

IMPORTANT DATES

Tentative Agreement Q&A: Grades PreK-6,
Monday, November 16, 4-5PM
<https://meet.google.com/hue-wptx-seg?pli=1&authuser=0>

Tentative Agreement Q&A: Grades 7-12,
Tuesday, November 17, 4-5PM
<https://meet.google.com/gfe-rawc-inf?pli=1&authuser=0>

BOE Meeting (New Date): November 17

Tentative Agreement Ratification Vote:
November 18: Online Vote Due by 4PM

Conference Days: No Classes PreK-12
November 23 & 24.

Thanksgiving Recess: November 25-27

SHTA Executive Board Meeting: Virtual
(tentative), December 7

SHTA Representative Council Meeting:
Virtual (tentative), December 14

SHTA *news*

NOVEMBER 16, 2020
ISSUE #3

Message From the President

I want to thank each and every one of you for standing by SHTA leadership and one another in playing your roles as responsible, responsive, and respected Association members. It has been a grueling eight months as we have gone back and forth with the administration to negotiate the safest reopening of the schools possible. It has not been easy. At times, we have been considered both heroes and oppositional by the community, although the overwhelming majority has been unrelentingly supportive. If we hadn't been so insistent with administration about the safe reopening of our schools, I don't believe we would be in the relatively safe position we are today. We continue to maintain that virtual is by far the safest environment for students, staff, and the community.

I would argue that with rapidly increasing infection numbers, families congregating for Thanksgiving, and college students returning home from college, that the district should consider a full shutdown until the beginning of second semester, or at the very least commit to a 14 day quarantine/shutdown until December 10th. We have seen an increase in our state of 50,000 cases in the past 13 days ([This is how fast Ohio's coronavirus cases have been increasing](#)). It seems only responsible for the district to limit the spread of this virus in any way that it can.

Without our strong recommendations, our insistence on six feet distance, adequate PPE (including widespread use of Plexiglas and plastic surrounds), and safe ventilation (including working windows and air purifiers), these elements would not be as widely available and as quickly accessible as they are today. Not to disparage our administration; I believe central office has had the intention of making our learning environments safe. But I do not believe they would have had the push and the pressure necessary to make these safety assurances high priority if it weren't for the presence and the prescience of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association.

Our efforts include consistently communicating concerns to building and district administrators, conducting SHTA surveys, answering communications, and being a calm and consistent voice of reason for the safest, most scientifically supported approaches to learning. I would be remiss in not acknowledging the guidance behind

these efforts. The SHTA Executive Board; Darlene, Lisa, Matt, Bill, Mike, Andrew, James, David, Tito, Selena, Angela, Peg, Michael, Lena, Bob, Tim, Becky, Chante, and Cathy have been consistent, supportive, dedicated, and inexhaustible advocates for our Association and its membership. I could not have done my job without them. I can guarantee you all, that I will continue relying on them and turning to them for direction and affirmation of our decisions as an Association. They are the backbone of the SHTA, and I am eternally grateful to them for their efforts and support.

We will not stop playing our role as stewards of our contract, supporters of our students and colleagues, and voices for the safest learning environment in our community. If our county turns purple, we will need to revisit our stance with the district if a return to virtual learning does not take place. We will also continue to fight the district's misinterpretation of ADA law as it relates to COVID accommodations. These are not acrimonious or deliberately oppositional positions. These are the positions we must hold to play our role as SHTA Leadership. Central Administration and the Board of Education have their own roles to play. We believe we all have the best interest of our students and community in mind. Our stance continues to be that the district should rely on the best scientific recommendations available, including those from the Cuyahoga County Board of Education and the Centers for Disease Control. Health and safety also must remain our top priority. And that will not change until we have a widely distributable vaccine for COVID-19.

In a normal year, the Tentative Agreement from the Negotiations Team would be the opening content of my President's Report. Of course, this is not a normal year. By now, you should be aware that we are recommending the acceptance of a one-year contract extension. The details are included in the Salary Tenure Report in this Newsletter. I am grateful to the members of the Negotiating Team for their efforts on this Tentative Agreement. Thank you to Darlene Garrison, Bill Scanlon, Lisa Hardiman, Mike Sears, Wendy Lewis, David Klapholz, James Schmidt and our indefatigable SHTA lawyer Susannah Muskovitz.

It's been another extremely active month. I toured buildings with Interim Vice President Lisa Hardiman and Professional Rights and Responsibilities Chairperson Mike Sears along with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Marla Robinson, and Chief Operations Officer Jeff Grosse. I filed a Class Action Grievance on Behalf of members seeking ADA at-home-work accommodations and/or sick leave use. I attended the Board of Education Work Session virtually. I met with the SHTA Executive Board. I met with the Representative Council. I asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to send out the Executive Board's "Staggered Re-entry" Letter. I spoke weekly with Superintendent Dr. Glasner. I met with Superintendent Dr. Glasner, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Robinson, and Chief Operations Officer Jeff Grosse to discuss building concerns with SHTA Secretary Darlene Garrison, Interim Vice President Lisa Hardiman, and PR&R Chair Mike Sears. I updated SHTA Facebook and Cuyahoga County Union Summit pages. I answered members email questions. I attended the October Equity Task Force meeting. I asked Public Relations Chairperson Bob Bognar, Woodbury Member Jackie Scanlon, and Occupational Health and Safety Chairperson James Schmidt to create a Building Facilities Survey. I asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to send the Building Facilities Survey to members. I asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to share the Building Facilities Survey Results to members, administration, and BOE members. I attended the BOE regular meeting. I asked Nurse and Onaway Head Representative Paula Klausner and High School Nurse Paula Damm to be our Nurse Advisors on SHTA communications relating to COVID-19. I asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to send out clarification on our "Staggered Re-entry" Letter with Paula Klausner and Paula Damm's answers. I received confirmation that our Class Action Grievance was denied by the administration. Our understanding is that members with previously established FMLA will still be able to use their sick time related to their conditions. We will take this grievance to Step III and Arbitration. I met again with Dr. Glasner, Jeff Grosse, and Dr. Robinson to discuss building concerns with Darlene Garrison, Lisa Hardiman, and Jeff Grosse. I met again with the SHTA Executive Board. I read and

recommended that the Executive Board vote approve the SHTA Nurses “Stop the Spread” campaign. The SHTA Executive Board voted and endorses this campaign. I communicated with administration about the attendance policy and sick day use during self-quarantine and illness in virtual environment. After receiving conflicting information from Central Office, I asked Occupational Health and Safety Chairperson James Schmidt to draft safety recommendations on behalf of the Executive Board and asked Paula Klausner and Paula Damm to review. I asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to email SHTA Safety Recommendations to members and administration. I attended the November Equity Task Force Meeting. I communicated with COO Jeff Grosse about accommodations at the schools. I asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to send out our Negotiations Team Tentative Agreement Announcement. I asked Woodbury Nurse Stephanie Smith to join SHTA Nurses Advisory. I continue to meet regularly with the other bargaining units in the district to discuss shared concerns. I asked James Schmidt, Mike Sears, and Paul Klausner to meet with UH doctors to discuss building safety. I met with a member on a Step II Grievance.

December is typically a month that we do not meet, although we keep a tentative Executive Board Meeting and Representative Council Meeting on the calendar. We are going to leave the meetings tentative at this point unless there is a major change in the county’s color-coding system. Please know that we will convene a meeting at that point using these dates. If these meetings do not happen, please know that we will remain diligent throughout this reopening time and wish you all safe and happy holidays. It remains an honor to continue serving the SHTA as President. Please do not hesitate to email me at morris_j@shaker.org or call 295-6270.

*Respectfully submitted,
John Morris*

SHTA Tentative Contract

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PreK-6, Monday, November 16, 4-5PM**
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November 18: Online Vote Due by 4PM**

Reports from the Executive Board

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This is my 26th year as a teacher in the Shaker Heights City School District. During these years, we as educators have experienced numerous obstacles. It is obvious that none of us have previously faced anything similar to the uncertainty and terror that is caused by this global pandemic. All of us, including but not limited to teachers and upper administrators, are trying to make decisions and take actions that are said to be in the best interests of the students. Before now, these decisions were usually driven by the need to attain such goals as closing the achievement gap, differentiating instruction, or reaching global mindedness. Now, the stakes are much higher. The decisions that we make now quite literally could impact whether people, students and staff, live or die.

