

IMPORTANT DATES

Friday, January 22:

Professional/Clerical Day (No
Classes PreK-12)

Thursday, January 28: Finance &
Audit Committee

Monday, February 1: SHTA
Executive Board @ Fernway

Wednesday, February 3: Master
Plan Community Engagement
Meeting- Programming Session

Monday, February 8: SHTA
Representative Council @ SHHS

SHTA news

January 19, 2016

ISSUE NO. 4

Message From the President

I know by now you have heard it a thousand times, but as we enter the first month of 2016 let me say “Happy New Year.” I hope your holiday break was relaxing and reenergizing and you are ready to tackle the rewards and challenges of the classroom again. I still believe there is no place that I would rather be as a professional than the classrooms and hallways of Shaker Schools. It’s been two months since we met as an Association and much has occurred during this time.

On November 23rd, I was happy to attend our very successful and well-attended Happy Hour. Selena Brown did a wonderful job organizing and facilitating this event. I met several times in person and via phone conference with Our SHTA Support Teachers Negotiations Team. They are working diligently to negotiate a contract that will fairly and equitably represent the best interests of their colleagues and students. I worked with a member on an ongoing medical issue, with guidance from our consul, Susannah Muskovitz, and help from our Professional Rights and Responsibilities Chairperson, Mike Sears.

In December, I dealt with personnel conflicts in the district. I also visited Support Teachers classrooms and worked on a legal issue with a member. I attended the December 7th Board of Education meeting, which was Board member Reuben Harris’ last meeting, and was able to commend his work with the Board. I attended the Shaker Union Summit meeting between SHTA Leadership and Leadership from both units from Local 200, Custodians and Security, and OAPSE.

I continue to have weekly conversations with the Superintendent, Dr. Hutchings. We discussed Special Education concerns and Calamity Days. I attended the Master Planning Meeting on January 6th and I encourage all of you to attend at least one of the next two (either February 3rd or 16th) to voice your opinion and offer your input on the vital re-design and renovation of our schools.

Along with Andrew Glasier, I continue to update SHTA Facebook page. I would also like to commend Andrew’s work on the page, as well as our Twitter account and website. Andrew’s brainchild was our Holiday Ugly Sweater Contest. It is my pleasure to announce that Lomond’s Steve Smith has been chosen as the winner and received the-gift of a signed (by me) holiday portrait (of me)...Priceless!

Finally, I would also like to commend the work of Tim Kalan. Tim, as Policy Chairperson, has revised and reformatted our Constitution and By-Laws to represent the recent changes voted in this year. However, of his own volition, Tim has also spearheaded efforts to expand our Association’s understanding of the district’s Special Education needs and protocols. He initiated a Q and A session with our district’s Special Education administrators by writing Strategic Plan-based questions for our Representative Council

meeting. We dedicated part of our meeting this week for this Q and A and we will continue at our February meeting. Tim's efforts go far in helping our members understand the complexities of the essential services we help provide for our students. You will see Tim's work in this issue's editorial. Once again, I commend Tim Kalan for his work and his dedication to the SHTA. Tim is a great example of the quality of educator we are so fortunate to have in Our Association and in Shaker Schools.

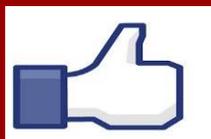
As we head into a new year, I have the same hopes and aspirations for our Association and our district as I always have: to be the best location for students, parents, and professional educators in the nation. We have an extraordinary school system and we will continue to do our very best to maintain and improve it. Our Association is one of the essential elements in this community for getting us there. Let's do this important work together, in solidarity.

*Respectfully submitted,
John Morris*



SHTA President John Morris speaks at the January Representatives meeting @ Mercer School.

The SHTA is on



us @

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Shaker-Heights-Teachers-Association>

Reports from the Executive Board

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Happy New Year.

I hope everyone had a restful break and is energized and ready to get back to our important work of educating.

Over the past two months I have had discussions with many members, especially in the PreK-4 buildings. I have heard concerns about development of common grade level assessments, inconsistent and poor directions to administer them, and the validity of the data and how it is used. These concerns are valid and need to be addressed. Having said that, I do believe the process to create useful assessment tools is important. I want to thank the teachers who have sacrificed so much instruction and planning time to assist in this process. I truly believe that we have an exceptional teaching staff that can and do create tremendous educational plans, assessments, and curriculum. It is a hardship teachers and students suffer to be out of the classroom on so many occasions. This important work needs to be appropriately supported and compensated by the administration.

I want to thank those of you who made contributions to the Silent Auction for *A Night for the Red and White*. Donations from teachers are very popular sought after items at the auction. The SHTA's donation to the silent auction this year will be gift certificates for the Cleveland Orchestra and for L'Albatros Brasserie and Bar in the Uptown area. Staff members are again offered discounted tickets at \$95 to support teacher attendance. The celebration will again be at the beautiful and elegant Tudor Arms Hotel. The event is on Saturday March 7, 2015 beginning at 7:00 PM. I encourage you to attend. It is a wonderful event.

I would encourage everyone to purchase ticket from the SHTA Red and White Drawing for a chance to win tickets to the event. The money raised from the tickets will help the association cover the cost of the tickets and our silent auction donation. Please see your head building representative for tickets for the drawing. Thank you again for your generous support and contributions. *A Night for the Red and White* continues to provide substantial gifts to the Shaker Heights City Schools.

I would like to remind the recipients of the SHTA Fellowship to submit receipts for reimbursement. I would also like to encourage our members to make a contribution to the PTO annual drive.

Respectfully submitted,
Matthew Zucca



**SHTA Vice
President Matt
Zucca at the
January
Representatives
meeting @ Mercer
School.**

TREASURER'S REPORT

I attended the SHTA Happy Hour at the Winking Lizard in November. It was great to see so many of our members out enjoying each other's company. The Association serves an important role in bringing us together. That kind of communal release helps our overall morale and in turn helps us be a better community.

Our investments recently have been taking a hit due to the downturn of the market. But our Investments Committee (myself, Todd Keitlen, Chante Thomas-Taylor, and Matt Zucca) are keeping an eye on it and frequently consults with Brady Krebs, our Edward Jones advisor.

