support the efforts of teachers. I hope that my attendance at evening meetings allows President John Morris and his leadership team the time to focus on the many concerns that come to them. The strength and success of the SHTA is vital to the success of the school district. Dedicated professional educators who are actively involved in the decisions and direction of the schools are a key component in the quality of the educational program in Shaker. I value the opportunity to serve the members of the Association. Thank you.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Becky Thomas, chairperson*

## **POLICY COMMITTEE**

As the school year ends, we must continue to look ahead to next year's challenges. May is the month where we vote to elect new representatives that will speak to their colleagues needs and concerns. It is very important that we take this responsibility seriously, and consider what the coming obstacles to teaching will be like without a strongly supported and represented association. Our constitutional focus for the day concerns **Article V, Section A, Part 2**. *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.*

Not only do we have the right to participate, but we have a *responsibility* to as well. Please consider participating in this process by volunteering to represent your colleagues. In this age of accountability and changing expectation, action and communication are essential. As the policy chairperson this year, I have participated in a number of committees, including the Performance Pay Committee, the Peer Mentoring Committee, and the Teacher Evaluation Committee. I was involved in the campaign to pass our levy, and I plan on continuing my work within my buildings to improve how OTES is implemented.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Tim Kalan, Chairperson*

## **SOCIAL COMMITTEE**

I have enjoyed serving you as social chairperson. I planned a very well attended happy hour at Los Habaneros restaurant in November. I also attended negotiations meetings as an alternate. I again would like to remind all of you to attend the annual Recognition Reception on May 22. On a personal note, I have decided to step down as social chairperson as all of my own children will be in school next year. Selena Brown will be taking my place as the social chairperson. I wish her the best and I will miss the camaraderie I have shared with Executive Board members and Representative Council members. Have a great summer everyone.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Wendy Lewis, Chairperson*

## **MEMBERSHIP/ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**

### **THE 2013-2015 SHAKER HEIGHTS TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION OFFICERS**

President	John Morris	High School
Vice-President	Matthew Zucca	Fernway
Secretary	Darlene Garrison	Woodbury
Treasurer	William Scanlon	High School

### **THE 2013-2014 SHTA REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL**

BOULEVARD: Tina McCauley - head rep, Naomi Loges - alt

FERNWAY: Michelle Berggrun - head rep, Selena Brown - alt

LOMOND: Donita Townsend - head rep, Kevin Wagner - rep

MERCER: Lisa Hardiman - head rep, Robyn Feinstein - alt

ONAWAY: Sanya Godbold - head rep, Tim Kalan - alt

WOODBURY: Robert Bognar - head rep, Aisha Mason - rep, Amy Santos - rep, Todd Keitlen - alt

MIDDLE SCHOOL: Paul Repasy - head rep, Susan Landi - rep, Lynne Shields – rep, Jeremy Bishko - alt

HIGH SCHOOL: James Schmidt - head rep, Amanda Ahrens - rep, Brian Berger - rep, Aimee Grey - rep, Jessica O'Brien - rep, Joel Rathbone - rep, Tod Torrence - alt

#### **TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY BUILDING**

<u>BUILDING</u>	<u>MEMBERS</u>
Boulevard	24
Fernway	22
Lomond	34
Mercer	27
Onaway	29
Woodbury	62
Middle School	69
High School	130
TOTAL	397

**On Monday, December 4, 2013 the membership approved the tentative agreement between the School Board and the SHTA for our contract extension effective through December 31, 2014.**

**CONTRACT TENTATIVE AGREEMENT RATIFICATION VOTE**

<u>BUILDING</u>	<u>ACCEPT</u>	<u>REJECT</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Boulevard	22	1	23
Fernway	22	0	22
Lomond	32	1	33
Mercer	21	0	21
Onaway	18	1	19
Woodbury	48	2	50
Middle School	42	2	44
High School	93	6	99
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>311</b>
Percent of Total Votes	<b>95.82%</b>	4.18%	