After countless hours of meetings between administrators and teachers, some of which I participated in, the decision was made by administration, for students and staff to return to the buildings. Although we were told all spring, summer and early fall that decisions for returning to school would be based on data driven recommendations presented by The Cuyahoga County Board of Health, this seems to have been abandoned. Instead, some other data was referenced during October's school board meeting. The source of this new data was not provided and seemed quite anecdotal in nature. A board member suggested that we consult experts when discussing these issues. I argue that one of the primary purposes of CCBH is to provide expertise in matters such as these. Are the CCBH recommendations based on data not the right kind of data that the Board of Education is looking to use? Is the fact that Ohio continues to set new records every day for new COVID-19 cases, today's being 7,101, not legitimate information to drive decision making? How about that the Shaker Heights zip codes 44122 and 44120 are among the worst in the state for COVID-19?

The reasons given for the decision to return to in-person school were not agreed upon by teachers. Further, the manner in which we are forced to deliver instruction using concurrent teaching, as indicated by the numerous negative testimonies by teachers, is not sound nor sustainable. In addition, it is clear to teachers that the education that students are receiving at home during concurrent teaching is far inferior to what they were receiving when we were teaching completely remote. I also argue that when it comes to matters of teaching and learning, WE are the experts. Shaker teachers, who have the combined teaching experience of hundreds of years from which to draw information, are the experts. Yet many of us received the clear message that we are not considered as such.

During this past month, I went on walkthroughs of 7 buildings with SHTA president Dr. John Morris, SHTA Professional Rights & Responsibilities Chairperson Mike Sears, Superintendent Dr. David Glasner, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Marla Robinson and Chief Operating Officer Jeff Grosse to check safety protocols and PPEs in buildings. I participated in several meetings with Dr. John Morris, Mike Sears, SHTA Secretary Darlene Garrison, Dr. David Glasner, Dr. Marla Robinson and Jeff Grosse. I attended numerous Executive Board meetings. I have spoken with members about the SHTA fellowship grant. I have communicated with SHTA Vice President Matt Zucca and Treasurer Bill Scanlon about SHTA fellowship grants. I participated in a pre-negotiations meeting with other members of the negotiating team. I attended a Teacher Advisory meeting organized by Dr. David Glasner.

I hope that everyone is holding up during this unprecedented time. Please know that the SHTA Executive Board and Representative Council are working tirelessly to do everything in our power to keep you safe and healthy. Thank you again to Dr. John Morris for naming me as interim Vice President during Matt Zucca's leave. This is such an honor to work in this capacity for the association.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hardiman

TREASURER'S REPORT

I sit here writing my newsletter report as our district's [COVID-19 Dashboard](#) continues to rise, and a few things give me pause. First, there are two new Staff cases. The [Dashboard](#) lists them as being from "Non-School Bldgs." As I said, this gives me pause because the email we got with details about one of the employees says "The person is a District staff member who works across multiple buildings." Something about that doesn't seem transparent.

The second thing that gives me pause is the district's quarantine rules. They read: "Any student or staff member who has been identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19 needs to quarantine for 14 days. To be a close contact, the student or staff member must have been within 6 feet of the person with COVID for a cumulative 15 minutes or more within a day; it does not matter whether the people in question were masked or not." If you think about these rules, they set up a system where no students or employees will ever be quarantined for a positive case in the buildings. People only need to quarantine if they identify as a "close contact" ("within 6 feet ... for ... 15 minutes or more). If we are following district guidelines, we will never be within 6 ft. of anyone else. So, am I correct in understanding that we will never be quarantining employees or students due to in-school contact? As I said, it gives me pause.

The Investments Committee (myself, Todd Keitlen, and Chante Thomas-Taylor) met in October with Brady Krebs, our Edward Jones advisor to evaluate our investment accounts.

I am meeting this month with our accountants at Edward Hawkins & Co., LLC to finish last fiscal year's (July 2019 - June 2020) tax form filings, and to provide them with the financial records for our annual review. I filed our annual report with SERB (State Employment Relations Board). The current financial report is attached.

This fall has been very difficult for all of us. This being the last newsletter of the year I pray that everyone stays healthy through the rest of the month and the rest of the year. Take care of your family and do all you can to stay safe.

*Respectfully submitted,
Bill Scanlon, Treasurer*



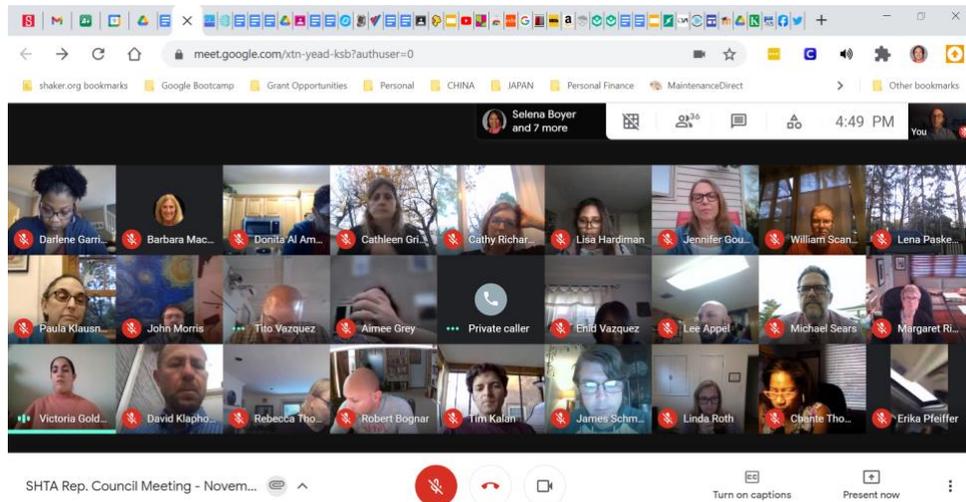
**SHTA November
Representative
Council Meeting
on Google Meet.**

Shaker Heights Teachers' Association Balance Sheet

As of November 12, 2020

	Total
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Key Bank (checking)	71,820.66
Key Bank Aisha Trust	5,840.00
Key Bank Investments	0.00
Key Investments2	0.00
Total Bank Accounts	\$77,660.66
Other Current Assets	
Edward Jones 13760-1-1	535,783.06
Edward Jones 13768-1-3	817,383.12
Total Other Current Assets	\$1,353,166.18
Total Current Assets	\$1,430,826.84
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,430,826.84
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Total Liabilities	
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	53.69
Retained Earnings	1,377,274.63
Net Income	53,498.52
Total Equity	\$1,430,826.84
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$1,430,826.84

**SHTA November
Representative Council
Meeting on Google
Meet.**



EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES REPORT

On October 23, 2020, I received a response to Grievance 10.14.2020. The grievance asked for five items, which were agreed to by Superintendent David Glasner. The five items with the District's responses (in bold) are listed below:

1. Complete transparency informing members of a positive COVID-19 diagnosis within 24 hours of identification.

The District will continue to inform SHTA members and other stakeholder groups of a positive COVID-19 diagnosis within 24 hours of learning of the case during business days. The District currently publishes a daily COVID-19 update to all SHTA staff members Monday-Friday.

2. Anyone in a school district building with COVID-19 is reported, including third parties and contractors.

The District will report positive or presumed positive COVID-19 cases of third parties and contractors who were in District buildings when the District is informed by a third party or contractor of a positive or presumed positive case within the period of communicability timeline.

3. A method of contact tracing of potentially infected staff members and students is completed as soon as possible after a positive case becomes known.

The District currently has a contact tracing protocol in effect, per the requirements of the Ohio Department of Health and the Cuyahoga County Board of Health. Attached to this response is a copy of the contact tracing form that the district is required to complete within 24 hours following a positive or presumed positive case.

4. Assurance that any visitors to the buildings will have masks and be instructed to use hand sanitizer.

The District currently has a facial covering Board policy and signs are up at each District building reminding anyone who enters of health and safety protocols, including regular hand washing or sanitizing.

5. Students who test positive for COVID-19 need to be identified whether, or not they have been on school property.

Per the District student health and safety protocols and in line with the Ohio Department of Health guidelines, the District asks that families report a positive or presumed positive student case to a building administrator, who then informs the District COVID-19 coordinator. The District will continue to inform SHTA members and other stakeholder groups when a positive or presumed positive case is reported to the District.

Please let an SHTA Building Representative or Executive Board member know if you think any of these protocols are not being followed in your buildings.