The current financial report is attached.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Scanlon



**SHTA Treasurer Bill Scanlon
explains our budget at the
January Representatives meeting
@ Mercer School.**

SHTA is now on



@SHTAssoc

FOLLOW US!

Shaker Heights Teachers' Association
Profit and Loss Standard
July 1, 2015 through January 12, 2016

01/12/16

	Jul 1, '15 - Jan 12, '16
Income	
Income	
Member Dues	92,820.00
Total Income	92,820.00
Investments	
Change in Value for Key Investm	-2,143.71
Edward Jones Investment Income	39,290.82
Change in Value in Edward Jones	-74,121.34
Edward Jones-Fees & Charges	-2,982.85
Key Investments Income	540.12
Total Investments	-39,416.96
Other Types of Income	
Miscellaneous Revenue	435.00
Total Other Types of Income	435.00
Total Income	53,838.04
Expense	
Operations	
Accounting	
Banking	-30.00
Accounting - Other	5,100.00
Total Accounting	5,070.00
Compensation	19,927.00
Conferences & Meetings	1,673.60
Executive Board	1,740.00
Fellowships & Grants	841.83
Insurance	5,384.00
Legal	6,757.70
Negotiations	21,828.80
Officers' Expenses	220.00
Payroll Taxes	365.07
Public Relations	3,865.48
Publications	162.32
Social	327.00
STRS (TPO Contribution)	3,524.78
Total Operations	71,687.58
Total Expense	71,687.58
Net Income	-17,849.54

Shaker Heights Teachers' Association

Balance Sheet Standard

01/12/16

As of January 12, 2016

	Jan 12, '16
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Key Bank (checking)	26,403.47
Key Investments ²	43,896.68
Total Checking/Savings	70,300.15
Other Current Assets	
Edward Jones 13760-1-1	433,486.47
Edward Jones 13768-1-3	561,950.49
Total Other Current Assets	995,436.96
Total Current Assets	1,065,737.11
TOTAL ASSETS	1,065,737.11
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	-10,524.96
Retained Earnings	1,094,111.61
Net Income	-17,849.54
Total Equity	1,065,737.11
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	1,065,737.11



EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES REPORT

The SHTA Happy Hour at the Winking Lizard had a record crowd. I enjoyed seeing so many of us from across the district coming together for a fun event.

In November, Director of Professional Learning Erin Herbruck approached me about teachers leaving the middle school before 3:45 on the professional day. There was a misunderstanding during the last MYP workshop about both expectations and facilitation. Some teachers who left returned to Woodbury or the high school to plan for the week after Thanksgiving once they were dismissed from their workshop. Several middle school teachers left the workshops and planned collaboratively with their departments. We agreed that better planning is needed on future professional days. Section 9.02 of our contract (below) clearly states what is expected from our members during a normal school day. It makes all of us look unprofessional when a few of us are seen leaving work early during a professional learning session. In addition, we would like future professional days to include more time to collaborate independently and focus on our unit plans and learning activities for students. The administration will be less likely to provide that time if they do not trust us to use it wisely.

“9.02 Teacher Day

The hours of the normal school day for elementary teachers will be for seven and one-half hours between 7:45 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. The normal school day for secondary teachers will be for eight hours between 7:45 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. unless there is an early or late course scheduled at the high school. All hours will be continuous unless there is a late course. However, if there is a late course that would not permit continuous hours, assignment to such course will be on a voluntary basis and the administration will work with the SHTA President to identify the teacher or teachers to voluntarily take such assignment. Once a teacher’s normal school day hours are set for the semester, they will not be changed without mutual consent. Flexible hours for an alternate work day for individual members may be agreed upon by mutual consent between the member, SHTA President, and administration. Every effort will be made to have this schedule established prior to start of the semester or trimester.

The lunch period will be fifty (50) minutes long for all teachers. Secondary lunch periods may be adjusted by no more than eight (8) minutes for the following reasons: assemblies, and/or when it is to the convenience of teachers attending building and/or district meetings or workshops. Any teachers’ meetings may extend the normal school day by mutual consent.

On days when there is a regularly scheduled SHTA meeting of either the Executive Board or Representative Council, those bargaining unit members involved in such meeting will be excused at 4:00 p.m.

Conference days are not considered normal school days and the hours for such days may be scheduled differently than set forth in Paragraph 1 of Section 9.02, if mutually agreed by the SHTA and district administration.

As a matter of good administration, teachers are expected to personally consult the principal, or his/her designee in case of his/her absence, if they need to leave their building before the end of the normal school day or before the end of any scheduled meeting.

For those teachers who must travel between buildings, the administration will establish a reasonable time schedule. Travel time cannot be included in either the lunch period time or as a break in pupil contact time. Mileage reimbursement for travel whether between buildings for such teachers or for approved conferences shall be the lower of \$.40 per mile or the IRS rate for mileage reimbursement.”

The Office of Professional Learning is planning to use the scheduled conference days during the spring semester as an opportunity for professional learning for teachers and other members who will not be meeting with parents on those days. It has long been the position of the SHTA Executive Board that our members need to attend whatever the administration plans for us on workdays without students.

In December, I assisted with member concerns regarding medical conditions, leaves of absence, and maternity leave. I also attended a union summit with leaders from other district bargaining units and participated in Supplemental Committee meetings.

I am currently helping a member with a grievance regarding how student behavior is addressed by the administration.

*Respectfully submitted,
Mike Sears, chairperson*

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The public relations committee has submitted a new ad for *Shaker Life* Magazine and sent along the contract to *Shaker Life* for the remainder of the year. We will continue our advertisement in the Shaker Heights High School yearbook as well as in the *Shakerite*.

It is our solidarity that creates our strength as an Association! One simple yet effective way of broadcasting our collective might is through increased visibility! Buy a T-Shirt; broadcast your membership!

*Respectfully submitted,
Bob Bognar, chairperson*

EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a restful break with family and friends!

