

IMPORTANT DATES

Monday, October 21: Board of Education Work Session

Thursday & Friday, October 31 & November 1: K-12 Conferences (No Classes)

Monday, November 4: SHTA Executive Board Meeting - Woodbury

Tuesday, November 5: Election Day (Schools Closed)

Monday, November 11: SHTA Representative Council Meeting - Boulevard

SHTA *news*

October 21, 2024

Message from the President

“Nostalgia is the enemy of progress.” I had a great professor of educational history at Cleveland State who shared this idea with our class. I shared the same notion at a recent meeting and it resulted in some discord. One meeting attendee defended the idea that tradition is not the enemy of progress. To a certain extent I agree, but I believe we have to examine how nostalgia can often hold us back. For example, our community’s resistance to safety measures such as weapons detection in our schools can be directly related to collective nostalgia.

I understand. I didn’t have weapons detection in my schools growing up. But back then, Ohio didn’t have some of the most relaxed gun regulations in the nation (<https://everytownresearch.org/rankings/state/ohio/>). We didn’t have widely available assault-style rifles flooding the gun market (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/alisondurkee/2022/07/20/record-28-million-ar-15-and-ak-style-rifles-entered-us-circulation-in-2020-gun-group-says/>), Columbine and its legacy of school shootings, and the complete repeal of conceal and carry laws (<https://www.nbc4i.com/news/local-news/how-ohios-gun-landscape-has-changed-since-permitless-carry-took-effect/>). Obviously, commercial venues have taken the note. Progressive Field, the Browns Stadium, and The Rocket Mortgage Field House all have weapons detection systems to ensure that their patrons are safe. Even the happiest place in the world, Disneyland, employs some of the most advanced metal detection systems available (<https://www.ocregister.com/2020/10/03/disneyland-tests-new-contactless-metal-detectors-to-speed-visitors-through-security-checkpoints/>). Shouldn’t our children benefit from the same security measures we would expect at a Guardians’ game or at Epcot Center?

Besides nostalgia, the unspoken fear in our community is that adding weapons detection to our schools might reduce our reputation in the area. We will suddenly become like “other districts” who have resorted to these safety measures. I think this way of thinking deserves examination and scrutiny. What are we implying about other districts? About ourselves? Do we really think there is a magic bubble surrounding Shaker because we believe it to be so? Recent events across the district, especially at the High School, suggest otherwise. Sadly, we saw the same issue at [Cleveland Heights High School](#) a few weeks ago.

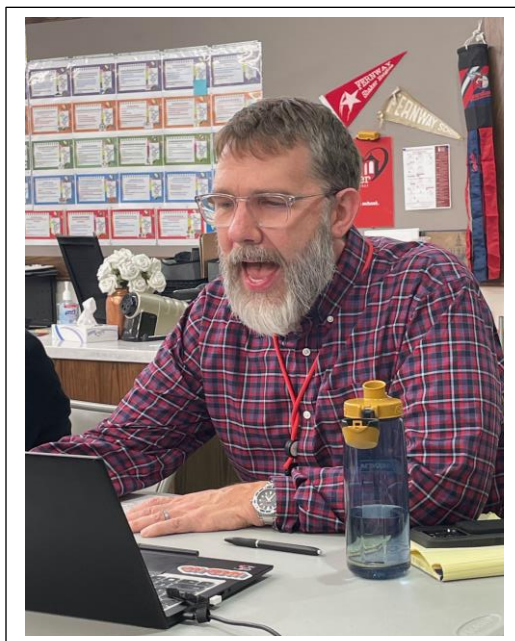
I remember when we added the Jack Rumbaugh rotunda to the front of the High School, and the parking lot that accompanied the build. There were both students and residents who believed the High School would never recover from the change. We did. So much so that some of those same former students can’t remember the front of the building any differently. I know weapons detection is, in its way, a more profound change.

However, I would argue that the payoff in increasing the safety of our students is a more profound benefit than an increase in parking space.

The fall is always eventful. I spoke with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner regularly. I communicated with Human Resource Director Dr. Tiffany Joseph. I updated the SHTA Facebook page with Publications Editor Andrew Glasier. I attended a Woodbury planning meeting with SHTA Vice President Darlene Garrison. I worked with Building Safety and Sick Day Transfer Chair Matt Zucca on building concerns. I communicated with Assistant Superintendent Jeff Grosse on Safety and Facility concerns. I spoke with members about Association concerns. I worked with members with legal concerns with SHTA Lawyer, Susannah Muskovitz. I worked with an IC member on facility and safety issues. I attended a Fact-Finding meeting with a member. I communicated with Special Education Chair Tito Vazquez on Intervention Specialists' concerns. I attended a Union Leadership meeting with leaders of the district's bargaining units along with SHTA Vice President Darlene Garrison, Dr. Glasner, Assistant Superintendent Felicia Evans, Assistant Superintendent Jeff Grosse, and Technology Director John Rizzo. After events at Cleveland Heights High School, I asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to share my commentary on school safety with SHTA members and administration.

I do not intend to be flippant or dismissive about our sense of tradition in Shaker. It's one of the reasons I've worked here for nearly 30 years, moved here with my family, and send my own children to our schools. But I also know we live in a different world than when I first arrived. As always, our schools become the meeting point between policy and practice as related to so many political and social realities in our state, nation, and world. That's why I and our SHTA Executive Board have made our previous position on district safety measures (<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/mUyevgCez5GJF8Zq/>), and why I am reiterating them now. I am happy that we have a High School Principal, Eric Juli, and a publication, the Shakerite (<https://shakerite.com/.../taking-security-to-the.../27/2024/>), that stands alongside us. I urge the School Board to take action and install weapons detection in all of our schools.