**On Monday, May 19, 2014, the membership elected the 2014-2015 Representative Council and approved the proposed budget. The tenured members elected to Representative Council to serve a one-year term:**

**THE 2014-2015 SHTA REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL**

**BOULEVARD:** Jennifer Goulden, Naomi Loges

**FERNWAY:** Annie Hanney

**LOMOND:** Donita Townsend, Kevin Wagner

**MERCER:** Robyn Feinstein, Lisa Hardiman

**ONAWAY:** Paula Klausner, Jim Sweeney

**WOODBURY:** Lee Appel, Aisha Mason, Amy Santos, Aquita Shepherd

**MIDDLE SCHOOL:** Terri Ann Hastings, Susan Landi, Kathy Manning, Paul Repasy, Tim Richards

**HIGH SCHOOL:** Amanda Ahrens, Brian Berger, Aimee Grey, James Schmidt, Keith Szalay, Tod Torrence, Tito Vazquez

**PROPOSED SHTA BUDGET RESULTS**

<u>BUILDING</u>	<u>FOR</u>	<u>AGAINST</u>
BOULEVARD	21	1
FERNWAY	19	0
LOMOND	28	0
MERCER	19	1
ONAWAY	15	0
WOODBURY	45	0
MIDDLE SCHOOL	39	0
HIGH SCHOOL	79	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>12</b>

*Respectfully submitted,  
Stacy Elgart, chairperson*

## LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

As the Legislative chairperson, I have focused on informing the membership of proposed bills and legislation directly impacting education policy and our collective bargaining unit in Ohio. The Ohio Senate proposed reasonable changes to the teacher evaluation system, Senate Bill 229. The House of Representatives have considered the Senate bill and have proposed their own version. Their version strips the Senate bill of positive changes. I worked for the passage of the Shaker School levy, participating in the phone bank to ensure a strong financial future for Shaker Schools. I have attended board meetings to demonstrate SHTA's active partnership with the board and administration.

As a member of the negotiations committee, I have attended strategic planning meetings in preparation for this year's negotiations. I have work with the committee to draft membership surveys. As the political action chairperson. I have informed members of recent issues and encouraged members to contact their representatives to support the Senate version of the bill. I have emailed members on various issues needing their attention. I went to several candidate nights around the county to listen to their positions on education policy. I will be working on various fundraising events over the summer. I am hoping to get more participation in the PAC, as it is essential to have a strong political action committee during the upcoming November elections. I have placed an advertisement in the SHTA newsletter-soliciting members to join the committee. If you are interested, send me an email at [pacshed@gmail.com](mailto:pacshed@gmail.com).

I urge all members to sign the MoveOn.org petition to tell their state representatives to support the senate version of the teacher evaluation legislation.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Eileen Sweeney, chairperson*



## **TEACHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

This spring, four teachers were granted tenure from the Shaker Heights Board of Education. They will be recognized at the District Recognition Tea on Thursday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>. I would like to congratulate the following teachers who are being recommended for continuing contract status this year: Ellen Battle – Fernway, Stacey Krantz – Boulevard, Ruth Mardell – Fernway, and Nicole Smith – Mercer. Congratulations to all of you!

The main focus of the Teacher Education Committee is a liaison for newly hired and non-tenured teachers. Throughout the year, I answered questions from teachers with the help of John Morris. At the September New Teacher meeting, I met with the new teachers and their mentors. During this time, I went over specific parts of the SHTA contract that were especially important to new teachers.

I have enjoyed this position as Teacher Education Chairperson. I feel that even though I am an experienced teacher, there are always new ideas to learn from less experienced teachers. As educators, we too should never stop learning. Thank you for this opportunity to work on behalf of the Association. Wishing you a calm end-of -the -year and a relaxing summer!