I am assisting SHTA President John Morris with Grievance 10.14.2020 about ADA accommodation requests being denied. Currently, we are preparing for step 3, or arbitration. If you are on an unpaid leave because your ADA accommodation request was denied, please contact me as soon as possible (sears_m@shaker.org). Also, all members whose ADA accommodation requests were denied are encouraged to file a discrimination charge with the Cleveland office of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. You have been discriminated against based on your disability. For more information on how to do this, go to their website <https://www.eeoc.gov/field-office/cleveland/location>. If you need help with this process, please contact me.

In the past month, I have also:

- Toured buildings with SHTA President John Morris and SHTA Vice President Lisa Hardiman
- Attended Executive Board meetings about the opening of schools to students
- Attended opening of schools' meetings with SHTA President John Morris, SHTA Vice President Lisa Hardiman, SHTA Secretary Darlene Garrison, Superintendent David Glasner, Chief Academic Officer Marla Robinson, and Chief Operating Officer Jeff Grosse
- Met with the Negotiations team regarding pre-negotiations planning and potential agreement for a 1-year extension
- Had phone conferences with members taking unpaid leave due to their ADA accommodations requests being denied by HR
- Assisted Middle School Building Representatives Erika Pfeiffer, John Koppitch, and Linda Roth, as well as individual members, with concerns about requested PPE being set up on time
- Had a phone conference with a member about how to best handle a positive COVID-19 contact
- Assisted members in making requests for PPE to COO Jeff Grosse and Senior Administrative Assistant April Abbott
- Responded to members phone calls and emails about PPE, ADA, and FMLA
- Assisted members with potential disciplinary actions

I would like to personally thank COO Jeff Grosse, Safety and Security Supervisor Vic Ferrell, Director of Buildings and Grounds David Boyer, Assistant Director of Buildings and Grounds Sean Brown, Senior Administrative Assistant April Abbott, and all of the custodians district-wide who have made herculean efforts to make sure schools and classrooms were safe and healthy for faculty, staff, and students when students returned to school on November 5.

*Respectfully submitted,
Mike Sears, Chairperson*

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

As you know, it's been over 20 years since the current school funding law has been ruled unconstitutional by the Ohio Supreme Court. The Plain Dealer is [reporting](#) on a push in the Ohio legislature to change that law. The plan is to have a new law before the end of 2020; let's see if it happens.

The New York Times [reports](#) that on the very first day of Joe Biden's presidency he will sign an executive order that restores the right of government workers to form a union.

EdWeek is making predictions about changes under a Biden presidency in an article titled "[Bye Betsy](#)".

Chalkbeat also has an [article](#) predicting what changes you can expect in education over the next four years.

If you have ideas about where I should get the latest legislative news, please let me know.

Wear A Mask.

*Respectfully submitted,
David Klapholz, Chairperson*

EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Greetings! I think we can all agree that evaluation is low on our list of priorities right now. Providing effective and innovative instruction and engaging learning experiences for our students remotely has been all consuming. Accomplishing this task in a concurrent teaching model is a whole new struggle. Due to these extraordinary circumstances, I continue to advocate for a flexible and supportive approach to the evaluation process for everyone.

Unfortunately, we continue to be accountable for completing the OTES process to meet state requirements. All buildings should have shared the evaluation slides and addressed questions and concerns about evaluation in a staff meeting or other communication. As stated last month, most of the evaluation process and requirements are consistent with the last few years, but there are some important changes for this year. Here they are again for your convenience:

- Student Growth Measures (SGM) will not be used towards your final rating. 100% of your rating will be derived from the Performance Rubric based on observations, “walk-throughs”, conferencing with your evaluator, and other evidence of your practice that you choose to share.
- We have chosen to eliminate the January Formative document.
- The due date for your Annual Professional Growth Plan was October 31. *Please be sure to upload your completed APGP to eTPES right away if you haven't yet!*
- You and your evaluator may choose to use recordings of your teaching for observation purposes. This will be especially important in fully remote teaching spaces and those with a large number of students and/or other adults. Peer evaluators may also have more difficulty scheduling observations due to our lack of planning time during the school day.
- Evaluations this year should be done with consideration of the stressful, complicated, never-before-experienced situation we are in. Teachers should expect and receive a certain amount of “grace” and evaluators should serve as a support and a resource.

All of these items have been discussed and agreed upon by the full Evaluation Committee. Please contact any committee member with any questions or concerns regarding these modifications to the process.

Evaluations for teachers who are not currently in their regular roles, such as preK-4 Single Subject Teachers and Skills Teachers, will require even more flexibility and open communication between evaluators and teachers. Asynchronous lessons and assignments, recorded instruction, observation of student support, and discussion of professional collaboration are all examples of things teachers and evaluators can use to inform the evaluation process. The traditional “lesson observation” may not be possible for these teachers and evaluators should remain flexible and supportive of the new roles teachers have been put in this year.

Please be sure to check your eTPes account to verify your current cycle. Remember, most of us will be repeating the cycle we were in last year due to COVID exemptions last year.

As always, please reach out to me or any other member of the evaluation committee or your SHTA representative with any questions or concerns about evaluation. Please access all evaluation forms on the shaker.org intranet on the Human Resources page.

Respectfully submitted,

Lena Paskewitz, Chairperson

PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This month, I attended the SHTA Executive Board meetings as well as the meeting of the Representative Council. I assisted with editing the Newsletter and with reviewing several communications. I attended the regular meeting of the Board of Education as well as the October 27 Special Meeting/Work Session. On Thursday, November 12, I plan to attend the meeting of the Finance and Audit Committee. Then on Tuesday, November 17, I will attend the rescheduled Board of Education meeting.

This should be the last Newsletter of 2020. You all have my best wishes for a safe holiday season with your family and friends.

*Respectfully submitted,
Becky Thomas, Chairperson*

SPECIAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

I met with Director of Exceptional Children Elizabeth Kimmel for our monthly meeting. In the meeting, we continued collaboration regarding bringing in students with disabilities for onsite services. We discussed ways to support Intervention Specialist and Related Services Providers with safety protocols.

I worked consistently for the last year with Elizabeth Kimmel to remedy an improved way for parents of exceptional children to access IEP progress reports online. I am proud to say; Shaker Heights's administration has purchased the *SameGoal* software update to make this possible. This should help every Intervention Specialist and Related Services Providers who work with exceptional children, in regards to progress reports. This reduces the extra labor of paperwork that all Intervention Specialists are required to complete, print out and mail every 9 weeks. More information will come soon concerning when this will officially be available for Intervention Specialists to utilize.

I supported various Intervention Specialists with concerns regarding Face to Face instruction.

I continue to work with SHHS Dean of Students Mr. Greg Zanelli and Assistant Principal Ms. Jacquelyn Baker, solving various concerns. Also, I continue to support Ms. Baker's consistent efforts to improve the Exceptional Children Department here at Shaker Heights High.

I attended all SHTA meetings.

*Respectfully submitted,
Anastacio Tito Vazquez, Jr. M.Ed. Chairperson*

POLICY COMMITTEE

Our constitutional focus this month is on **BY-LAW VIII** regarding negotiations. It reads:

A. Any proposed contract or change in the existing contract presented by the SHTA Negotiating Team or the SHTA ST Negotiating Team for a vote of the respective membership must be filed in writing with the Secretary and then submitted to all members of the SHTA or SHTA ST (as applicable) within fifteen school days after the filing. B. No proposed contract changes in an existing contract shall be voted upon less than seven calendar days after submission to the applicable membership. C. The applicable Negotiating Team will make itself available to discuss the proposed contract or changes in the existing contract at the district and/or local building level during the seven day pre-election period.

Section C compels our negotiating team to be available to the membership for questions. Here are the pertinent dates for those meetings:

Monday, November 16th from 4 to 5pm for Grades PreK-6 (<https://meet.google.com/hue-wptx-seg?pli=1&authuser=0>)

Tuesday, November 17th from 4pm to 5pm for Grades 7-12 (<https://meet.google.com/gfe-rawc-inf?pli=1&authuser=0>) to discuss the proposed tentative agreement. You may come with your questions at any time during the meeting.

*Respectfully submitted,
Tim Kalan, Chairperson*

LEGAL AID COMMITTEE

Meetings, meetings, meetings! This month I attended regular and special meetings with the Executive board and I listened in on the Board of Education meeting.