*Respectfully submitted,
John Morris*



OFFICERS' REPORTS

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

My favorite season is here. I absolutely love fall; cooler temperatures, beautiful outdoor colors and the taste of caramel apple cider. This is the time of year when our school days feel overloaded. Please remember to take time for yourself and enjoy each day. Self-care is a priority.

During the month of September, I processed and mailed checks to our winners of the Dr. Rebecca L. Thomas Fellowship Grant. For the 2023-2024 school year, we had 51 fellowship recipients, and 32 members submitted receipts for their \$100 reimbursement checks. The new application for the 2024-2025 school year was shared with our membership on Monday, October 14th. If you are planning to submit an application for the Dr. Rebecca L. Thomas Fellowship Grant, please submit your Google Form by Monday, November 4th. All winners will be selected during a random drawing on Monday, November 11th. Only members of the SHTA are eligible to participate in the drawing for the fellowship grant. All winners will be awarded a fellowship grant for up to \$100 each. Winners will be notified by the district email and all names will appear in the November Newsletter. The \$100 Dr. Rebecca L. Thomas Fellowship Grant can be used for but not limited to the following items listed below:

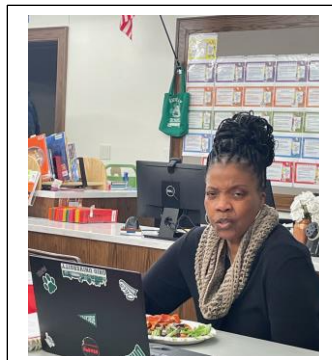
- Seminars
- Professional conferences
- Course work
- Membership fees for professional associations excluding the SHTA Membership Dues
- Professional development materials

On September 20th, I attended the Woodbury Campus Design Leadership Launch Meeting. We met the architects who are designing the plans for the new middle school. The first PTO meeting of the 2024-2025 school year took place on Tuesday, October 01st. Members of the PTO Council shared reports regarding individual school activities and events. MLK Jr. Day activities were discussed briefly. I did inform the PTO Council that we would like representation from the PTO at our Rep. Council meetings and I shared a sincere thank you for the delicious lunch provided by the PTO at the beginning of the school year.

I attended the SHTA Executive Board Meeting at Fernway on Monday, October 7th. On October 8th, I attended an Investment Committee meeting with SHTA Treasurer Bill Scanlon, Membership Chair Chante Thomas, Union Member Todd Keitlen, and Financial Advisor Brady Krebs. In the afternoon of October 8th, I attended a Union Leadership meeting with President Dr. John Morris. Our negotiation team met on Wednesday, October 9th to begin preparations for the upcoming IBB Negotiations.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Enjoy your upcoming Parent Conferences and the beautiful fall weather!

***Respectfully submitted,
Darlene Garrison***



SECRETARY'S REPORT

Fall has fallen! At this point in the year, the honeymoon with the students is clearly over and it feels like we never left!

It has been busy lately, and for the eight members of SHTA's negotiating team, it's about to get even busier. Having the opportunity to negotiate our contract with members of the administration is arguably the most important job of our Association. Many professions do not have this right. Among the numerous reasons that collective bargaining is crucial to our profession is the protection of educators' rights, improving and ensuring good working conditions, receiving fair pay, addressing recruitment and retention of new teachers, and improving student learning. Collective bargaining benefits everyone connected to the school and it gives teachers a voice!

Each month I send invitations to SHTA's executive board for our monthly meetings at Fernway. I also send members of the SHTA Representative Council invitations to monthly meetings that take place at different buildings around the district.

This month I communicated with Professional Rights and Responsibilities Chair Michael Sears about a member's question regarding taking a personal day between Rosh Hashanah and the weekend. I also discussed the language in the contract about this issue with other members.

I attended Mercer's Building Committee meeting this month and a big topic was the condition of our printers. We were able to obtain a replacement for one of the printers, but the other one is constantly breaking down which causes major problems. Principal Roneisha Campbell has been working to help this situation and we all have our fingers crossed.

I attended a pre-negotiations meeting where each member shared findings of their research. We also discussed a survey that will be coming out in the next few days that all SHTA members should complete. This will help to guide our conversations during negotiations.

I am again emphasizing ongoing problems with the elementary schedule this year. Although last year, some of SHTA's Executive Board members had productive discussions with Assistant Superintendent Felecia Evans and other administrators which resulted in eliminating last year's A-E schedule, this new schedule is also very problematic. We all worked hard but the problems are still not resolved. Again, given that teachers now have 30 minutes less of planning time in the morning, and we often have required meetings 3-4 times per week during our 50-minute planning period during the school day, there is simply not enough time to prepare to educate students, which is what we are still charged with doing. Many have said that two of these meetings could be combined into one and/or be completed virtually. Numerous members have expressed that these mandated meetings are simply not giving us what we need to improve our practice. Given all of the new and old responsibilities that we have been given, with input from teachers, meetings could be restructured so that our time is better utilized and in turn, teaching and learning improves.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to reach out to your building representatives or me.

*Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hardiman*

TREASURER’S REPORT

On September 30th, I attended a League of Women Voters program titled The Impact of Gerrymandering on Education in the Heights. It was troubling seeing the effects that redistricting has had on our profession in Ohio. One school program they highlighted was School Vouchers:

Voucher Explosion Trends

School District	2022-2023 Enrollment	2023-2024 Enrollment	2022-2023 Voucher Count ¹	2023-2024 Voucher Count ¹	YOY Voucher Change
Aurora (Portage)	3,043	3,035	3	87	2,800%
Nordonia (Summit)	3,441	3,424	20	456	2,180%
Westlake City	3,251	3,264	41	829	1,922%
Strongsville City	5,484	5,504	61	905	1,384%
Shaker Heights	4,451	4,442	28	156	457%
Cleveland Heights	5,009	4,921	209	465	123%
Cuyahoga County	129,996	128,311	2,490	10,763	332%
Ohio	1,671,675	1,665,621	23,272	88,231	279%

¹EdChoice Expansion Vouchers Only

Attending this presentation solidified the importance of my vote on Issue 1 coming up in the election. If you’d like to learn more about this topic, here is a link to the [LWV slide deck](#) from the program.