As you all may know, the challenge of creating an effective, growth focused teacher evaluation system is immense. The complexity of the work, the interests of various stakeholders, and state law all have to be considered and honored. The work of the committee towards meeting this challenge continues this winter and spring with further examination of the rubric and reflection on successes and difficulties of this year's system. As always, your feedback and suggestions to any of the members of the committee is welcomed and needed.

With the close of the first semester, the first round of observations and walkthroughs are complete. The changes that occurred this year, including the increased use of eTpes and the Evidence Summary form, have introduced new opportunities and challenges. Questions and concerns about what to expect continue to arise. Following are several important reminders for both evaluators and teachers.

- All forms for the Shaker Teacher Evaluation System (we do not use "OTES") are housed on the evaluation page of the Shaker website. Forms must be uploaded to eTpes in a PDF format. **Do not use the online forms on eTpes.**
- **Teachers are not required to complete additional forms, such as the "Self-Assessment Tool" on eTpes.** This additional work is completely optional.
- **All evidence from walkthroughs, observations, pre and post conference discussions, and any additional submitted evidence must be included on the Evidence Summary Form,** which is an ongoing record for the entire year. The Evidence Summary Form must be uploaded and shared with educators after additional evidence is recorded.
- Teachers must submit lesson plans for observations and are encouraged to submit any additional evidence of their teaching practice by uploading documents to eTpes. **Tag each document with a date and brief description of what it is and the area of the rubric the evidence pertains to.** Uploading tagged items will be much more effective than handing your evaluator a binder of your work.
- **Evaluators must reference all submitted evidence on the Evidence Summary Form.**
- As always, all observations and conferences must be scheduled at mutually agreed upon days and times.
- **Post-observation conferences should occur within one week of the observation.**

Please notify any member of the Evaluation Committee or your SHTA building representative if you need further help or clarification with your evaluation!

*Respectfully submitted,
Lena Paskewitz, chairperson*

PAST PRESIDENTS COMMITTEE

I hope you had a relaxing break that included plenty of time with family and friends. And, I hope that 2016 is off to a good start for you. In addition to attending the Executive Board and Representative Council meetings this month I attended the Board of Education meeting on Jan. 12 and plan to attend the Finance and Audit Committee meeting on Jan. 28.

The January meeting of the Board of Education is the organizational meeting, so the beginning of the meeting dealt with affirming the protocols for Board procedures. William L. Clawson was reelected as Board President and Alex Liston Dykema was elected to be Vice President. Jeff Isaacs was sworn in to serve on the Board. Earl Leiken, Mayor of Shaker Heights, and Tania Menesse, Director of Economic Development for the city, made a presentation on the progress of the Van Aken redevelopment and the tax increment financing agreement.

There were three updates on district activities: Facilities Update from Assistant Superintendent Stephen Wilkins; Assessment Update from Dale Whittington, Director of Research and Accountability, and Dr. Lynne Kulich, Director of Curriculum; and Teacher Evaluation Committee Update from Darlene Bushley, Director of Human Resources, and Andrew Glasier, High School Social Studies teacher. Andrew did an excellent job representing the professionalism of our membership and our participation in the Evaluation process. The Board was impressed by the leadership Shaker teachers have taken in developing and implementing the Peer Evaluation process.

Tuition Reimbursement was also approved at the January Board meeting. The Board has budgeted \$125,000 per year toward tuition reimbursement paying tuition costs of up to \$150.00 per credit hour (see Section 25.02 of the Contract—which is available on the Home page of the SHTA web site—shtaweb.org). Some people may wonder why this reimbursement is done once a year. For that explanation, go to FAQs at <http://shtaweb.org/faq.aspx>. There is an explanation of the disbursement procedures.

The discussion on Special Education at the January Representative Council meeting was productive and, hopefully, will continue. As an observer, I felt the confusion and frustration from my colleagues. Some expressed surprise at the support personnel that are available in the district. Others were unaware of the procedures that should be followed to get assistance. There seemed to be a need for more information and even training for regular education teachers as they work with students identified with special needs.

I look forward to continuing to work with President John Morris and the members of the Association. Thank you for allowing me to assist you.

*Respectfully submitted,
Becky Thomas, chairperson*

POLICY COMMITTEE

Our constitution has been updated on our www.shtaweb.org site to reflect the changes we made per our September vote to recognize the SHTA Support Teachers, all existing committees, and language concerning tenure. In addition to outlining the structure and operation of our Association, our Constitution also offers guidance concerning interactions with administration and parents that is worth examining. Following our By-Laws there is a section titled Special Policy, which offers the suggestions and strategies that follow:

POLICY FOR SOLVING PROBLEMS

A. We expect our members to take part in any conference so long as the educational needs of the child remain the focal point of that conference. If the conference is to be held outside of the normal school hours, then the member must be agreeable as to the time.

B. If a situation arises in which it is no longer possible to maintain a conference in which the educational needs of the child are paramount and there is no administrator present to terminate the conference then our member, with as much decorum as possible, should inform the other party involved that the conference is terminated for now and will be resumed if the other party so desires, when our member is able to secure Association/legal representation and/or the presence of an administrator.

C. If in a conference between a parent, member and administrator a situation arises in which it is no longer possible to maintain a conference in which the educational needs of the child is paramount, then our member, with as much decorum as possible, should request that the conference be terminated until such time as the member is able to secure Association/legal representation. The administrator should honor such a request.

D. Remaining in a conference that has degenerated into a forum for the leveling of undocumented charges cannot in any way serve any legitimate educational need and will only serve to make a future solution to the problem more difficult, if not impossible. A cooling-off period is needed. This is what we hope will be accomplished by terminating the conference.

E. As a professional association we have a dual responsibility: First, we must do everything possible to insure that every member recognizes and assumes his/her professional responsibilities; Second, we must also insist that our members be treated as professionals at ALL times. We will support them with all our resources in this effort.

F. We would hope for the support of the central administration in our efforts to seek educationally sound solutions to problems that arise as we deal with the many complexities involved in our efforts to fulfill our professional responsibilities. However, we will continue to advise our members to terminate all negative conferences, to allow for a cooling-off period, and we will insure that the member will have Association/legal representation at any future meetings. We do not seek to avoid the public. What we hope to accomplish is to insure that an atmosphere conducive to the solution of problems on the highest level possible shall be maintained at all levels.