I helped members solve problems and set up their classroom according to the safety guidelines. Have a safe, healthy and happy Thanksgiving.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Cathy Grieshop, Chairperson*

MEMBERSHIP/ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

It's not too late to join SHTA. Membership forms only need to be completed by NEW MEMBERS, or as a current member you wish to CHANGE your form of payment and SIGN UP FOR PAYROLL DEDUCTION. This google form can be found at www.shtaweb.org.

The 2020-2021 Representative Council Elected Members are:
(Head Representative in **BOLD**)

Boulevard- **Angela Anderson**, Jennifer Goulden, alt

Onaway- **Paula Klausner**

Fernway- **Victoria Goldfarb**, Andree Hassell (alt)

Lomond- **Donita Al Amin**, Jill DiPiero, Steve Smith

Mercer- **Nicole Ciconetti**, Cathy Richards, alt

Woodbury- **Angela Goodrum**, Stacey DeYoung, Aquita Shephard, Lee Appel (alt)

Middle School- **Erika Pfeiffer**, Linda Roth

High School – **James Schmidt**, Brian Berger, Aimee Grey, Jessica O'Brien, Joel Rathbone (alt), Keith Szalay, Tod Torrence, Enid Vazquez

SHTA ST – **Margaret "Peg" Rimedio**

If you need access to the school membership directories, please reach out to me. We want to make sure all information is correct as we are preparing for the one year contract ratification vote on November 18th.

*Respectfully submitted,
Chante Thomas-Taylor, Chairperson*

TEACHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Please remember that my role with SHTA is not only to assist new teachers and mentors. I am also available to any teachers who are not on a continuing contract. If there are questions or concerns I can be reached through my district email (hardiman_1@shaker.org) or by phone at Mercer (216-295-4867).

Tuition Reimbursement Fund-Deadline for applications is **Tuesday, December 1st**. **Requests will not be accepted after this date.** You can access the Tuition Reimbursement form on the Staff Intranet, under Human Resources, then click on “Human Resources Forms.” This is for coursework taken for transcript credit and completed in the calendar year of 2020 (Spring, Summer, Fall 2020 semesters) can be submitted for tuition reimbursement.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hardiman, chairperson

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

While I do not have an official Social Committee Report, I have attended all Executive Board and Representative Council meetings. I have also provided support and feedback to the head representative at my school as necessary.

I want to take this opportunity to publicly acknowledge the tireless work of Fernway’s school nurse, Louise Haffke. She has advocated for our students and staff to create the safest environment possible for onsite learning in a health pandemic. Mrs. Haffke has created videos for the students and teachers and provided the staff with knowledge to be informed and equipped to best protect ourselves and students from potential exposure to COVID 19. We are so thankful for Mrs. Haffke’s extensive skill set and support!

Respectfully submitted,
Selena Boyer, Chairperson

SUPPORT TEACHERS COMMITTEE

Hello Everyone. I continue the effort to get rid of the “tutor” word to describe Support Teachers. I corrected an Administrative Assistant who used the term and corrected it on the spreadsheet. I heard from an IC Support Teacher who has felt ignored by the SHTA. She thanked me for my work and hopefully is feeling like we are listening to her now. I sent an email to the Support Teachers to clarify the *Negotiations Update* that we recently received. I explained that the email relates to only the SHTA Teachers contract and not the ST contract. Our contract expires on 6/30/21 and negotiations are scheduled for the spring. ST members will be advised at that time.

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret “Peg” Rimedio, Chairperson

SHTA PAC

I proudly voted! I encouraged others to fill out their ballots and helped them get their vote in and counted. I am looking forward to positive changes in the White House which will positively support students and teachers in the next few years to come. I continue to read and post articles on the [SHTA PAC Facebook](#) account pertaining to education, unions and the election.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Cathy Grieshop, Chairperson*

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

I received the HVAC Report from Chief Operating Officer Jeff Grosse on October 9th. Since then, I have

- Read the report countless times
- Distributed building specific sections of the report to each of the Head Reps in every building
- Collected room numbers that were missing or reported erroneously in the report and passed these in to Mr. Grosse for his office to address
- Received reports back from Mr. Grosse about the state of many of the classrooms
- Read and cross referenced the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, and Air-Conditioning Engineers' report [Reopening Schools and Universities](#) with the report to verify best practices for HVAC systems. [A one page version of the report is available here.](#)
- Prepared information from the report, including citations, for the October Exec Board Letter

A sincere thanks to Woodbury Teachers Jackie Conway and Bob Bognar for their work with creating and facilitating the SHTA Facilities Survey. This survey provided SHTA with critical information regarding the state of our school buildings prior to the return of students to in person instruction. Whether or not these important issues are considered by the Board or our Administration as they proceed with their plan, I commend Jackie and Bob for their work with the survey and for advocating for our members.

I used data from the Facilities Survey and included information about expectations for HVAC systems to provide the Board of Education with a report that they discussed at the Emergency Board Meeting last week. [A PDF of the report is available here.](#)

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I sent out a follow up to the Facilities survey via Publications Editor Andrew Glasier and am in the process of putting that data together. It is difficult to say for sure if there have been improvements in every area, as only 159 of the previous 247 people responded to the follow up survey.

I will be meeting with Jeff Grosse and some UH doctors to tour the building.

I continue to respond to members' emails, trying to provide guidance and support for the issues that we are facing with returning to in person instruction. Please continue to reach out as we encounter these issues, both new and old.

*Respectfully Submitted,
James Schmidt, Chairperson*

SALARY TENURE COMMITTEE

I met with SHTA Secretary Darlene Garrison, SHTA Lawyer Susannah Muskovitz, Superintendent Dr. David Glasner, HR Director Barb Maceyak, and District Lawyer Eric Johnson. We spoke with FMCS Mediator Brittany Howard. We set tentative dates for negotiations. Dr. David Glasner and I spoke afterwards and we discussed a one year tentative agreement that featured no increase to the base for one year, but longevity steps for experience and education, no increase to medical benefit contributions, the continuation of the Sick Day Transfer Program, and no changes to any other elements of the contract. I then met again with our Negotiations Team to seek their approval, which was unanimously agreed upon.

There will be question and answer sessions for the SHTA membership on Monday, November 16th from 4 to 5pm for Grades PreK-6 (<https://meet.google.com/hue-wptx-seg?pli=1&authuser=0>) and Tuesday, November 17th from 4pm to 5pm for Grades 7-12 (<https://meet.google.com/gfe-rawc-inf?pli=1&authuser=0>) via Google Meet to discuss the proposed tentative agreement. Members may come with questions at any time during the meetings.

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We believe this tentative agreement is warranted at this time, given the challenges faced by our members and our community. We would like our members to seriously consider the timing and scope of the agreement and approve it.

*Respectfully Submitted
John L. Morris, Chairperson*

The PAC of the SHTA is on 

 *us @*

[*PAC of the SHTA*](#)

MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

November 9, 2020, on Google Meet

SHTA President, John Morris started the November 09th Rep. Council Meeting at 4:31P.M. – Virtually (Google Meet)

Neal Robinson, Principal of Boulevard Elementary School welcomed SHTA membership to the Boulevard virtual meeting. Mr. Robinson thanked members for the work they continue to do for our students. Thank you for welcoming the students back on-site and being engaged in concurrent teaching. You are trailblazers! Shout out to my dear friend Lisa Hardiman. Congratulations on your appointment as the Interim Vice President.

MINUTES from the October 12th, 2020 Rep. Council meeting were approved. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Aimee Grey and the motion was seconded by Paula Klausner.

Administration Report

Director of Human Resources, Barbara Maceyak was present for the Rep. Council meeting.

- Nothing new to report at this time unless there are any questions from the membership.
 - Question from John Morris. “Anything new about subs?” Holding steady on subs, we just posted hiring 8 district subs to be used throughout the district. We are not assigning them to any grade levels.
 - Any information on hiring Lunch Aides and daytime cleaning staff? We are going to start interviewing for daytime cleaning staff. Also, we had 6 people apply for lunch aide positions.

P.T.O. Report

Stacey Hren sent an email - not in attendance

- Sarah and I will miss the meeting today; we don't have an update, but please do share our gratitude with everyone. We're hearing a lot about the amazing, creative, caring ways you are all supporting our students! Thank you!