On October 8th, the Investments Committee, made up of Darlene Garrison, Chante Thomas, Todd Keitlen, and myself, met with Brady Krebs, our Edward Jones advisor to examine our investments. The Investments Committee meets a minimum of twice a year, once in the Fall and once in the Spring, to review our investments and decide on any changes. A full financial report will be included in November’s newsletter. If anyone has any questions about our Association’s finances, please give me a call (216-333-2627).

*Respectfully submitted,
Bill Scanlon*

The SHTA is on   *us @*
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Shaker-Heights-Teachers-Association>

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES REPORT

The Supplemental Committee met on September 24 to approve new proposals. Human Resources won't send out contracts until final Board approval. If you still haven't received your contract, please contact both your building principal and Human Resources Specialist Nellie Brown (brown_n@shaker.org) for clarification. The committee meets again on November 7. The Insurance Committee meets for the first time this school year on October 30.

During the past month, I attended all the September and October Executive Board and Representative Council meetings. I also continued a research project for the collective bargaining team, and participated in a meeting with the team on October 9. I worked with SHTA President John Morris to schedule a meeting on October 28 with high school athletic directors and coaches regarding supplemental contracts for athletics. I spoke with high school head building representative Jessica O'Brien several times about step one grievances at the high school. All of them were resolved before going to step two. I also spoke with Ms. O'Brien about a member's supplemental contract for a student club and a member's questions about worker's compensation. These matters were also resolved to the satisfaction of the members involved. I met with middle school head building representative Kevin Thomas about a member's personal day being denied after Rosh Hashanah. I am concerned that some members have their personal day requests approved before or after a holiday and others do not. I will continue to work on this problem, and report again in November based on my findings. I also spoke with Mr. Thomas about offering support for members involved in investigatory/fact finding meetings with administrators. I spoke with a member who had questions about retirement.

While reviewing one of the high school grievances, Jessica O'Brien and I noticed a potential contract violation related to policies and procedures. Since the school district now has an employee handbook that covers all employees district-wide, building principals might be violating Article VI School Procedures (see below) because they are no longer publishing school procedures. The employee handbook does not include procedures for each building, and if they are not provided by building principals (as specified in 6.01 below) there is great potential for uncertainty. If you know that your building does not have "published procedures", please contact me at sears_m@shaker.org.

ARTICLE VI - SCHOOL PROCEDURES

6.01 Each principal will provide their staff and the SHTA with that school's published procedures at the beginning of the school year. Any change to those procedures will be made available to the SHTA and the staff as soon as possible. Additionally, prior to the end of September, the principal shall distribute to the teachers to be evaluated information about evaluation which will include the evaluation form, expectations regarding observations, and the procedures to be followed. Evaluation forms shall be available online. A copy of such information shall be provided to the SHTA Building Representative.

Recent developments (two students carrying handguns) at Cleveland Heights High School prompted discussions among SHTA Executive Board members about safety and security measures here in the Shaker schools. My daughter is a senior at Cleveland Heights High School, and she is now required to pass through a metal detector each morning at school. I believe this is a necessary step to keep students and employees safe, and I strongly encourage our administrators and Board members to add metal detectors at the high school. My daughter told me it's like going through TSA at the airport, but faster. She also believes it's a good idea. We live in a state that allows adults to carry weapons almost everywhere without a permit. If an 18 year-old

student can legally carry a gun while shopping at Target, should it surprise us when a 17 or 18 year-old student shows up at a high school carrying a handgun?

*Respectfully submitted,
Mike Sears, chairperson*

EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Greeting colleagues and friends! Thank you for the continued opportunity to serve the Association as the Evaluation Chair. In this position, I serve as co-facilitator of the Evaluation Committee with Human Resources Director, Tiffany Joseph. I also work with Andrew Glasier and Addie Tobey to coordinate the Peer Evaluation Program. While I am on leave, Addie Tobey will be co-facilitator of the Evaluation Committee. All members of the committee and I are available to answer your evaluation questions and concerns. I will continue to communicate information about evaluation procedures through this newsletter and during SHTA Representative Council Meetings.

All buildings should have staff meetings to review the [Evaluation OTES Overview](#) slides by September 30. These slides serve as a resource for both teachers and evaluators as they engage in the evaluation process. There are numerous links to videos, examples of forms, the High Quality Student Data menu, and Ohio Evaluation System (OES) support.

All teachers evaluated with OTES should have completed the Annual Professional Growth Plan (PGP) in the Ohio Evaluation System (OES) by October 15th. The expectation is for two goals to be created this year. Teachers who have “Self-Directed” Professional Growth Plans or who are participating in the Peer Evaluation Program are not required to work with building administrators to create these plans, nor do they need to be approved by building administrators. Self-Directed goals are created and edited only by the educator. The OES indicates the educator's Professional Growth Plan status at the top of the PGP page. This plan should be discussed and reviewed throughout the year with your evaluator. Also, be sure to review the OES site and forms, as well as check your evaluation cycle and listed evaluator asap.

The effective use of High Quality Student Data (HQSD) is a part of the evaluation process. Teachers will need to:

- Choose two sources from the [HQSD Instrument Menu](#). The Evaluation Committee will approve additional instruments, as needed. Teachers who have Value-Added data must use it as ONE of their sources.
- Complete the HQSD Verification Form on the Ohio Evaluation System. The HQSD form link is on the left under the Professional Growth Plan on each teacher's evaluation overview page. Teachers should add the two measures they will use.
- Familiarize themselves with the OTES Rubric, particularly the references to use of data.
- Conference with their evaluators about their use of data, HQSD and otherwise. The HQSD slides in the above linked deck have specific questions aligned to rubric elements. It is strongly recommended that teachers consider these questions as they prepare for evaluation conferences.