*Respectfully submitted,
Tim Kalan, Chairperson*

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Thank you for attending our Annual SHTA Autumn Happy Hour!!! It was a great time! Our SHTA generously awarded the winner of our trivia contest \$25 gift cards to Winking Lizard. If you weren't able to make it to our SHTA Autumn Happy Hour maybe you can carve some time out of your schedule to join us in the future! I am planning another social event for the spring.

If you have any suggestions or comments please feel free to call my school extension (x6041) or email me (brown_se@shaker.org).

*Respectfully submitted,
Selena Brown, Chairperson*

MEMBERSHIP/ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Our association has 446 members currently; this includes 26 SHTA Support teachers. The 2015-2016 SHTA membership cards were mailed to the schools. Please let your building representative know if you have not received one.

*Respectfully submitted,
Chante Thomas-Taylor, chairperson*

TEACHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Happy New Year! Please remember that my role with the Association is to assist teachers in any way I can. During this time of teacher evaluations, please feel free to upload evidence, forms, and information into eTpes. As Evaluation Committee Chairperson Lena Paskewitz shared "Teachers must submit lesson plans for observations and are encouraged to submit any additional evidence of their teaching practice by uploading documents to eTpes. Tag each document with a date and brief description of what it is and the area of the rubric the evidence pertains to. Uploading tagged items will be much more effective than handing your evaluator a binder of your work." This process helps your evaluator connect your teaching to all areas of the rubric.

*Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hardiman, chairperson*

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

It is my hope that everyone had an enjoyable and restful break. I enjoyed seeing many of you prior to break at the Annual SHTA Autumn Happy Hour in November. Currently, I am working on the supplemental compensation committee. We are attempting to come to an agreement regarding compensation for the outlined areas in the side letter of our contract. We continue to meet monthly and are making progress.

Legislative watch:

At the Federal level, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act(ESSA) into law on December 11, 2015. This bi-partisan legislation includes many of the key reforms called for by Congress and the current Administration. It offers states and districts relief from the more cumbersome provisions of No Child Left Behind. Specifically, the law helps ensure educational opportunity for all students by:

- Holding all students to high academic standards that prepare them for success in college and careers.
- Ensuring accountability by guaranteeing that when students fall behind, states redirect resources into what works to help them and their schools improve.

- Empowering state and local decision-makers to develop their own systems for school improvement.
- Reducing testing, making sure that tests don't crowd out teaching and learning, without sacrificing clear, annual information parents and educators need to make sure our children are learning.
- Providing more children access to high quality preschool.

Source: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/12/03/fact-sheet-congress-acts-fix-no-child-left-behind>

At the state level, the state school board has hired the Ray and Associates firm to find a new state superintendent. The new superintendent will replace Richard Ross, who held the post from 2013 until retiring at the end of 2015 under fire for charter school test reporting violations. The school board hopes to conduct an interview of the finalist in mid-April. Lonny Rivera, former superintendent of the Oregon schools near Toledo, will fill the job until the final choice is made. The general public will also be able to offer input through an online survey. It has not been posted yet, but I will provide an address when available.

The Ohio primary elections will be on March 15, 2016. You can request an absentee ballot online <http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/votebymailapplication.aspx>. Please take a moment to update your voter information so that you can participate in the March election. Voting for candidates that have strong educational policies is a way for each of us to advocate for our students.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Eileen Sweeney*

SUPPORT TEACHERS

Happy New Year! SHTA-ST negotiations are still pressing on. We are eagerly working towards a common ground with the district's management team. We are in great hopes that we can reach an agreement soon. Keep the positive vibes flowing to our negotiating team!

*Respectfully Submitted,
LauraAnn T. Moore*

The SHTA is on


us @

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Shaker-Heights-Teachers-Association>

MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

January 9, 2015, Mercer School

SHTA President, John Morris started the January 11th, 2016 Representatives Council Meeting at 4:29PM. **Mr. Lindsay Florence, Principal of Mercer Elementary School** welcomed SHTA members to Mercer.

MINUTES from the November 9th Representative Council meeting were accepted. Motion to accept minutes mad Tim Kalan & Bonnie Gordon and seconded by Aimee Grey.

Administration Report

Dr. Hutchings and Dr. Breeden from central office were present at the Rep. Council Meeting along with Sara Cole and Tim Gesing(Special Education) and Darlene Bushley(Human Resources)

- Dr. Hutchings stated that he hoped the format of our meetings was good. More of a Question and Answer session making sure to bring in the specialists who can answer the questions.
- Administration can create a document with responses to our questions, just let them know.
- Dr. Hutchings thanked SHTA for their hard work and commitment. Have a happy new year.
- Good way of communication, two-way dialogue.
- Board of Education meeting tomorrow, January 12th. Will provide SHTA with the same information given to the Board of Education.
- Ms. Bushley stated that in November 2014, there were 729 absences by SHTA members and 85% were filled by Substitute Teachers. In December 2014, there were 729 absences by SHTA members and 77% were filled by Subs. In December 2015, there 666 absences by members and 97% were filled by Subs. Data is showing an improvement with filling absences with subs in 2015.

Special Education Questions Created by Tim Kalan

SPECIAL EDUCATION QUESTIONS

These questions are offered in the spirit of improving our communication, classroom practice, and understandir Your ideas and information would be much appreciated to help provide clarity where there is currently ambiguity. Our association would like to invite you to collaborate with us at a Representative Council meeting.