Officer's Report

President, John Morris

- Toured buildings with Interim Vice President Lisa Hardiman, Professional Rights and Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears along with Superintendent Dr. Glasner, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Robinson, and Chief Operations Officer Jeff Grosse
- Filed a Class Action Grievance on Behalf of members seeking ADA at-home-work accommodations and/or sick leave use.
- Attended the Board Member Work Session.
- Met with the SHTA Executive Board.
- Met with the Representative Council.
- Asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to send out the Executive Board's “Staggered Re-entry Letter”.
- Spoke weekly with Superintendent Dr. Glasner.
- Met with Superintendent Dr. Glasner, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Robinson, and Chief Operations Officer Jeff Grosse to discuss building concerns with SHTA Secretary Darlene Garrison, Interim Vice President Lisa Hardiman, and PR&R Chair Mike Sears.
- Updated SHTA Facebook and Cuyahoga County Union Summit pages.
- Answered members' email questions.
- Attended October Equity Task Force meeting.
- Asked Public Relations Chair Bob Bognar, Woodbury Member Jackie Scanlon, and Occupational Health and Safety Chair James Schmidt to create a Building Facilities Survey.

- Asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to send a Building Facilities Survey to members.
- Asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to share Building Facilities Survey Results to members, administration, and BOE members.
- Attended BOE regular meeting.
- Asked Nurse and Onaway Head Representative Paula Klausner and High School Nurse Paula Damm to be our Nurse Advisors on SHTA communications relating to COVID-19.
- Asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to send out clarification on our Staggered Re-entry Letter with Paula Klausner and Paula Damm’s answers.
- Received confirmation that the Class Action Grievance was denied by the administration.
- Our understanding is that members with previously established FMLA will still be able to use their sick time related to their conditions.
- We will take this ADA issue to arbitration.
- Met again with Dr. Glasner, Jeff Grosse, and Dr. Robinson to discuss building concerns with Darlene Garrison, Lisa Hardiman, and Mike Sears.
- Met again with the SHTA Executive Board.
- Read and recommended that the Executive Board vote to approve the SHTA Nurses “Stop the Spread” campaign. The SHTA Executive Board voted and endorses this campaign.
- Communicated with administration about attendance policy and sick day use during Self-Quarantine and illness in virtual environment.
- After receiving conflicting information from the Central Office, asked Occupational Health and Safety Chair James Schmidt to draft safety recommendations on behalf of the Executive Board and asked Paula Klausner and Paula Damm to review.
- Asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to email SHTA Safety Recommendations to members and administration.
- Attended November Equity Task Force Meeting.
- Communicated with COO Jeff Grosse about accommodations at the schools
- Asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to send out our Negotiations Team Tentative Agreement Announcement.
- Asked Woodbury Nurse Stephanie Smith to join SHTA Nurses Advisory.
- I continue to meet regularly with the other bargaining units in the district to discuss shared concerns.
- Asked James Schmidt, Mike Sears, and Paul Klausner to meet with UH doctors to discuss building safety.
- I met with a member on a Step II Grievance.

Interim Vice President, Lisa Hardiman

- Participated in building walk-throughs with John and Mike.
- Participated in meetings with Dr. Glasner, Dr. Robinson and Mr. Grosse
- Attended many Executive Board meetings.
- Sat with a member at Mercer regarding a special needs student and their movement between the classroom and the special education room.
- Attended pre-negotiations meetings.
- Attended work sessions and BOE meetings.

Secretary, Darlene Garrison

- Please be sure to place a check or “X” on the attendance sheet showing that you are at this meeting.
- Attended many Executive Board meetings.
- Attended work session meetings for school re-entry with Dr. Glasner, Dr. Robinson, Mr. Grosse, Dr. Morris, Mr. Sears and Ms. Hardiman.

- Attended pre-negotiations meetings.
- Met with Negotiations mediator, Dr. Morris, Dr. Glasner, district lawyer and SHTA lawyer.

Treasurer, Bill Scanlon

- Attended re-entry meetings and individual building meetings.
- Attended pre-negotiations meetings.
- Involved with communication with nurses regarding an issue at Boulevard.
- Financial report will be sent and it will be in the newsletter. I had a computer issue and I am not available to share it with you right now.
- Looked up Edward Jones Investments and we are at 1.4 million dollars.

Executive Board Reports

Past President, Becky Thomas

- Going to the Finance and Audit meeting this Thursday, November 12th.
- Tomorrow's BOE meeting has been rescheduled to Tuesday, November 17th. I will be going to that meeting.

Teacher Education, Lisa Hardiman

- Putting in the newsletter important dates the new teachers will need to know.

Legal Aid, Cathy Grieshop

- Met with Executive Board
- Attended BOE meetings
- Helped members at Boulevard set up their classrooms so that they are following safety guidelines
- Helped problem solve with Principal Neal Robinson, it was very helpful and cooperative.
- PAC, continue to read and share articles on Facebook related to education and unions.

Policy, Tim Kalan

- Attended many meetings
- Helped specialists deal with issues revolving around our duties as RLPs and also content teachers.
- Addressing other members' needs in the building.

Public Relations, Bob Bognar

- I have gotten all the masks out and thank you so much for the positive feedback.
- Attended many meetings
- Trying to work with our administration making sure that those of us supporting recess, it is done in a safe, reasonable way.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Angela Goodrum

- Black Teacher Task Force, no conversation because the meeting was canceled. Received comments stating, what is the point of this task force. It doesn't seem important to sit down to have a conversation with teachers of color.
- Concerned about COVID-19 and the risks that people of color are presently under and it has not been addressed.
 - *John Morris thanked Dr. Goodrum for tackling this essential role.*

Legislative, Dave Klapholz

- Our First Lady is a teacher, and Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos is unemployed, so things have gone well recently.
- There is talk that President-elect Biden plans to restore the right of government workers to unionize.

- Here in Ohio, the legislature is looking to change how schools are funded by the end of 2020, we have to see if they actually do it. <https://www.cleveland.com/open/2020/11/with-end-of-ohio-legislative-session-in-sight-lawmakers-put-renewed-effort-into-passing-new-school-funding-formula.html>

Publications, Andrew Glasier

- Emailed membership multiple times
- Updated email lists
- Updated Facebook & Twitter
- Updated SHTAweb.org
- Editorial from SMS Science Teacher Jeremy Bishko & SHHS English Teacher Sharon Craig
- Blurb due November 11th
- Two evaluation issues worked on: 1. If you teach in two buildings you will be evaluated in the building where you have the most students 2. We had teachers whose evaluations were completed prior to COVID shut down, but they were not PINNED therefore returned to Formal evaluation.

Social, Selena Boyer

- No Social Committee Report
- I have been attending all the meetings and dealing with back to school issues
- Fernway Head Rep. Tori Goldfarb has been doing an excellent job for Fernway. It's been great and thank you.

Membership/Elections, Chante Thomas

- Answered a few questions for head reps. Tori Goldfarb and Nicole Ciconnetti, clearing up membership lists.
- Updated new member directory with Publications Chair Andrew Glasier, just to make sure that everyone is receiving the newsletters.
- Continuing to receive dues that I will share with our Treasurer Bill Scanlon.
- Dr. John Morris stated that he will ask Andrew Glasier and SHHS Head Representative James Schmidt to work with me for the contract ratification vote. To make sure everyone gets an online ballot to vote.

Professional Rights and Responsibilities, Mike Sears

- Toured buildings with Dr. John Morris and Lisa Hardiman.
- Attended Executive Board meetings.
- Attended return to school meetings with Dr. John Morris, Lisa Hardiman, and Darlene Garrison.
- Filed a grievance about communication regarding positive COVID-19 cases.
- After the grievance hearing, I received a response that all communication steps requested would be granted, whenever possible.
- Met with the Negotiations team regarding pre-negotiations planning and potential agreement for a 1 year extension.
- Had phone conferences with members taking unpaid leave due to their ADA accommodations requests being denied by HR.
- Assisted Middle School building reps. and members with concerns about requested PPE being set up on time.
- Had a phone conference with a member about how to best handle a positive COVID-19 contact.
- Assisted members in making requests for PPE to COO Jeff Grosse and Senior Administrative Assistant April Abbott.
- Responded to members phone calls and emails about PPE, ADA, and FMLA.