Your evaluator should be reaching out to you soon, if they haven't already done so. First observations for those on a Full Cycle should take place before winter break to avoid a time crunch in January. If you haven't heard from your evaluator by the end of October to schedule your observation, please reach out to me, or another member of the evaluation committee.

The Peer Evaluation Program has well over 100 educators, counselors, and nurses participating across the district. It is exciting that this program continues to thrive as a unique professional learning opportunity. Peer Evaluation participants have been coded in OES, unless re-credentialing is still in progress for an

evaluator. Please double check that you have access to your partner's evaluation so that any errors can be corrected right away.

The Evaluation Committee in September reviewed revised evaluations for Librarians and Gifted Intervention Specialists and gave comments and suggestions for review by both groups. The second revisions have been submitted to the Committee and are under review now, before they go to the Committee for a vote.

As always, I am here to help answer teacher and evaluator questions and navigate any part of the process with you, as are all members of the committee.

Respectfully submitted,
Lena Paskewitz, chairperson

SPECIAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Over the past month, I met with the Director of Student Services Dr. Meghan Shelby over special education concerns across the district. I worked with SHTA President Dr. John Morris, over Special Education concerns. I discussed an issue of equity for students at The Innovative Center for Personalized Learning (I.C.) with I.C. Coordinator Mr. Isaiah Wyatt. I represented a member concerning classroom size and safety concerns at Lomond Elementary. I spoke with members who have issues concerning job placement, personnel issues and work options. I have communicated with Shaker Heights High School Exceptional Children Department Chairs Tana Thompson and Keesha Bryant over concerns at the high school. I continue to work collaboratively with administrators for the benefit of both students and teachers.

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

POLICY COMMITTEE

Last May, our Association voted to amend some of the By-Laws in our constitution. One of those amendments concerned By-Law IV ADMINISTRATION. A section was added concerning the activities of Head Building Representatives. Part 3 states:

Regular Representatives will continue to receive a per meeting stipend for the monthly Representative Council meeting, while Head Representatives shall receive one per meeting stipend for attending the Representative Council meeting AND an additional per meeting stipend for a monthly meeting with building administration before the Representative Council meeting.

Note that the Head Building Representative should now be compensated for meeting with the administrator during the course of their duties. Your meeting with the administrator will be tallied alongside the meetings with the Representative Council, and paid at the conclusion of the year.

Respectfully submitted,
Tim Kalan, Chairperson

MEMBERSHIP/ELECTIONS COMMITTEE.

At this time, you should have noticed your first dues deduction if they are paid via payroll deduction. Members who select payroll deduction shall have ten (10) equal deductions (\$33.00) starting with the first pay in October of the current school year.

At this time, we have 465 members of SHTA.

In order to have accurate and complete records, I am counting on you to alert me to changes in membership so that I can update our records. If you need a current copy of the building spreadsheet, please email me and I will send it to you.

The 2024-2025 Representative Council Elected Members are:

Boulevard- **Cathy Grieshop**, Heather Pincoe (WO)

Onaway- **Noreen Smyth-Morrow**, Stacey DeYoung (WO), Alison Colvin (Pre-K)

Fernway- **Jamie Harden**, Lee Appel(WO)

Lomond- **Kelly Grahl**, Lauren Meek, Sherri Jarvie (WO)

Mercer- **Eileen Sweeney**

Middle School- **Kevin Thomas**, Erika Pfeifer, Melissa Albrecht and Marie O’Leary Stark (WO)

High School – **Jessica O’Brien**, Jayce Bailey, Cathay Szendrey, Enid Vazquez, Adam Cohen, Aimee Grey, Joel Rathbone, Raina Li (WO)

IC- Anne Hay

*Respectfully submitted,
Chante Thomas, chairperson*

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

As we approach the conference season, teachers need to understand how to talk to parents of color about their child. A teacher should prioritize open communication, cultural sensitivity, positive reinforcement, and a focus on the child's individual strengths and needs, avoiding stereotypes and assumptions, while actively listening and creating a collaborative partnership to support the student's success. Both parents and teachers have the same goal to promote the best academic setting for students.

The article [*the 4 C's for Better Student Engagement*](#), gives us a look at ensuring that all students are given the best opportunity to be successful in the classroom. The article reviews ways to engage all students regardless of their background. We can build relationships, cultivate high expectations, relinquish control, and challenge all students to think critically and outside of the box. However, unless we work collaboratively with students, we will continue to see a widening of the achievement gap.

Food for thought: Did you know a disabled Black woman invented the walker, toilet paper and other essential items? Mary Davidson Kenner, was an industrious inventor in spite of her ailments and contributed “must haves” for many today

*Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Angela Goodrum*

NEW TEACHER COMMITTEE

Hello everyone. I have some important deadlines and information to share with you. [SALARY RECLASSIFICATION](#) happens twice a year, in November and April. The due date for submissions is TWO WEEKS prior to that month's Board meeting. For [Salary Reclassification](#) as noted on the "Request for Salary Reclassification" Form: "Recommendations regarding salary class changes are presented to the Board of Education at the April and November meetings. Coursework should be completed and the official transcript and request for salary reclassification form must be received by the Human Resources office no later than two weeks prior to the April or the November Board of Education meeting date." November submissions are due now, in time for the November 1st Board Meeting. Along with the form, you will need to submit an **official transcript**.