*Respectfully submitted,  
Steve Smith, chairperson*

## **LEGAL AID COMMITTEE**

From my perspective, as chairperson of the Legal Aid committee, it is always a good thing when there is nothing to report. So, I have had a quiet year. But please remember, the role of the Legal Aid committee is to hear requests from members who might need legal assistance. I can be reached at 295-5601 if you have any questions. Please do not hesitate to give me a call.

I wanted to wish everyone a restful summer. I hope each of you has an opportunity to spend time with your loved ones, and enjoy your well-deserved break.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Chante Thomas-Taylor*

## **SALARY TENURE COMMITTEE**

I emailed the negotiations survey out to members on Friday, May 9<sup>th</sup>. Members should print them out, complete them, and submit them to the building representatives on Monday, May 19<sup>th</sup> by 4pm.

*Respectfully submitted,  
John Morris*

## **WANTED: SHTA PAC TREASURER**

Seeking a politically minded Association dedicated person to oversee the duties of Treasurer.

**DUTIES INCLUDE: Bi-Annual reporting to the B.O.E. & keeping abreast of state election laws. Time commitment is approximately a couple hours/month**  
Interested? Contact Eileen Sweeney at:  
**pacshed@gmail.com**

## **WANTED: SHTA PAC MEMBERS**

Seeking Association dedicated people to participate and represent the SHTA politically.

Committee members will develop political positions on issues impacting the SHTA and organize political actions. Time commitment is approximately a couple hours/month  
Interested? Contact Eileen Sweeney at:  
**pacshed@gmail.com**

# MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

**Onaway School, May 12, 2014**

**SHTA President, John Morris** started the May 12th Rep. Council Meeting at 4:29PM.

**Amy Davis, Principal of Onaway Elementary School** welcomed SHTA membership to Onaway and shared that we have had a busy couple of weeks with OAAs, OTES evaluations and Teacher Appreciation week, wow! She thanked all teachers for being on the frontline for our students. A special thank you was given to Sonya Godbold, Tim Kalan and Lena Paskewitz for helping staff members get through the OTES evaluation process.

**MINUTES** from the April 14th Rep. Council meeting were approved by James Schmidt and seconded by Lena Paskewitz.

## **Administration Report**

**Dr. Hutchings** was present from central office.

- Dr. Hutchings explained that this was our first year implementing the OTES evaluation process and that it is still a work in progress. OTES is state mandated and we have to be in compliance. Remember that it is a work in progress and we are here for the kids.

## **The floor was opened for questions**

- Is it true that all second and third grade teachers received Above Expected (5) on student growth because of mistakes that Pearson made? Shared attributes were issued and we felt that was safe to do for second and third grade teachers. The district still has student scores. Hopefully, next year, there won't be as many mistakes made.
- A teacher expressed that morale is low at Onaway maybe because of OTES taking autonomy away from the vision of teachers. Response- every teacher is in it for all the right reasons. Give teachers the support and training so that they can have success in their particular area. It is difficult for administration to address issues if they are not being shared. When it comes across my desk I have to investigate it. Everything is not perfect.
- Is it true that in 2015-2016 High School classes that have less than 15 students will be closed? Proof, data is needed to show that the programs are working like Team at the high school. If it's great and it's working, I need to see the data to support that. Data is not necessarily academics. Could be social skills, especially with classes like TEAM. We will refine it, not get rid of it. It is a scheduling issue that we have to work on.
- Common Core will allow our students to go out and be successful in the work world. We have to think about their futures. Common Core is only one component; we have so many more components.
- We want to offer online courses for flexibility not for cutting teachers.
- Communication seems to be an issue. Response – We have monthly administration meetings where we discuss issues. We as administrators and teachers are all in this together.
- We are here for a common goal, to make sure our kids learn.