Evaluation, Lena Paskewitz

- Hoping that all members checked eTPes when uploading Professional Growth Plans, to see what their status is for the year. If there are any discrepancies, please let me or Andrew Glasier know.
- Most building administrators may have done a presentation using the slide deck that Director of Human Resources Barb Maceyak created.
- Advocating for us to have a modified focus of evaluations - more support and how teachers are handling this new environment.
- Concerns about completing formal evaluations are going to be challenging this year.
- Worked with Barb Maceyak, Assitant Superintendents Erin Herbruck and Micki Krantz to discuss evaluations of single subject teachers. Agreed that we should have a subset of guidelines. They will need to complete evaluations but possibly modified.

Support Teachers, Peg Remedio

- Continue the effort to get rid of the tutor word to describe Support Teachers.
- Heard from an IC Support Teacher who feels ignored from SHTA.
- Sent an email to Support Teachers to clarify negotiations update that we received. Email relates to the SHTA teacher's contract and not the ST's contract. Our contract expires on June 30, 2021. Negotiations scheduled for the spring.

Special Education, Tito Vazquez

- I met with Director of Exceptional Children Elizabeth Kimmel for our monthly meeting.
- In the meeting, we continued collaboration regarding bringing in students with disabilities for onsite services.
- We discussed ways to support Intervention Specialist and Related Services Providers with safety protocols.
- I worked consistently for the last year with Elizabeth Kimmel to remedy an improved way for parents of Exceptional Children to access IEP progress reports online. I am proud to say; Shaker administration has purchased the *SameGoal* software update to make this possible. This should help every Intervention Specialist and Related Services Providers who work with Exceptional Children, in regards to progress reports. This reduces the extra labor of paperwork that all Intervention Specialists are required to complete, print out and mail every 9 weeks. More information will come soon concerning when this will officially be available for Intervention Specialists to utilize.
- I supported various Intervention Specialists with concerns regarding Face to Face instruction.
- I continue to work with SHHS Dean of Students Mr. Greg Zanelli and Assistant Principal Ms. Jacquelyn Baker, problem solving concerns. Also, I continue to support Ms. Baker's consistent efforts to improve the Exceptional Children Department here at SHHS.
- I attended all SHTA meetings.

Occupational Health and Safety, James Schmidt

- I received the HVAC Report from COO Jeff Grosse on October 9th. Since then, I have
 - Read the report countless times
 - Distributed building specific sections of the report to each of the Head Reps in every building
 - Collected room numbers that were missing or reported erroneously in the report and passed these in to Mr. Grosse for his office to address
 - Received reports back from Mr. Grosse about the state of many of the classrooms
 - Read and cross referenced the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, and Air-Conditioning Engineers' report [Reopening Schools and Universities](#) with the report to verify best practices for HVAC systems. [A one page version of the report is available here.](#)
 - Prepared information from the report, including citations, for the October Exec Board Letter

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Salary Tenure, John Morris

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Building Representative Reports

Boulevard, Angela Anderson

- No Report for Boulevard

Fernway, Victoria Goldfarb

- Met with principal Chris Hayward on 10/13, 10/14, 10/16 to discuss logistics of onsite instruction, protocols, and to address member questions and feedback.
- Helped members set up their classrooms in accordance to guidelines; measuring distances and moving furniture etc.
- Collaborated with Mr. Hayward about classrooms being in the 80s multiple days to solve the issue; he was very responsive in addressing this concern.

- Distributed union masks and additional filters (thank you!!)
- Checked in with Membership Chair Chante Thomas about membership and adjusted distribution list accordingly.
- Facilitated a member getting in touch with PR&R Chair Mike Sears and our principal to address exposure and working from home.
- Met with Mr. Hayward and a member to support in mediating a concern relating to PPE. This was resolved and provided understanding for both parties.
- Sent a google form with options for members to choose how they would prefer to provide feedback.
- Created a Fernway SHTA Open Feedback Google Form for members to ask questions, give ideas, discuss concerns.
- Discussed concerns with Mr. Hayward and members about shared instructional spaces and collaborated to find separate spaces when possible.
- Addressed single-subject teachers' concerns with Mr. Hayward with guidance from James Schmidt and John Morris regarding lunch distribution and assignment. We have brainstormed with our nurse, Louise Haffke (who has been extremely knowledgeable and supportive of our students and staff) and hope to resolve this in a way that addresses member concerns and also provide class lunch coverage. Mr. Hayward has reached out to the district asking for additional staffing since Fernway lost other staffing resources this year that other buildings haven't. Mr. Hayward and I have collaborated with Louise to brainstorm ways to make lunch procedures safer, especially regarding assisting students who need help opening items in their lunch. This concern is still outstanding at this time but will hopefully be resolved soon.
- Confirmed that the new onsite schedule provides members with their 50-minute contractual lunch period for a concerned member.
- Met with Mr. Hayward to discuss member concerns 12/6.
- Clarified student temperature-taking district policies with a member and Mr. Hayward.
- Thank you to the custodial staff for your tireless efforts to keep everyone safe with appropriate cleaning measures.
- Continued collaboration and problem-solving from Mr. Hayward is much appreciated. We look forward to this continued teamwork as we move forward with whatever the remainder of the school year may bring.

Lomond, Donita Al Amin

- We have been working collaboratively with our administration to resolve individual members' issues. Air purifiers were needed where there was no ventilation,
- Principal George Clark has been fantastic addressing each person.
- November 4th, we received window fans, air purifiers and Plexiglas.
- Mr. Clark copied us on all of the responses.

Mercer, Nicole Cicconetti

- Thank you to SHTA for the masks for members!
- I supported members with email communication regarding concerns specific to those members
- I supported members with understanding contract language in multiple areas of the contract to help resolve concerns
- I consistently communicate with members to check in and provide reminders, as applicable
- Frequent communication with Principal Lindsay Florence; he continues to offer open communication and encourages staff to reach out to him regarding PPE concerns
- Concern with the 8:05 AM report time to meet students at their buses/door duty with an 8:00 AM contract time when preparations are needed for onsite and remote students. Items such as, but not limited to: Preparing ~ 2 teacher computers for instruction, plus other technology tools such as the Hovercam, SmartBoard, and/or student Chromebook, opening and setting up all chrome tabs needed for concurrent

instruction, opening classroom windows, checking staff email to address family and/or staff communication prior to the start of the school day. Prior to this school year, staff had approximately 50 minutes of preparation time before students arrived.

Onaway, Paula Klausner

- Concern about start time for teachers, difficult turnaround time. Transportation plays a big role in this problem.
- Work with Director of Exceptional Children Elizabeth Kimmel and various nurses, designing documents/letters to go home to parents when students have symptoms .and contact tracing plans
- My proposed new clinic is not ready yet, still in my old clinic.
- Made comments on the Executive Board document/letter on the return to school.
- Contacted by staff people who work in the lower level, purifiers were found from two-years ago, Merv-8 filters. We need to examine if it is adequate for those areas.
- Masks were a big hit at Onaway, thank you!
- First grade team don't have the new computers. Charging stations will not work with the old chrome books. We were given power strips.

Woodbury, Angela Goodrum

- Working collaboratively with Principal Tiffany Joseph, therefore we have no report to share today.

Middle School, Erika Pfeiffer

- Staff continued reporting PPE concerns as we prepared to open to students. We met with Principal Miata Hunter regarding barriers for student desks and teacher areas to ensure all teachers who needed equipment had it prior to students entering the building. World Language teachers in particular seemed to get left out of the initial PPE distribution, but were equipped Thursday morning.
- Discussed staff wellness concerns with Ms. Hunter re: daily reporting. There is a concern that because teachers are being told they must stay home if they have any one of many health complaints on the district list, that teachers will gamble on coming to work sick because they do not want to be forced to waste sick days. The consensus is that we should still have the option of teaching from home if we have a symptom on the list. If we are ABLE to teach but not PERMITTED to teach, we should not be giving up sick days.
- Room temperature continues to be a problem. Teachers were working in 55 degree rooms with cold air spewing out of the vents one day and were told that maintenance "is aware" but that they were not able to fix it. At the same time, some rooms were so hot that air conditioning (not available to all) had to be turned on to make it bearable.
- Assisted a member with an issue regarding contracted pay for services rendered.
- Teachers continue to express concerns about rotating to multiple rooms. A significant amount of instructional time is being lost in the transitions, the cleaning, the setting up to teach, and then starting to pack up in time to move to the next location.
- Teachers continue to seek clarification on Pod Champions. We are expected to meet with students during Raider Time on Wednesdays each week. Some parents are opting their children out because they have other plans. Others simply do not see the value. Teachers have been given very little guidance as to exactly what we are to be doing with this time beyond a "check-in."