The district also offers tuition reimbursement. [TUITION REIMBURSEMENT](#) forms are due by December 1st. For [Tuition Reimbursement](#) as stated in the SHTA Collective Bargaining Agreement: "25.03 All teachers completing graduate level work shall submit to the Director of Human Resources the necessary documentation demonstrating the successful completion of such coursework prior to December 1 of each calendar year." Along with the form, you will need a **receipt of payment**, which can be the original receipt or a credit card statement.

[OPEN ENROLLMENT](#) for our Medical Mutual Insurance is November 1-16th. Both forms are linked, but you can also find them by going to the Staff Intranet, going to the Human Resources & Benefits sections, and selecting Human Resources Forms.

For members that have questions about Continuing Contracts (Tenure), please see below. As per Ohio Revised Code 3319.08 the following is the eligibility requirements to be evaluated for a Continuing Contract.

As per Ohio Revised Code 3319.08, the following is the eligibility requirements to be evaluated for a Continuing Contract (Tenure)

CONTINUING CONTRACT GUIDELINES for ELIGIBILITY ORC- 3319.08

MUST HAVE 5 YEAR LICENSE Received Educator License **Prior to** January 1, 2011

- Work in Shaker 3 of last 5 years
- MA at time of ODE License - needs 6 additional hours
- BA at time of ODE License - needs 30 additional hours

MUST HAVE 5 YEAR LICENSE Received Educator License **After** January 1, 2011

- Work in Shaker 3 of last 5 years
- Must have Educator License for 7 years
- MA at time of ODE License - needs 6 additional hours
- BA at time of ODE License - needs 30 additional hours

MUST HAVE 5 YEAR LICENSE

****IF NEW HIRE HAD CC IN ANOTHER OHIO DISTRICT**

- **MUST WORK IN SHAKER FOR 2 YEARS**

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

*Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Lewis*

SHTA PAC COMMITTEE

This month the SHTA PAC has been working on posting Facebook messages regarding the November election. It has developed a neutral summary of Issue 1 and the presidential candidate's stance on many issues to help members be informed and prepared to vote (see pages 27-30).

We strongly encourage all members to create an election plan to ensure you can cast your ballot in this election. Your local county Board of Elections has information to support voters. You can view your local ballot, check your registration status, and verify your voting location through the Board of Elections. Vote like your life depends on it. Our kid's future is counting on us.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Eileen Sweeney & Jessica O'Brien*

BUILDING SAFETY & SICK DAY TRANSFER COMMITTEE

This month I fielded questions from various members regarding the Sick Day Transfer program. If you have any questions, please refer to Side Letter B in our negotiated agreement, the “contract”. I reached out to a member to remind them that under their contract they are supported by the SHTA. In times that cause high levels of frustration we often direct our frustration at people who are not the root cause of the frustration. Please remember to support your fellow SHTA members.

I gathered information from K-5 Head Building Reps. to understand norms across the district pertaining to various building meetings. I found many differences and discrepancies between the buildings that could be described as inequitable and unfair at least. During these conversations I reminded SHTA members to work the contract hours. If I were asked to attend an administrative meeting outside the contract hours, and the compensation does not fit the value I have for my time, I personally would decline attending the meeting. I also had many conversations regarding the hardships that K-5 teachers are experiencing with the lack of actual planning time. To those feeling the pinch of the lack of planning, you can only do so much during your contractual day; do your best during that time. When your hours are done at school the rest of the day is yours, not the district's.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Matt Zucca, Chairperson*

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

This month I wanted to highlight some proposed bills and items on November ballots. Also, remember to **vote on Tuesday, November 5th!**

- **HB 595** - A new bill was drafted in August by Ohio legislators and education advocates proposing the state adopt universal pre-k. While this bill is currently in House Financing Committee hearings, the goal is to vote on the bill before the end of the year. ([more info here](#))
- **H.R. 3724** - In the U.S. House of Representatives this proposed bill has been dubbed the “End Woke Higher Education Act.” The proposed bill moves to bar the requirement of D.E.I. programs at colleges and universities. Although this bill has passed in the House of Representatives, it will likely not pass in the Senate. However, it should be noted that D.E.I. continues to be a targeted policy of certain politicians. ([more info here](#))
- **SB 29** - Passed in November of 2023, SB 29 needs to be effectively implemented in every Ohio district by October 2024. Under this law, schools need to disclose to families the technology tools their students

have access to and only a district's central office will be authorized to add a program to a student device. Additionally, it moves to protect student data and privacy from technology developers by ensuring only the district maintains access to this information. ([more info here](#))

- **Ballot Watch: Private School Choice** - Although this issue is not on Ohio's ballot, it should be noted that a number of states have issues in their November election regarding private school choice. This article notes that the Ohio Supreme Court's election may prove to have an effect on the outcome of this challenged policy and the use of vouchers from June from a number of school districts. ([more info here](#))
- **Ballot Watch: Ohio's Issue 1** - This article provides an overview of Issue 1, which moves to redistrict the state through the creation of an independent commission council instead of the current council which consists of only politicians. Many people question the current districting policies and cite that they have led to gerrymandering. Note that the bill language is confusing, so please pay attention to the language. ([more info here](#))

Respectfully Submitted,
Matt Klodor

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

As the Public Relations Chair, I have taken on the important task of preparing the congratulatory advertisement for the merit scholarship recipients that will be featured in the upcoming issue of Shaker Life magazine. This ad will serve as a celebratory recognition of the hard work and academic achievements of these deserving students. Alongside this responsibility, I am also gearing up to launch the highly anticipated SHTA t-shirt sale, which provides an opportunity for the school community to show their SHTA Solidarity. New and exciting shirt designs will be available as part of this sale, giving buyers fresh options to choose from. It's crucial to note that there will be a slightly longer than usual wait time for the shirt orders to be fulfilled and delivered. The entire process, from the start of the sale to the final distribution of the shirts, will take approximately one month to complete. Once the shirts arrive, they will be carefully sorted and distributed to the building representatives, with each individual shirt clearly labeled with the name of the purchaser. This organizational system will ensure a smooth and efficient pickup process for everyone who placed an order.