**P.T.O. Report** – No Representative was available to give a P.T.O. Report

## **Officer's Report**

**President, John Morris**

- Met with Marla Robinson, Bernice Stokes, Lisa Scott, Matt Zucca and Greg Hutchings to discuss evaluation issues. What does it mean to be accomplished, skilled, developing or ineffective? We need definitions so that administration can help teachers move up on the evaluation scale.
- Worked on disciplinary issues.
- Worked on a survey for negotiations. Please encourage members to pay close attention to all the questions listed. Print, complete and turn in survey on May 19<sup>th</sup>.

- Worked on the levy campaign.
- The SHTA Presidential Award will be given to Andrew Glasier, Lena Paskewitz and Addie Tobey.
- The Lifetime Service Award will be given to Gary Raymont.

#### **Vice President, Matt Zucca**

- Thanked the membership for their service with the Association.
- Worked with issues dealing with Aimsweb. Aimsweb will no longer be used for student growth measurement.
- Attended PTO meeting. It appears that the PTO is not reaching out as much as they did in the past.
- Attended OTES peer evaluation meeting, working on plans/goals.
- Dealing with an outstanding issue at Woodbury, wrapping up some loose ends.
- Please turn in grant fellowship receipts for reimbursement before the end of the school year.

#### **Secretary, Darlene Garrison**

- Please be sure to sign the attendance sheet and check the total number of dates for payment today.

#### **Treasurer, Bill Scanlon**

- Shared the proposed budget that we will be on the ballot on May 19<sup>th</sup>.
- Shared proposed financial report as a preview to discuss with members before the vote on May 19th.
- Voting on the proposed budget will be on Monday, May 19<sup>th</sup>.

### **Executive Board Reports**

#### **Past President, Becky Thomas**

- Attended regular meetings for the month
- Attended the Finance & Audit meeting along with James Schmidt. Thank you James for attending the meeting.
- The five-year forecast shows a zero percent raise for teachers. Maybe they were waiting for the levy to pass first.
- There were members on the Finance & Audit committee who expressed their opinions on teacher raises at the April 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.
  - Amy Fulford, school board member and Finance & Audit committee member – “Our salaries have dropped to near the bottom of the pool we compete with... We can’t hold salaries flat... It can’t be zero for the next six years.”
  - Paul Carlton, finance & audit committee member – “With steps, it’s not a zero.”
  - Amy Fulford – “But it relates to who we are competitive with.”

#### **Teacher Education, Steve Smith**

- Sent congratulatory letters to teachers who received continuing contracts.

#### **Membership/Elections, Stacy Elgart**

- Passed out ballots and signature lists for the May 19<sup>th</sup> vote.

#### **Policy, Tim Kalan**

- Spent time working on the levy campaign.

#### **Public Relations, Lena Paskewitz**

- Sent all Head Representatives teacher appreciation gifts to pass out.
- Will be stepping out of the role of Public Relations for next school year. New role for the next school year will be Evaluation Chair. Will continue to advocate for growth and purpose.

### **Legislative, Eileen Sweeney**

- On the levy committee and worked on the phone bank.
- Worked on HB229 concerns. Please contact Ohio House Representatives.
- More support and help is needed on the PAC committee. Participation is needed.

### **Publications, Andrew Glasier**

- Wednesday at midnight all submissions are due.
- All executive board members, end-of-the-year reports are due Wednesday at midnight.

### **Social, Wendy Lewis**

- Darlene Garrison gave report for Wendy - The Recognition Reception is all set for Thursday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>. The reception will be held at Shaker Heights High School, upper cafeteria 3:45 PM. Hope to see you there.

### **Legal Aid, Chante Thomas-Taylor – John Morris gave report for Chante -No Report**

### **Professional Rights and Responsibilities, Mike Sears**

- No grievances were filed dealing with evaluations.
- Two candidates selected for the position of Middle School Principal. You can meet one on May 13<sup>th</sup> and the other on May 14<sup>th</sup>. They will be at Shaker Middle School library.