Other continuing (as yet unresolved) concerns include:

- Divided attention (online and onsite) and not knowing which students to "teach to" at any given moment. Because the online students vastly out-number the in-person students, attention is necessarily aimed there.

- Breakfast/lunch orders have been added to some teachers' daily duties. This takes yet more instructional time away and adds another item to the "to do" list. Surely there is a more efficient method that transfers the responsibility off teachers (perhaps a weekly form for families to fill out?)
- Math teachers are facing significant challenges trying to differentiate instruction.
- The stress level is overwhelming and affecting students' experience and our health. Students reported disappointment and disillusionment with the return experience.
- Afternoon bus duty cuts 20 minutes into Raider Time. Buses are very slow and called one at a time. Some teachers were still sitting with students waiting for buses at 4 pm Friday.
- Tech issues (sound, mouse, feedback, etc.) creating barriers to instruction. Difficult to see and hear students behind shower curtains and Plexiglas dividers; poor communication leads to a poor learning environment.
- Para professionals are not able to be as effective in this setting (a breakout room does not compare with a small group face-to-face and in close proximity).
- So many last-minute changes and communication (ex: pod champions, lunch, advisory, etc.) are muddying the waters.
- Community meetings are last minute, fast, and frantic. No time for questions or processing before implementation.
- Inequities between K-4, 5-8, & 9-12 teachers.
- So much extra time is required outside of contract hours to just barely hang on.
- Are we really providing the best educational opportunities to students with concurrent teaching? Would at-home learners benefit from having dedicated online teachers while in-person learners could benefit from the dedicated attention of an in-person only teacher.
- Have we reached our breaking point? Are we at capacity for what we can do well?

High School, James Schmidt

- I continue to meet weekly with Principal Eric Juli about issues related to the High School.
- I, along with SHTA President Dr. John Morris, read the proposed Hybrid Schedule for the High School to verify that it is within the bounds of our contract, which we believe it to be.
- I continue to work with a member about an ongoing grievance, but I am hopeful that it is nearing resolution at Step II.
- I am working to resolve an issue with a member who has a reduced time schedule and should have a teaching schedule that is within the bounds of our contract.
- I am waiting to hear if we have resolved an issue regarding pay for summer work for two members that have been patiently waiting since August to be compensated.
- I continue to work with our building administration, our custodial staff and our members to ensure the least amount of viral spread in our building when we return on November 19th, with all students set to return on November 30th. I still feel that this return to in person instruction which eschews the guidance of the Cuyahoga County Board of Health guidance at even Level 2 (we are now at Level 3 and rising) to remain remote instruction for students in Grades 6 - 12 if cohorting and student group mixing cannot be addressed. I understand that our building administrators are trying to provide us with the safest environment in which to work. I still believe that the safest environment is remote instruction. While all of the safety measures are designed to mitigate the spread of the SARS-CoV-19 virus, there is no guarantee that these measures will prevent spread of the virus. Our faculty will have my full support as they make decisions that are in the best interest of their health and safety.

“Stop the Spread Discussion” - Paula Damm and Paula Klausner
SHAKER HEIGHTS SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITY INITIATIVE
by the School Nurses of Shaker Heights: *Educating not only the children but the community*

What is it? Coordinated community wide communication focused on the Shaker community as a whole being active participants in controlling COVID spread.

The schools are working diligently to do their part to get schools open. It's now the community's turn. New messaging to city, community, school board, PTO, everyone - STOP the SPREAD - hold each other accountable for mask wearing, distancing and no group gatherings. The schools have taken and are taking mitigation strategies but we need to do it with community support.

PARTICIPANTS: Includes but not limited to Mayor, other city leaders, police and fire chiefs, business leaders, school leaders (public and private), educators, school nurses in private schools, foundations, parents, PTO, SHTA, all students within our shaker community, Bellefaire (social-emotional) and others.

HOW? By speaking in one voice with consistent, coordinated, targeted messaging through multiple media platforms.

FOCUS: Education about how community spread is causing move to purple - this spread is primarily around large gatherings, not wearing masks, not social distancing. A challenge around holidays.

Bottom line - if community spread is not stopped, schools will close. No matter what we have done in schools to make them safe. If families want schools to open/stay open, they need to follow guidelines COVID prevention guidelines. Shaker Heights City Schools is trying its hardest. The community must be charged to try their hardest and stop the spread, one family at a time.

New Business

Motion was made by James Schmidt to endorse the “Stop the Spread” campaign. Seconded by Cathy Grieshop, Motion passed

Old Business

- None

Good of the Order

- Thank you to the Executive Board and Rep. Council, we have effectively played our role and shared our collective voices.
- No December Executive Board meeting, no December Rep. Council meeting unless it is necessary.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by James Schmidt, seconded by Tim Kalan.
Meeting adjourned at 5:54PM

Respectfully submitted,
Darlene Garrison, Secretary

Student Safety Must Be Top Priority

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 science teacher, I find it interesting how some scientific theories are widely accepted while others cause controversy. For example, people do not argue about gravity – everyone can rally around its existence without issue. However, evolution, which is just as scientifically sound, is not accepted by a significant chunk of our population. I see the same thing with COVID-19 except it seems that one's beliefs are based upon their political proclivities or preferred narratives.

While everyone agrees that students do best in school, that is under normal conditions. The conditions on the ground are far from normal, and to pretend that we can somehow impose our will and make things normal is both misguided and a fool's errand. A wise person once told me that "acceptance is the answer to all my problems", and that couldn't be truer today. We are in the middle of a pandemic, and while we can control our individual behaviors, everything else is out of our control. To pretend that we can put people back in a building and have it be "school as usual" is simply not possible.

There are many students in our district who are thriving in a remote learning setting and upwards of 30% are choosing to stick with that model for a variety of reasons. Students also need consistency and clear expectations of what lies ahead. Changing their learning setting, especially when the community infection rate is growing does not seem to be in the student's best interest. What we are going through is not ideal, but we are not in an ideal situation. And while some may argue that students are losing instructional time, I would argue that we are all losing things – that is the price we pay to ensure the safety of our fellow community members. I would also posit that instructional time is a vague, nonspecific term.

I know many teachers, including myself, who are refining their curriculum to meet the needs of their students in the virtual model. We are working tirelessly to build connections with students and make the curriculum as engaging as possible. The "horror stories" that we hear others talk about are foreign to the teachers I know – we have not heard anything but positive comments from our families. What hurt was that the way Shaker Heights City Schools Superintendent Dr. David Glasner and the board of education portrayed remote learning as a failure across the board. They never mentioned any of the fantastic feedback that teachers have been receiving daily. That gives the appearance of painting a preferred narrative and not reporting the facts on the ground. They also discussed lost instructional time which we have not seen; in fact, we have gained far more than anyone ever anticipated. For the administration to attempt to shortcut "losses" and get us in the building by not following guidelines, guidelines that have been put in place to slow the spread of a deadly disease puts everyone at increased risk. This is especially problematic (and ironic when considering equity) when the majority of our community is already disproportionately affected by this deadly disease.

To hear parent groups, say that "their child's teacher is excellent, but their child is just not thriving doing remote learning....and they want their child back in school interacting with other kids" shows you how either misinformed or uncaring parts of our community are. When we are back in school, kids cannot interact; they have to stay at least 6' away from one another. I am teaching both to students in a room and at home. Monitoring students in the room and the Zoom chat and the Zoom video concurrently. And to be honest, nobody is thriving right now. But that is a side effect of doing what we need to do, as a community, to keep one another safe during a pandemic. I am sorry you don't like that – not many people do. But it is what mature, responsible people do; sometimes the right thing isn't easy or fun, but it keeps people alive.

I do believe that the district has the students' best interests at heart when they make their decisions. However, I find that their decision to rely less upon the local and state COVID-19 data and more upon their "empirical data" to be fraught with problems. To begin with, the data collected by school districts is self-reported. I am going to repeat that because it is such an important fact. **It is self-reported.** When an individual tests positive for COVID-19, the lab is required to notify the Cuyahoga County Board of Health (CCBOH), **but it is not required, and nor does it, notify school districts.** As every teacher knows, families often never inform the district that their student has lice due to the stigma associated with it. That stigma is much more severe with COVID-19.