Respectfully Submitted,
Robert "Bob" Bognar

PUBLICATION COMMITTEE

During the past month, I created, edited, and sent to my editors before sending to membership the first SHTA newsletter of the 2024-2025 school year. I also later had the newsletter posted on SHTAweb.org and sent to our administration and community members. I have also sent various emails to membership from SHTA officers, and Executive Board members. I have sent updates to the company that oversees our website including updating the Executive Board, Representative Council, meeting dates and Presidential Service award winners on our website.

If you wish to publish an editorial in the SHTA Newsletter, please feel free to reach out to me. All are welcome to write an editorial.

If you hear of a member who is NOT receiving the newsletter, please have them email me directly at glasier_a@shaker.org. Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,
Andrew Glasier

SALARY-TENURE COMMITTEE

I worked with Human Resource Director Tiffany Joseph to communicate with Negotiations Team members on updated Interest Based Bargaining Meetings with the Administrative Team. SHTA Negotiations Team members met to consolidate issues. We worked on a second pre-negotiations survey that will go out to members this week. This survey is for SHTA members only. Please do not share with anyone else as the responses may skew our results.

Respectfully Submitted
Dr. John Morris

MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

SHTA President, Dr. John Morris started the October 14, 2024 Representative Council Meeting at 4:30 PM. **The meeting took place at Fernway Elementary School.** Dr. Morris introduced *Fernway Principal, Mr. Christopher Hayward* to the Representative Council.

Principal Christopher Hayward welcomed the SHTA Representative council to Fernway School. He noted that there are 19 new people at Fernway which is a lot of new people for such a small building. He expressed appreciation to the Fernway staff for the challenges that this presents. He gave a shout out to Spanish teachers on carts, Art teachers on carts, and Music teachers on carts. He thanked Selena Boyer and Matt Zucca. He said that overall Fernway has had a great start to the school year and is looking forward to a great year ahead.

A motion for approval of the MINUTES from the September 9, 2024 Representative Council meeting was made by Lee Appel and seconded by Bob Bognar.

Administration Report

Director of Human Resources, Dr. Tiffany Joseph was present for the SHTA Representative Council Meeting. She shared two items

- Salary Reclassification is due to Stacy Poole on October 30th which is two weeks before the November board meeting.
- Tuition Reimbursement forms are due December 1st.

P.T.O. Report

PTO President Mrs. Christine Reynolds was present for the SHTA Representative Council meeting. She asked the Representative Council what they would like to know. She said that fall festivities went great. They have been getting on the same page at the council meetings with SHTA Vice President Darlene Garrison. PTO is planning Martin Luther King Day events and will be asking for help with that.

Officers' Reports

President, John Morris

- Spoke with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner regularly
- Communicated with Human Resource Director Dr. Tiffany Joseph regularly
- Updated SHTA Facebook page with SHTA Publications Editor Andrew Glasier
- Attended a Woodbury planning meeting with SHTA Vice President Darlene Garrison
- Worked with SHTA Building Safety and Sick Day Transfer Chair Matt Zucca on building concerns
- Communicated with Assistant Superintendent Jeff Grosse on Safety and Facility concerns
- Spoke with members about Association concerns
- Worked with members with legal concerns with SHTA Lawyer Susannah Muskovitz
- Worked with an IC member on facility and safety issues
- Attended a Fact-Finding meeting with a member
- Communicated with SHTA Special Education Chair Tito Vazquez on Intervention Specialists' concerns
- Attended a Union Leadership meeting with leaders of the district's bargaining units along with Darlene Garrison, Superintendent Dr. Glasner, Assistant Superintendent Felicia Evans, Assistant Superintendent Jeff Grosse, and Technology Director John Rizzo.

- After events at Cleveland Heights High School, I asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to share my commentary on school safety with SHTA members and administration.
- Dr. Glasner replied to the commentary:
 “When I met with you and other bargaining unit leaders earlier this week, I stressed that we are thoroughly and with due diligence examining enhanced safety and security options, including weapons detection systems. I also shared this information publicly at Tuesday’s Board of Education meeting. In fact, just today, our administrative team received its fourth demonstration from a metal detection system vendor. The systems we have seen provide security to schools, sports venues and other public buildings across the nation and around the world. Our team is working toward a recommendation as to which of these systems might work best for us and we will continue to keep you and other staff and faculty informed as we move forward.”
- I look forward to the administration and our Board moving as expeditiously as possible to make our buildings safe through weapons detection.

Salary-Tenure

- I worked with HR Director Tiffany Joseph to communicate with Negotiations Team members on updated Interest Based Bargaining Meetings with the Administrative Team. SHTA Negotiations Team members met to consolidate issues. We worked on a second pre-negotiations survey that will go out to members this week. This survey is for SHTA members only. Please do not share with anyone else outside the SHTA, as the responses may skew our results.