## **Building Representative Reports**

**Boulevard, Tina McCauley – No Report**

**Fernway, Michelle Berggrun – No Report**

**Lomond, Donita Townsend – No Report**

**Mercer, Lisa Hardiman**

- Some confusion and disappointment with OTES. Not fair that 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teachers get Above Expected and other grades do not.

**Onaway, Sanya Godbold – No Report**

**Woodbury, Robert Bogner**

- Dealing with concerns about parent accusations.

**Middle School, Paul Repasy – No Report**

**High School, James Schmidt**

- A teacher had to appear at an expulsion hearing. Worked with teacher to get through this process.
- Continued to work with issues concerning OTES.

### **Old Business**

- None

### **New Business**

- Sonya Godbold from Onaway Elementary made a motion to give 3% raises to Executive Board and Representatives. Tim Kalan seconded the motion. Discussion was conducted for the reason why she proposed a 3% raise. Motion went to a vote and passed by majority.

### **Good of the Order**

- Thank you Onaway Reps. for hosting the May meeting.
- June 5<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-7:00 is the Senior Showcase Night at the high school. Come out and support our high school seniors and see their Senior Projects.

**May 12<sup>th</sup> Rep. Council meeting was adjourned at 7:08 PM.**

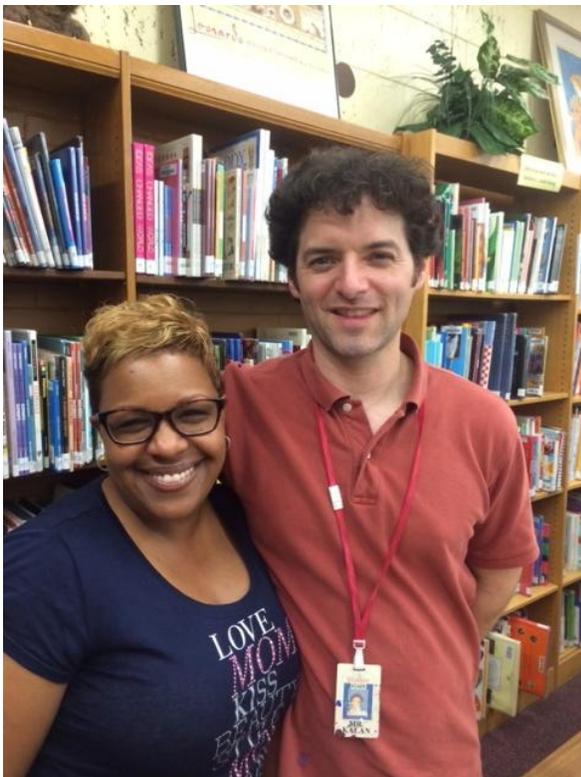
**Have a wonderful summer vacation and we will see you at the next Rep. Council meeting in September.**



**SHTA Secretary Darlene Garrison talks at the May Representatives meeting at Onaway School.**



**SHTA Representatives meeting at Onaway School.**



**Special Thanks to Onaway School SHTA Representative Sanya Godbold and SHTA Policy Chairperson Tim Kalan for hosting the May SHTA Representative meeting.**

## ***What a Long Strange School Year It's Been***

*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.*

As I begin planning the end of the school year, I gave myself some time to reflect on the past year and the chaos of state and district mandates. The Ohio Teacher Evaluation System was in many ways constructed on the fly, not well thought out and especially badly implemented. The use of so called "Student Growth Measures" as 50% of our evaluation manifested into the disaster I predicted, turning teachers against each other and administrators and unfairly labeling teachers. A recent report in [\*U.S News & World Report\*](#) continues to bring clarity to the folly that is using test scores inappropriately. Administrators have been scrambling with compliance, in essence performing as highly paid data-entry personnel. As my colleague Liz Plautz stated "This year has been so challenging for all of us and I believe that it was my students who suffered from the additional responsibilities, mandates, whatever." While I have heard some folks say that next year will be better, the continued attack by state legislatures on our profession gives me little hope.