Another reason the district numbers are not accurate are because families often don't know that their student is sick; they could be asymptomatic, or just have "a cold or allergies". Add to that the fact that families send their kids to school sick all the time. Thus, when the district makes decisions based upon the "dashboards" of other districts, they are relying on anecdotal data that vastly underreports the reality on the ground. It is the same for their statement that our buildings will have "zero to very low" transmission rates – nobody knows what the rate of transmission is in our buildings and the rates in districts similar to ours are very underreported, as discussed above. Self-reported data is not dependable data.

There is also a lack of robust and comprehensive contact tracing at the county and state level and we don't know where spread is occurring – to state otherwise is simply not based on data. Students will be eating lunch in rooms, many of which have no active air ventilation. The virus does not know or care that one is eating lunch and not wearing a mask (or that you are playing a wind instrument in band. Yes. Band). Students are also not 100% compliant at all times – many adults are not, which is why we are seeing the level of infections that we are. Simply put, there will be spread in schools – to say otherwise is incorrect at best and purposefully deceptive at worst. An item that goes along with this, that is not discussed, is that students WILL bring home this illness and spread it to their family and community much of which is already disproportionately affected.

While every single person in our fantastic district wants the very best for our students, it is unfortunate that it has become so divisive. I would hope that we would make decisions based upon the most robust and reliable data possible. We would never make curricular or testing decisions based upon anecdotal data, but that is what the district is doing and it will impact the health and safety of the entire community. The county and the state have systems in place to collect and analyze data and accompanying guidelines to follow. To ignore both the data and guidelines to better fit a narrative that is more desirable is both irresponsible and not what we as teachers have been instructed to do. We have always been told to make data-based decisions; I would love to see the district follow suit.

I would love to see all sides come together, put politics aside and do what is best for our community, and at this time, that is doing what is safest. There is no better time for us collaborate and do what's best for all stakeholders. That might mean making courageous decisions that aren't popular with a small but vocal group of stakeholders and instead doing what is safest for *all* stakeholders. At the end of the day, I think back to the Bioethics class I took with science teacher Mr. Bob Hoskins when I was a student at Shaker Heights High. He always praised the utilitarian way of looking at things; cost-benefit ratios. What is worse: students receiving the best education possible remotely, or students receiving the same education in school? (Except I will sound like Charlie Brown's teacher because I will have protective mask and shield and speak from behind a shower curtain) in school?

If we go back in the building, we will be promoting the spread of a deadly disease and we will likely realize the statistical probability that staff and students and community members will get sick and possibly die. We should never put politics before science, especially when lives hang in the balance. While this might sound dramatic, it is not intended to be – when people get sick and if lives are lost because of this decision to open schools based upon anecdotal data, blood will be on the hands of those who made the decision.

Jeremy Bishko, Science Teacher, Shaker Heights Middle School

A Compassionate Response

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 we begin our process of heading back into the buildings for the sake of our students, I would be remiss if I did not express my growing concern for friends and colleagues—people who feel that their voices have been stifled and perhaps silenced in this process.

As numbers of COVID-19 patients rise in our county, vulnerable populations have to take greater precautions. There are staff who know that Plexiglas and a shower curtain are not enough to guarantee that they will have their life at the end of the year. They are afraid—and rightfully so. If you are not one of these people, you do not understand the anxiety that comes with having to return. The fear that swells in your throat when you imagine the stalker COVID-19 finding you, seizing your lungs, putting you on a respirator and leaving you in the hospital to fight alone, your preexisting condition making it likely that you could die.

So much care and compassion has been rightfully extended to students and their families—where is such care and compassion for staff? Currently, a parent can decide the risk is too great for their student. As a district, you have given them a clear option of comfort--keep their student home. Where is such an option for our most vulnerable staff members?

In truth, such a choice does not exist for staff. Sure, one could take leave, surrender the students they have been working so hard for, abandon their calling, lessen or eliminate their pay and jeopardize their standing and reputation in the district to take leave and avoid the possible contraction of the virus. But is that really a choice?

I not only want my colleagues safe, I want them alive. They are dedicated professionals. They are teachers with experience and wisdom, with great ambition and tremendous energy. They are servant leaders who are willing to go over and beyond for students. They are human beings inspiring me every day. They are people who deserve greater protection as numbers rise. They are not expendable.

I know that your reaction to my words might be to roll your eyes or to draw upon the heavy evidence of the countless individuals who have given so much time and effort to make our buildings safe. This is not a denial nor an indictment on that effort. This is a plea for the district to recognize that for some people—that just simply is not enough. That for some, the risk is still too high. Please consider them. They deserve additional options.

Despite qualifying for accommodation, I will come into the building. I will take all safety measures and put my life at risk. I recognize that I have no choice. However, I am pleading with the district to consider other staff, others who are just as vulnerable--if not more so. They deserve a fair option. They deserve a compassionate option.

Please consider our true mission as an institution of education, as educators and models for the students that we serve. Let's remember what we preach of empathy and extend to our vulnerable teachers what we have provided for our families--a fair and compassionate option.

Sharon Craig
English Teacher
Shaker Heights High

****As of 11/11/2020 this writer would like to acknowledge that the district has made steps toward more compassionate options for teachers. While those who are most vulnerable continue to need additional measures, decisions that have been made go a long way for some people.*

Another Sleepless Night

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It's currently 4:58 in the morning. I gave up on sleeping, again. I realized getting my thoughts out on paper might be more productive than staring at the wall in my bedroom. Not sleeping is the new normal these days. I keep thinking, what is it that is keeping me awake?

It could be the fact that I personally know five people with COVID-19 currently. My best friend has coronavirus right now. When I texted her yesterday to ask how she was, she responded that she is frustrated with the fact that she is not recovering as quickly as she would like. I worry for her and her family.

It could be the dreaded feeling that I have that I have to go teach in person when our state hit 8071 COVID cases yesterday. 8071! Remember when we were shut down and there were 1200? That seems like a dream. 8071 coronavirus cases in one day. I was looking at the state map and every single county has an H in it for high incidence. Every. Single. County. The COVID ICU cases have gone up a full 2% in 6 days. The district keeps talking about how the community spread is not in the school setting, but I read an article today where the Ohio Department of Health reported 2,808 new cases of coronavirus among students and staff this week. I am deeply concerned by this.

It could be the fact that I am not able to spend time with people. My in-laws came over yesterday. They only see us outside now. I put masks on my kids so that they can hang out with their grandparents outside for 20 minutes and not give them coronavirus now that I am teaching in person. I have not been able to bring myself to call my parents to tell them we will not be coming for Christmas. My mom will be so sad it brings tears to my eyes just thinking about it.

It could be the fact that just being at the school is stressful. There is the kid who does not abide by the six feet distance requirement, does not want to just sit at her desk all day, and definitely does not understand that other kids do not want to be touched by others right now. Or maybe she does understand, and it is now my task to get her to change these behaviors. I think every teacher in the building has a student like this; maybe a couple. It is truly terrifying and exhausting to think that I am responsible to provide an education and keep all of these small people safe from this terrible, horrible virus. If I had time, I would keep a tally of how many times I say, "Pull your mask up" in one hour of the school day.

It could be, and I think this is a large for me, the empty questions asked of me. And by this, I mean that somehow with all of the above happening in our world as teachers, we have certain people in administration who ask you, "How are you?" It is a nice gesture, I suppose. A gesture as it seems they are expecting the

response of, “Fine.” I am not fine. I am not well. I am not ok. It would be easier for me to have some sort of admiration for administrators if they were somehow able to understand this fact. Or, maybe, if they were not asking me this via a Google Meet from the sanctity of their personal office.

No, in fact, I am very unwell. I am very stressed. I am tired. I am constantly dealing with terrible anxiety. I am, frankly, scared out of my mind. The meetings that I dread are the ones where the administration asks us the empty “How are you?” question and then blows on to the meeting agenda as if it were business as usual. None of this is business as usual. Sometimes I wonder if they know that I have not been to the grocery store in months, but here I am gathering inside with a group of students. I wonder if they know the worry I feel about kissing and snuggling with my small children at home. I should clarify that it is not all administration. We have a wonderful, supportive principal and assistant principal here who I truly believe understand and lose sleep over the stress themselves. But generally speaking, it would be really helpful if we stopped pretending that any of this is normal and stop with the empty concern for how I am really doing.

Meredith Miller
Lomond School
Intervention Specialist

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