- 1) Do we have a specific district protocol when it comes to addressing behavior issues – particularly severe behavior issues and contingencies not covered in our handbook? If we do, can teachers have access to it? If not, should we create one? (SP3, SP1.4, 1.6, 1.7, SP5)
- 2) What are the district’s options when it comes to finding different placements for students whose needs are not fully addressed in district? Can placements ever be compelled? (SP1.4, 1.6, 1.7)
- 3) Do we have general guidelines used for expulsion or legal action when a student has a history of assaulting teachers/students? (SP1.4, SP3)
- 4) When placing students in a ‘least-restrictive’ setting, do we have an equation that factors in the collateral harm (physical/emotional) done to teachers or classmates? (SP1.4, 1.6,1.7)
- 5) Kindergarten and 1st grade receive an exceptionally large share of the burden when they receive students that either haven’t been identified, been improperly identified, haven’t been staffed, or their needs have been inadequately addressed. Do we have a process where we regularly review how issues of this nature could be more effectively dealt with? (SP1.4, 1.6, 1.7, SP4.3)

- 6) Has the district ever reflected upon the transition we've made from self-contained ED units? Is there evidence that what we are currently doing now is meeting all our needs better than prior practice? What are our metrics? (SP1.4, 1.6, 1.7, SP4.3)
- 7) Given our current philosophy/practice, can all pertinent staff (any staff that comes into contact with severe emotionally disabled students) be CPI trained? (SP1.4, 1.7, SP2.4, SP3, SP4.3, SP5)
- 8) Do we have plans to hire more behavioral specialists and intervention specialists? (SP1.4, 1.6, 1.7, SP4.3)
- 9) Do we have a policy concerning optimal class size in regards to inclusion? (SP1.4, 1.7, SP4.3)
- 10) State law says we have a policy concerning implementation of positive behavior intervention supports and the use of restraint and seclusion. Can this be made available to teachers, or can we develop a more specific training regimen? (SP1.7, SP2.4, SP3, SP4.3, SP5)

Our questions revolve around a few themes:

Policy and protocol that directly affect teachers practice in the classroom (i.e.- what should teacher do in specific contingency)

Policy and protocol that administratively affects classroom practice (i.e.- inclusion policies, placement policies, exclusion policies)

Procedure to prepare and support teachers regarding behavioral issues

Strategic Plan (paraphrased)

1.4 Build a system of school-based supports to positively impact the achievement of all students.

-assure *effective* and efficient use of resources

-use *data* to make decisions

1.6 Implement behavioral expectations that are consistently modeled...equitably for *all* students.

1.7 Effectively address the needs of diverse students...

2.4 Expand professional learning opportunities to meet individual learning needs

3.1,3.2,3.3 ...Policies that reflect State and Federal guidelines *and support district*

4.3 Build capacity within the faculty and staff to work effectively with students from all backgrounds.

5. Engage ...school stakeholders as *active* partners.

- Sara Cole and Tim Gesing answered the questions together. If time does not permit to answer all of the questions about Special Education, they will happily return to the next meeting on February 08th.

Special Education Law dictates how we move forward with children.

When there is an increase in behavior issues, a team will pull together.

An IEP meeting will take place and a FBA will be done. A FBA is a Functional Behavior Assessment.

After the FBA, a Behavior Intervention Plan will be created. In the plan, the team will be evaluating what is working for the child and what is not working. If the items listed in the Intervention Plan are not working then it is time to amend the IEP.

It has to be determined what function the behavior is serving. How best do we intervene to determine what triggers are initiating the behaviors?

- It was suggested to get more students involved in the new Preschool to identify any concerns early.

- We do have Behavior Coaches, at Lomond, Woodbury and Middle School.

- Each school has a Crisis Intervention Team. Some teachers are on the team and when help is needed with a student the members are called to help. A member commented by saying that calling a teacher out of a class.

puts a stress on the class/situation they are called away from.

- The district is looking at more training. There has been some discussion about how to express what is learned in the training to others.
- Placement – Least Restrictive Environment; monitoring of student, accommodations in the classroom, tutoring pulled out 30 minutes a day, pulled out for some major classes. When the school cannot provide necessary support, PEP services will be suggested and the parent has to be in agreement.

PTO Report

- Candith McMillan talked about the Family Wellness Event at the Middle School. The event was very nice and very happy with the professionals who spoke.
- Homeless Stand Down Clothing Drive – two volunteers are organizing this community service project. Collecting clothing, mittens, boots, coats etc.
- Will be working with Keith Langford, Coordinator of Family and Community Engagement to see what PTO can do to assist the program.
- Vick Ferrell, District Head of Security, will be at the next PTO meeting.

Officer's Report

President, John Morris

- Attended successful November 23rd Happy Hour.
- Met with SHTA ST Negotiations Team – who negotiated today. Will continue.
- Dealt with ongoing medical issue in the district.
- Dealt with personnel conflicts in the district.
- Attended the School Board Meeting on December 7th – last board meeting for Harris.
- Dealt with teacher-parent concern.
- Attended Shaker Union Summit on December 18th.
- Had weekly conversations with Dr. Hutchings.
- Discussed Special Education concerns with Dr. Hutchings – including Tim Kalan's letter.
- Encouraged Special Ed Admin attendance at next month's rep council meeting – most likely Tim Gesing and Sara Cole.
- Discussed calamity day issues with Dr. Hutchings.
- Worked on a legal concern with a member.
- Visited Support Teacher Classrooms.
- Attended Wednesday's January 7th's Master Planning meeting.
- Communicated via email with members encouraging them to attend. You may also attend either February 3rd or 16th in the upper high school cafeteria as well.
- Continue to update SHTA Facebook Page with Andrew Glasier.
- Award for Ugly Sweater goes to Steve Smith at Lomond.

Vice President, Matt Zucca

- Attended the November 23rd Happy Hour, a great event.
- The SHTA donation consists of 2 tickets to the Cleveland Orchestra and a dinner for two.
- The form to make a donation for the silent auction *A Night for the Red and White* is due by January 15th. Please consider making a donation, it is a way to reach out to the community. The donation is not due by January 15th but the donation intention form is due at that time.
- *A Night for the Red and White* is on Saturday, March 5th at the Tudor Arms Hotel. Teachers receive a discounted price of \$95.00.
- Turn in Fellowship Grant receipts so that you can receive your reimbursement.
- Will be attending the PTO meeting scheduled for January 12th.
- Dealing with issues pertaining to substitute teachers. Issues with relying on staff members when there

is not a substitute available.