Except for that one shining light that came from the tyranny of the "reform movement," *Peer-Evaluation*. The Peer-Evaluation pilot was a glowing success and a model of how true professionalism can enhance professional development by creating opportunities for meaningful collaboration that betters instruction. When dealing with issues concerning the evaluation process only two came directly from the Peer-Evaluation pilot. That cannot be said for administrative evaluation and the Ohio Department of Education's

implementation, which presented continuing barrage of issues. Why is that? Why was Peer Evaluation so successful while around us mayhem was occurring?

I believe that answer is that Peer Evaluation flowers from the seed of the concept that teachers are professionals. While I am hesitant to cite best practices since we are a creative field and even best practices do not work for every student or teacher, research has demonstrated that reflection and conversation amongst colleagues typically leads to growth in teacher performance. For many of us who collaborate daily, this of course is part and parcel of how we work. What I found fascinating, however, is the intensity of the conversation and reflection that manifested between my fellow evaluator and me. My Peer Evaluator provided more meaningful insight into how I need to grow as an educator compared to any feedback I ever received from an administrator. I have made changes in my teaching because the Peer Evaluation fostered effective analysis and reflection on good teaching methodology. I felt I was treated as a genuine professional because of the Peer Evaluation process. Perhaps more significantly, I am a better teacher because of my Peer Evaluation experience.

Board of Education members on the Performance Pay committee, Amy Fulford, and Annette Sutherland, along with former superintendent Dr. Mark Freeman pushed for Peer Evaluation and I want to thank them for doing so. Their push to create a transformative program for the entire district is doing just as they anticipated. Once again our district is at the forefront of our profession, pushing the boundaries with teacher led initiatives that bring growth and support our students. I fear that our new Superintendent, Dr. Gregory Hutchings, is unsupportive of this venture, seeing it as an attack on administrative authority. Yet this is not about power and control, except as a way to control our own professional development. It is not about keeping principals and administrators from making important decisions about personnel but about growth as teachers. He needs to understand that Peer Evaluation is how we *Shakerize* the OTES evaluation system. It is what will be transformative for our students.

While Dr. Hutchings states that the Common Core and other state mandated curriculum would not affect teachers' choices in how they teach, he forgets the added 50 hours of testing in grades 3 through 12 for just the PARRC alone, not including OGT's, OAT's, End of

the Year Exams, Aimsweb, MAPS, and so on and so forth. With Peer Evaluation, I felt hope that we were coming out of the tyranny of the “reform movement.” If Peer Evaluation is dismantled or tinkered in a way that will undermine the integrity of the process, I will be dejected. I will feel that the job that I love has been compromised. Maybe it will be time to find something else. Maybe I could become a plumber? No one tells a plumber how to do her or his job.

**AG**

## **TESTIMONY AGAINST HOUSE BILL 229, AS WRITTEN BY LYNNE SHIELDS**

May 12, 2014

Dear Chairman Gerald Stebelton and members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Lynne Shields, and I am currently an Intervention Specialist at Shaker Middle School, in Shaker Heights, Ohio. I am writing to express my disdain for the version of Senate Bill 229, which is now under consideration – a vast deviation from the original Senate passed version of the bill.

Sirs and Madams, have you ever been a teacher? If you have, you will recognize the hard work and dedication it takes. If not, do you have any idea of what a teacher’s day is like? It is easy to mandate grandiose changes that sound terrific on paper. In actuality, they are far from terrific. This is not the 1950s when all students sat at their desks quietly and participated in instruction. We are fighting for the very lives (educationally, so to speak) of children, some of whom are very unreceptive to the hard work we do everyday to try to present ODE standards and content. We are all for accountability. Who wouldn’t be? But let’s make this realistic. Here are parts of the Bill under consideration that are glaring mistakes:

“Exempts from collective bargaining all amendments made by the bill to Revised Code provisions regarding educator evaluations.”