Vice President, Darlene Garrison

- Attended the September 20th Woodbury Campus Design Leadership Launch Meeting
 - Met the architects
 - Shared ideas of our vision for the new design
- The First PTO Council meeting for the 2024 - 2025 school year was on October 1st. I attended the meeting and shared our thanks for the delicious beginning of the lunch that was provided by the PTO.
- Attended SHTA Executive Board Meeting on Monday, October 7th at Fernway Elementary.
- The first Investment Committee Meeting of the school year was held on Tuesday, October 8th. I was in attendance along with SHTA Treasurer Bill Scanlon, SHTA Membership Chair Chante Thomas, Association Member Todd Keitlen, and Financial Advisor Brady Krebs.
- On October 8th, in the afternoon, I attended the Union Leadership Meeting with SHTA President Dr. John Morris.
- Attended the Pre-negotiations meeting with our team on Wednesday, October 9th.
- Processed and mailed final payments for the Dr. Rebecca L. Thomas Fellowship and Grants
 - For the 2023 -2024 School Year, there were fifty-one recipients selected
 - Thirty-two members submitted their receipts for reimbursement
 - Nineteen members did not submit receipts for reimbursement
 - Closed the 2023 - 2024 Fellowship and Grants reimbursement year
- Created a new application form to share with SHTA Membership for the 2024 - 2025 Dr. Rebecca L. Thomas Fellowship and Grants
 - SHTA Publications Chair Andrew Glasier emailed the application form to all members on Monday, October 14th

Secretary, Lisa Hardiman

- Emailed invitations for SHTA Executive Board and Representative Council meetings. Included in all invitations is the schedule and location of all meetings.
- Attended both Executive Board and Representative Council meetings
- Completed the minutes for SHTA Representative Council meeting

- Communicated with Professional Rights and Responsibilities Chair Michael Sears regarding a member's question about needing approval for a personal day the Friday between Rosh Hashanah and the weekend.
- Communicated with members about the contract language of taking personal days before or after a holiday and that it needs to be changed
- Attended Pre-negotiations meeting
- Researching contracts from other districts in preparation for upcoming negotiations
- Attended Mercer's Building Committee meeting this month where we discussed the issue of copiers consistently breaking down and causing major issues for teaching and learning
- Continuing to participate in numerous discussions about our planning time which gets taken away with meetings that are not directly impacting what we need to do to teach our students

Treasurer Bill Scanlon

- Met with Investments Committee-Edward Jones advisor
- Talked with accountants about financial books
- Attended League of Women Voters event. Topic was about gerrymandering and how it is changing schools. There is a push in Ohio to privatize schools.

Building Representative Reports

Boulevard-Cathy Grieshop, Heather Pincoe (WO)

- The schedule is a huge issue. We need more time to contact parents, prepare for lessons, etc. We are working through lunch and more than usual after school hours.
- There is a concern about report cards: too many standards and no time in the schedule to work on them. Some of us have never done the standards-based report cards, so there is some concern.
- I worked with a member on a retirement issue.
- I worked with a member on the sick-day transfer program.
- Reminded members about uploading their growth plans on time
- I talked with Boulevard principal Neal Robinson about the student behavior referrals and the follow-up with the teacher afterward.
- Thank you to principal Neal Robinson, for giving us On the Rise cookies (The building favorite) after Curriculum Night

Fernway-Jamie Harden, Lee Appel (WO)

- September 17, 2024: Two members stressed concerns about the Room Relocation form sent out 9/16/24 after 4p.m. Members felt as though they were "jumping through hoops" and were not treated as professionals.
- September 19, 2024 Member stated that the member asked Chris Hayward if they could leave work early (under 2-hour window) for an appointment. She was advised to take a ½ day or 2-hour sign out procedure. Chris Hayward also emailed me requesting collaboration on a statement to share with staff about leaving early or arriving late. It was agreed that we would discuss this at our next regular monthly meeting (October 1st). John Morris was emailed for clarification of the procedure and best practice. Topic was discussed at the meeting (Jamie Harden, Lee Appel and Chris Hayward present). Email has been drafted but not completed.
- September 30, 2024 The first building committee meeting was held virtually. Topics of interest were collected from members and principal. A Google form was used to prioritize topics. Main topic was a concern about behavior during student arrival. Members of the committee were reminded that they could leave at 3:15 during the meeting.

Lomond-Kelly Grahl, Sherri Jarvie (WO)

- The 9/16 payment delay significantly impacted many teachers and staff at Lomond. Some reported that they were unable to purchase groceries for their families, were penalized with overdraft fees by their banks, and others unable to pay bills on time. The downstream effects of that kind of mistake are hard to quantify but clearly impose significant strain on the lives of the workers who make Shaker run. Accountability is essential here. We seek a clearer explanation for why this happened and some descriptions of what actions have been taken to keep this from repeating in the future.
- As has been stated by other buildings, the current schedule does not allow for both adequate planning time and time dedicated to the amount of grade-level, building-level, and committee specific meetings that Shaker schedules. Teachers are regularly expected to dispense with their valuable planning time in the name of district mandated meetings. However, when the district is asked to pay teachers for their time outside of contract hours, these requests are denied. We seek two things, first, in the immediate future, a district level administration that accepts the material realities of the schedule they've chosen, which includes being prepared to pay teachers for their time working beyond contract hours to enrich the experience of students, families, and staff. Second, longer term, a schedule that protects and respects all teacher's, no matter the position, planning time.
- Beyond the lack of planning time, we are also troubled by the district's inability to hire and retain paraprofessionals to adequately staff our buildings. For example, at Lomond there is at least one parent volunteer being used to fill a paraprofessional role supporting students with significant learning needs. In other classrooms, paraprofessionals are being "shared" across classrooms across grade levels, which not only doesn't work, but also puts an undue burden on the paraprofessional being spread too thin. We seek an administration that is **materially** dedicated to equity and understands that truly investing in that goal means offering competitive compensation to hire and retain paraprofessionals who play an essential role in our schools.

Mercer-Eileen Sweeney

- The building committee discussed the coverage, or lack of staff to support dismissal. There is often not enough staff to cover the carpool pick-up location. Admin is trying to cover locations but staff absences create problems.
- We discussed Xerox/copying issues and blue sheets. Staff are encouraged to submit blue sheets when they give up planning or lunch.
- I emailed staff to remind them to submit blue sheets when signing up for the planetarium during their lunch periods. The administration worked to cover the staff so that they did not have to miss their lunch.