- Attended the Master Planning/Facilities meeting on January 7th.
- Concern with teachers being asked to serve on many committees.
- Improvement needed with administering common assessments.

Secretary, Darlene Garrison

- Please be sure to sign the attendance sheet going around.
- Please take an active role and sell raffle tickets for the Red and White Event. All money and ticket stubs are due to me by Thursday, February 4th. We will pull names on Monday, February 8th at Representative Council meeting. Three members will be selected to win two tickets for the Red and White Event at Tudor Arms Hotel on Saturday, March 5th.
- Attended the Happy Hour hosted by SHTA on November 23rd.
- Attended the December meeting for Professional Learning for Instructional Leaders.
- Attended the Master Planning/Facilities meeting on January 8th.

Treasurer, Bill Scanlon

- Attended Happy Hour hosted by SHTA on November 23rd.
- Attended the Shaker Union Summit Meeting on December 18th.
- Communicated with accountants.
- Discussed with Dr. Hutchings the rudeness involved with parents going in for fingerprinting at the Administration Building.
- Will need to transfer money from the Key Investment account to take care of bills being paid through the checking account. The SHTA ST Negotiations are taking longer than expected.
- Net income is at a negative, because it takes into account our Edward Jones and Key Investments, they have both gone down.
- Membership dues collected thus far \$92,280.

Executive Board Reports

Past President, Becky Thomas

- Attended the Happy Hour hosted by SHTA on November 23rd.
- Missed December Board of Education Meeting.
- Will be attending Board of Education meeting on January 12th.
- Will be attending the Finance and Audit meeting on January 28th.
- Please attend the Master Planning/Facilities meetings if you would like a change in your school.
- When a teacher asks for support, they should not be written up saying that they don't have good classroom management.
- Serious lack of communication in the area of Special Education.

Teacher Education, Lisa Hardiman

- Continue to answer questions related to the contract.
- Making sure new teachers are uploading evidence on eTPES.
- Attended Happy Hour hosted by SHTA on November 23rd.

Membership/Elections, Chante Thomas-Taylor

- Attended Happy Hour hosted by SHTA on November 23rd.
- Continue to update and work on membership for SHTA.
- Everyone should have received their SHTA membership cards.

Policy, Tim Kalan

- Typed the Constitution and By-laws.
- Attended the Master Planning/Facilities meeting.
- Created and typed questions about Special Education.

Public Relations, Bob Bognar

- Submitted a new ad for *Shaker Life* Magazine and sent along the contract to *Shaker Life* for the remainder of the year.
- We will continue our advertisement in the Shaker Heights High School yearbook as well as in the *Shakerite*.
- It is our solidarity that creates our strength as an Association! One simple yet effective way of broadcasting our collective might is through increased visibility! Buy a T-Shirt; broadcast your membership!

Legislative, Eileen Sweeney

- Attended SHTA Happy Hour on November 23rd.
- Attended Supplemental Contract meeting.
- Working on upcoming March Primary information.

Evaluation, Lena Paskewitz

- January 15th marks the end of the 1st half of Teacher evaluations.
- Please review protocols for evaluations in the newsletter.
- Encourage members to upload evidence on eTPES.
- Looking to expand Peer Evaluation Program.
- Committee meetings, looking at any revisions to the rubric and evaluation process.

Publications, Andrew Glasier

- Steve Smith won the “Ugly Sweater” contest.
- Tim Kalan will have an editorial in the January Newsletter focusing on Special Education.
- Constitution and By-laws updated by Tim Kalan & uploaded to SHTAweb.org.
- SHTA file cabinet moved to the basement of the high school.
- SHTA Twitter account, editorials have been posted.
- With evaluations at the Middle School, a lot of walkthroughs were done the day after winter vacation???
- Remember that evaluations are done using the Shaker Heights model, not OTES.
- A better model for Special Education needs to be looked at.
- Wednesday at Midnight newsletter submissions are due.

Social, Selena Brown

- Thank you for coming out to the SHTA Happy Hour.
- Any ideas for another Happy Hour, please let me know.
- Working on the Annual Recognition Reception.

Legal Aid, Paul Repasy

- Not in attendance for the meeting.

Professional Rights and Responsibilities, Mike Sears

- Attended the Shaker Union Summit Meeting.
- There was a mistake on payroll- FlexSave dependent care was not taken out. Eighteen members should receive an email explaining the mistake.
- You will notice slight difference in medical and dental on your January 16th check.

SHTA ST, Bonnie Gordon

- Negotiations are proceeding satisfactorily and will hopefully be ending soon.

Building Reports

Boulevard, Jennifer Goulden

- Several problems with AESOP. Some members are not able to access their accounts.
- In the month of December, a member was not able to put in for a ½ day in the afternoon. The start time should be 12:00 but her start time on her account was 1:00.

Darlene Bushley replied that teachers should be able to select ½ day, full day or they should be able to customize their time on AESOP.

- There were some technology issues but the building principal is working on it. A member's SmartBoard was not working & it will be replaced.
- More communication needed as to when items will be fixed or what the actual problem with the item should be discussed.

Fernway, Andree Hassell

- There is still an issue with lack of substitutes. There were no substitutes available a total of 10 times.

Lomond, Donita Townsend

- No Report

Mercer, Nicole Smith

- We have all been paid for summer writing!
- Third grade has not received ELA materials; Mr. Florence has recently given third grade a solution for ordering these materials. However, the concern is the materials were strategically placed on the list to be used for IB planners and CCSS, some of which may not be applicable at this point in the year.
- Some computer issues have been reported since the updates over winter break; Mrs. Ng has been attentive to and is aiding teachers with solutions as best as possible.
- Side note regarding the ELA materials, Mr. Florence said he will give us \$2,500 to spend on materials, however, he mentioned using his own Red and White funds---why isn't this being paid for by Central Office? He did not make the amount public, but spoke to me personally about it and asked me to inform my team, which I have done.

Onaway, Paula Klausner

- Refer to questions created by Tim Kalan – Special Education Questions “Least Restrictive Environment”.