Why are you so opposed to local control and the need for teachers to support one another for fair working conditions? The voters overwhelmingly rejected Senate Bill 5, which tried to do away with this level of support, yet this set of lawmakers continues to try to undermine the will of the people. Why do we need that support? Although contractual hours run from 7:45 – 3:45, teachers put in more hours than you can imagine. Typically, my day isn’t an 8-hour work-day, but a 12-hour work day (and this has been for 22 years). I know some who do more. We don’t ask for overtime, just to be fairly compensated for all of the time we put in and for the expense of our continued education. We are told what to do by ODE and our LEA, and we do our best to work within those parameters. What we ask our unions for support for are ensuring we have proper planning time for our class work, not just planning time that is consumed by Professional Development, leaving us little to no time to work on our daily needs. We ask for support to ensure that evaluation procedures are fairly administered, of which times they are not. We ask that our buildings don’t leak and that the heat works, as sometimes they do not. We ask for materials that would help to meet the requirements of the content standards, but sometimes they are not. We ask for professional support from one another for evaluation rather

than giving that responsibility to outside companies who don't have the full picture of what we do each day, or administrators who can be consumed by the number of evaluations that they must complete. Are the above things to ask for unreasonable? Do you really have to ask that?! Teacher unions are a part of professional support for one another to make sure we can provide the best education for our students. As we are human beings, one size does NOT fit all, yet this Bill is trying to make people robots and paint them as villains because we want decent and fair working conditions.

Another aspect of the Bill that is revolting:

“Student Growth Measures component down to 35%, the new bill eliminates that lower bar and maintains the minimum of 50% of a teacher's evaluation at 50% as it now exists in state law.”

The Ohio Department of Education, due to your legislation, has created a CAP test to measure student growth. Teachers were on that committee and had part of the design of that test. That was a good thing. What was NOT a good thing was that teachers commented that some items were not the items they created. To top it off, which is the most horrendous application of this test to measure student growth, the test (intended to measure of year's worth of learning) was mandated to be given at the end of three quarters of the school year, not the end of the school year. A whole one-fourth of the test was over material not yet taught!!!! Of course students didn't do their best because they COULDN'T do their best. They never were able to learn a whole quarter's worth of material! Now 50% of what we are evaluated on is based on a test that doesn't measure what it purports to measure. This is coming from an entity that is supposed to ensure validity and reliability and this test has neither. My question to you (all) is how are you evaluated? Are you evaluated on a one-time measure or just simply by a vote of the people at election time?

Here is my personal piece, Ladies and Gentlemen...

I have been a Special Educator for many years. Most people burn out because of the high demands of the Job. I INTENTIONALLY focused my career on helping kids with behavioral issues. I have been bit on, spit on, sh\*\* on, hit on...just about all of the “on's” you can have. I have been cursed at, (called a “Buck-toothed Hillbilly – among one of the nicer names), threatened to be killed by students and to be “taken care of” by an occasional parent. Amidst all of those things that can burn you out is “marshmallow center” that is behind all of the violence. This is what I have worked for. I can change lives. Now, our focus is strictly on testing and how well kids do on tests. My kind of kids don't do well on tests because their lives are in havoc. With this rating system – based on a one-time test given ¾ of the way through the school year – who will want to teach my kids? Being penalized for trying to help kids at-risk for failure by ALL teachers (as there is a fine line between those who have IEPs and those who do not), is INSANE. I will close by asking you to consider all that teachers do during the course of our day. REJECT this version of Senate Bill 229 and adopt the Senate-passed version. Stop looking at what things will look like on paper and look at reality. Support, not restrict, teachers so we can do our jobs to the best of our ability. Teachers are voters. We will take into account those who don't support our jobs during your evaluation time...the elections.

Sincerely,

Lynne M. Shields, Ph.D.  
Intervention Specialist  
Shaker Middle School  
Shaker Heights, OH