Woodbury, Angela Goodrum

- No Report

Middle School, Tim Richards

- (Introduce Sarah Levine & Jennifer Currie – Special Education Department Chairs. They are attending today's meeting to contribute to the Special Ed. Process)
- In collaboration with our building administration we have worked through an assistant principal's extended medical leave. This took some creative thinking in regard to the OTES process but we continue to move forward. This actually has allowed us to use more **peer evaluators** as we were far behind other buildings in peer usage. Dexter Lindsey has done an admirable job filling in the daily duties of the administrator.
- Members expressed concern for the spirit of walkthroughs being performed immediately before and after the winter break.

- We have been assisting a member with their gradual return to work following medical treatment. There does not seem to be specific language that covers a situation where a staff member is ready to return to work on a part time basis. The member has tried to work out a “phase in” arrangement that is least disruptive to student but is having trouble getting specific answers on the process.
- Because our schedule now mirrors that of the High School some members are asking that our planning/teaching schedules reflect that change. Specifically it was stated that our teachers need more time to grade written midterm exams.
- With Bryan Christman and John Morris’ help we were able to retro activate a salary scale adjustment. The member’s education level increased as the new salary scale was kicking in last year and there had been some confusion.
- Continue to work with building administration to insulate a member from an aggressive parent.
- Instructional Rounds that were originally scheduled during our exam week have been postponed. These Rounds are our building’s Problem of Practice. While other schools selected their Problem of Practice with faculty input, ours was selected by Administration, which is antithetical to the process.

High School, James Schmidt

- Issue concerning administration not including uploaded support material in evaluation.
- There was an issue of a student making a threat towards a student, one administrator didn’t think it was a big deal but the interim principal took care of the situation.
- Interim principal announced that he will be applying for the high school principal job. Members wanted to know why he just can’t be given the position when he is doing such a great job.
- ***Darlene Bushley stated that we already have the contract with the firm who is responsible for searching for candidates. Also, there is a process that all candidates go through.***

Old Business

- None

New Business

- None

Good of the Order

- Thank you Mercer Building Reps. for hosting out January meeting. Also, thank you Tim Kalan for generating the Special Education questions.

Next Rep. Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 8th at the High School

Motion to adjourn meeting made by James Schmidt.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:37PM

***Respectfully submitted,
Darlene Garrison***



SHTA President John Morris awards the first annual SHTA Ugly Sweater contest winner Steve Smith a signed holiday portrait of himself. Award accepted by Steve's wife Nicole, Mercer representative.



SHTA January Representative Council Meeting @ Mercer school. Special thanks to Mercer Representatives Nicole Smith for hosting the meeting.

Special Education Accountability?

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.

We face many challenges in the twilight of No Child Left Behind. One euphemism we are familiar with is the currently fashionable 'accountability' that assumes much of what ails our schools are bad teachers and ineffective principals. Unfortunately this philosophy, which has purchased us high stakes testing and the incremental privatization of our public school systems, is not simply misguided, but is a pernicious distraction from some of the most obstinate obstacles to education: the depredations of poverty and the misallocation of resources. One aspect of this dynamic that inner-ring districts like Shaker struggle with is how to best serve the needs of all students. In particular, how do we reconcile the diversity of our community and vast spectrum of aptitudes with our limited resources, cumbersome federal and state expectations, and minimal funding? I argue that with all the distractions surrounding high-stakes testing, curriculum writing & re-writing, alignment, and IB, we often overlook the foundation of what we do in the classroom, where our teachers are often overwhelmed and under supported.

This lack of support is evidenced in many K-4 buildings (though not exclusive to them) where staff struggle with maintaining a high level of instruction amid the many behavioral problems that occur. While we are effectively meeting the needs of many of our students, and our adherence to RTI, and incorporation of behavioral support from PEP and Bellfaire have mitigated some of the obstacles to learning, our resources still are not at levels that truly address the problems. In fact, the resources we do have are spread unevenly throughout the district, and are at best inefficient or at worst non-existent. This is in addition to a mindset that has not adapted quickly enough to our changing demographics. As the frequency and severity of dysfunctional behaviors increase, we as a district are still taking an ad hoc approach to dealing with our salient behavior problems, which on occasion, are violent and extremely disruptive.

Moving forward, we as a district need a more comprehensive and transparent plan to tackle this obstacle to instruction together. Failing to do so means that our emotionally disabled students will not be receiving the instruction and services they truly need, and neither will the classrooms that they inhabit. Years ago Shaker Schools transitioned away from the Emotional Disabilities unit model that provided instruction separately from the classroom. I do not necessarily advocate a return to that model, but I do believe if you are going to eliminate self-contained services, you then have to provide the resources needed for the intensive classroom interventions that will consequently be called for. This will require more intervention specialists than we currently have. It will require more behavior specialists. Just as importantly it will require a better trained and better informed staff. Perhaps the effective or useful vestiges of the old ED unit could still be salvaged?

I believe the constant attention we pay to the writing, alignment, and implementation of curriculum is often at the expense of other valuable and overlooked skills and needs. A great curriculum isn't worth much if you can't get to the point where you are actually teaching it. There is a current imbalance in how we utilize our professional time in the district, where more emphasis is spent on the reflective processes of IB as well as dealing with the burdens of alignment and assessments, at the expense of pragmatic classroom approaches to distractions and review of the efficacy of building and district procedures. I propose that in the future some of our Professional Day learning be spent on reviewing district protocols and expectations for student behavior, CPI training for teachers, and better coordinated efforts within buildings as well as across the district to identify and address behavior concerns. Using Crisis teams to assist classrooms is welcomed, but shouldn't we employ teacher coaching to mitigate and prevent crisis as part of that model? True accountability comes with tackling the challenges that don't have easy answers or ready-made data pools. It comes with difficult decisions. How

will we measure our success in this regard? It can't be solely with test scores. How do we measure the trauma of one student in need compared with the trauma inflicted upon twenty-four of their classmates? How do we measure the trauma of their teacher? As our real-world needs grow, so too must be our willingness to self-analyze, adapt, and ask if we are truly performing as a *'first-choice-district.'* Hopefully we can turn these challenges into an opportunity for us to collectively improve our practices, results, and community.

Tim Kalan
Art Teacher
Onaway & Lomond School

Special Education & Family

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 a long time educator I have seen many changes in the field of education. One area of concern has always been and continues to be how to deal with students with behavioral concerns.

While each student needs to be seen as an individual and there is no one size fits all approach to help these students accomplish their goals, I wanted to share my journey with my son in the hopes that it may help others.

I knew from the time my son was about 2 years old that my son was going to follow a different path than his peers. I had him evaluated and when he was old enough he went to the special education preschool in Mentor where we live. As often happens, he did well in the small structured class with three teachers. I talked with the district about transition to kindergarten. Since he had done so well in preschool, he was placed in the regular kindergarten (least restrictive environment) with just a few accommodations.

My son became "that kid". We all know the one. He was throwing things in the classroom, running through the halls, being chased by teachers and yes... even ran out of the building. He was constantly in the principal's office and received many suspensions. While we pursued the medical side and placed him on medications, we began the course to find the best program to meet his needs. We tried all the usual "least restrictive measures" (shorter school day, classroom aid, classroom breaks, sensory diet...).

Finally, it was decided he needed a different type of approach. My son was placed in the ED (Emotionally Disturbed) unit. This program has had different titles over the years including SBH (Severe Behavior Handicap). The biggest hurdle a parent has to get over when placing your child in this program is getting over the name of the program and getting over the label that has to be put on your child. As a parent you need to look at the structure of the program, the professionals running it and how it works. Even as an educator myself, this was hard, but it was the best decision we ever made. I think because the identification process is so difficult and many parents shy away from this route, this program has been removed from many school districts.

This program is worth the struggles it takes to place children for the reward it has in these students' lives. I cannot say enough for the teachers and aides my son has had in this program. It takes extra training and a different mindset for this program. Instead of students being in the mainstream classroom and being pulled out when they cause disruptions, these students start off completely in the unit for all subject areas. Behavioral training and social skills are infused into the entire day with their educational curriculum. As students show

control of behavior and social skills, they are slowly introduced to the mainstream classroom one subject at a time. Many of these students have difficulty being successful in a mainstream class because they are not ready for a full day in a mainstream class. Even students coming back from PEP or other outside program are just placed in a regular classroom all day when they are not ready for those demands. The way this unit works is by allowing the children to feel successful with a small amount of time, just what they can handle, then fold in more and more time. The amount of time is adjustable for each child.

For a long time, the only subject my son went to the classroom for was math, since that was his best subject. As he showed he could handle the classroom structure they added in other content areas and specials were added in last. If he had a setback, they pulled him back to the unit and he slowly started adding time back in again. One huge key to this process being so successful was the trust he feels for his unit teacher. When he wanted to run, he would go to her. Also, if he was having a difficult day, he could stay in the unit. They worked on his schoolwork with him and there was no disruption to the educational process for him or other students.

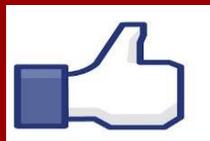
My son is in 8th grade now. He continues to be a part of an ED unit and participates weekly with the behavioral training and social skills. He continues to work on social skills, staying focused during class, solving problems and keeping up with his schoolwork. He has come a long way and only minimally uses the services. He still has times when he runs, but he runs to the unit.

Just before break we had one of his biggest success stories. As we know certain times of year are trigger times for students; the holidays are one. His unit teacher sent me an email about how my son came to her because he could feel himself having trouble focusing in class and controlling his behavior. He asked if he could be put back on a passport and have regular times to check in with her daily to keep himself under control. I am so proud of my son and the young man he is growing into and there is no doubt in my mind that a huge part of his success is the professionals who run the ED unit and the fact that it was there to teach and train him. I am thankful every day that my school district had this support service in place and that my child reaped the benefits of this program.

The identification and consent process can be long and difficult to get a student placed. The professionals needed to run a unit like this need to be well trained with proper support services. While all of this means extra time and money for a school district, I truly believe the benefits for those students who do participate are so great that it is worth the investment to school districts.

Sharon Mauser
Kindergarten Teacher
Lomond Elementary

The SHTA is on



us @

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Shaker-Heights-Teachers-Association>



SHAKER SCHOOLS

FOUNDATION NEWS

for Shaker Heights Teachers' Association

Issue 1

Winter 2016

High School Learning Garden Grows

The Foundation is thrilled to announce that the Learning Garden has been named for Audrey Stout. A social studies teacher at the High School from 1968 to 1986, she was the mother of three Shaker graduates, much loved by her students, and an outstanding gardener. We were saddened to learn of her death on this past September, but with gifts made in her memory, her name will be forever associated with the Shaker Schools. The family's generosity has continued with the donation of a Japanese lantern for the Asian section of the garden.

And, the Audrey Stout Learning Garden will be featured in the June 2016 Gracious Gardens of Shaker Heights garden tour, sponsored by the Shaker Historical Society.



Donors' Gifts at Work

Already this school year, several projects have been made possible because of Shaker Schools Foundation funding and support.

- This past summer, the Foundation helped baseball coach Mike Babinec and volunteer Doug Lamb organize the baseball team's first golf outing. With proceeds from that event, a Nitroswing machine was purchased to help players improve their swings.
- Shaker's opening convocation for employees and faculty featured Clint Smith, a poet, teacher, and motivational speaker. The **Cleveland Clinic** sponsored his appearance.
- The Foundation's **Madeline and Dennis Block Fund** provided funds for master classes for the High School orchestras. The Cavani Quartet presented classes on Beethoven, and members of the Oblivion Project coached students in playing tangos.
- In November, the **Elena Steinberg Fund** enabled guest speaker Amy Hanauer to visit the eleventh grade English classes that are reading *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens. Ms. Hanauer is the founding executive director of Policy Matters Ohio, and she discussed the novel's relevance today, in terms of its focus on social and economic inequalities.

You Can Help Even More

The Foundation thanks faculty members who already have donated through the Charity Choice campaign. If you missed it, please know that you can make a tax-deductible gift at any time by sending us a check or visiting shaker.org/foundation.aspx.