Onaway-Noreen Smyth-Morrow, Stacey DeYoung (WO), Alison Colvin (Pre-K)

- The Building Committee met last week and discussed that we are struggling with only 20 minutes before the students arrive. We need time to collaborate. We also need time to gain and feel a sense of community.

Pre-K Report:

- Since all desktops were taken out of the classrooms, and only teachers are given personal laptops, PreK paraprofessionals need access to a laptop to help with data collection and other required PreK training and responsibilities that help support the students.
 - Onaway principal Ms. Dora Bechtel put in a request several times and the paras have not received them yet. Ms. Bechtel said she would send another request.
- With UPK training and requirements, we will need built in time in the year in addition to SUTQ, and Shaker PD to complete all requirements. UPK is yet another layer to the time requested initially for just SUTQ. Ms. Bechtel has been doing her best to carve out time to give us days and coverage and it has been much appreciated, and necessary.

Because these training days (and more required paperwork) have been unexpected, and not on the original school/staff calendar...the classroom teachers are out of the room while school is in session....it is still not enough time. Time to get required ongoing training will have to be heavily considered and built into either the PreK calendar schedule for the year, or the daily schedule moving forward at Ludlow in addition to actual planning time for instruction.

- With UPK (being implemented after school already started and classrooms staffed), "unexpectedly", our classroom ratios went from 1-13 (state requirement) to 1-10 (UPK requirement). It is expected and required at all times to maintain UPK compliant for funding purposes among other things. If a child has to leave and go to the nurse, or has trouble transitioning, or has an accident, or in a Special (with a Special's teacher) and the para needs to take a child to the bathroom, the teacher/para (in a classroom of 16-20 children) is required to take 6-10 additional children with them to stay in compliance with the 1-10 classroom ratio. This causes loss of instructional time for the other children who have to tag along for 1 child.
 - Ms. Bechtel is aware and is in the process of making adjustments...and hiring staff.
 - Ms. Bechtel has been providing coverage for lunch breaks by having a floating PreK sub, plus the building sub, and the PreK Administrative assistant, Ms. Blockson, filling staffing holes.
 - To "maintain" High Quality and UPK compliance at all times, it is imperative for Ludlow to have each room staffed with 3 adults for up to 20 children. As a standard, and best practice, this will help the program stay high quality and in compliance so that children will not miss instructional time every time 1 child needs assistance, or leaves the room.

Middle School—Kevin Thomas, Melissa Albrecht (WO), Marie O’leary Stark (WO)

Met with several off-team teachers who are very concerned about the challenges of the current schedule. We are currently working with administrators to see what solutions can be found.

- Additional materials may be needed so that teachers won’t have to transport as many supplies from room to room. Department chairs have been encouraged to request any materials necessary.
- Teachers are encouraged to continue to look at the master schedule in order to see if other classrooms can be found that might facilitate quicker transitions from room to room.
- We have proposed that floating teachers be excused from one of their half period duties (team time or lunch duty) in order to have more time to prepare for classes. Principals were open to the idea but are currently working on a structure for student support during this time and wish to finalize that before agreeing to lessen teacher duties.
- Some classrooms lack adequate seating for students, so teachers are encouraged to request other classroom options if anything better is available at that time.
- Attended an investigation/fact finding meeting as a union representative for a member.
- Met with a member who asked for clarification about a personal day which was denied around a holiday. Spoke with SHTA PR&R Chair Mike Sears and discussed a need for more transparency in administrative approvals.
- Met with middle school principal [Eric Forman](#) and assistant-principal [Jasmine Venson](#) weekly and worked together on the following:
 - The number of interruptions during the day due to announcements has been an issue. Administration has replaced several announcements with emails. [Erika Pfeiffer](#) has reached out to staff to remind them to enter 2nd period attendance on a timely basis in order to eliminate the need for that announcement.
 - Requested that all meetings include calendar invites.
 - Currently working on adding a bell schedule during lunch periods.
 - The number of copiers is still an issue. Facilities is working on adding wiring so that new machines can be installed.

- Coaches and athletes have been leaving school early on a regular basis which is negatively impacting student learning. Administration has spoken to the athletic department and schedules will be changed in the winter so that no students will need to be dismissed early.
- We have asked that some clarification about lockdown procedures be given, especially to staff new to our building. Administrators are open to give additional information and have asked anyone with specific questions to bring them directly to admin.
- Safety continues to be a concern with the portables. The doors have been left unlocked at times and not unlocked at times for students by security. Other times the key card hasn't worked. Administration has been made aware and is still working on a buzzer system.
- Raised issue of inadequate conference hours to meet parent needs. Can we shift some hours to evening in return for daytime hours? Teams are being offered the choice to run pair conferences with two per time slot and switch subject areas.
- Woodbury Chromebook carts are in an unknown location. Currently, one charger per room is being offered in place of these.
- Building committee met a second time and continued discussing organization around additional bells, team lunch detentions, more equitable use of team time, and lunch flexibility.

High School—Jessica O'Brien, Raina Li (WO)

- Met with High school principal Eric Juli, Director of Curriculum John Moore, and an Instructional Coach to clarify roles and responsibilities, especially in light of the high school now having a single instructional coach.
- Filed four separate grievances on behalf of members, all of which have been resolved.
- Provided guidance to members on the grievance filing process and answered related questions.
- Discussed a compensation issue with SHTA Professional Rights and Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears regarding a member not receiving full supplemental pay. Mike addressed this with Human Resources Specialist Nellie Brown and the member has received the full payment.
- Collaborated with Mike Sears and Director of Human Resources Dr. Tiffany Joseph regarding a workers' compensation claim for a member injured in an incident. As of 9/18, Dr. Joseph confirmed that the paperwork had been received and at that time was being processed. The member expressed concern and frustration as they were never contacted by HR as to what to do moving forward. The member is now back at school.
- Addressed the need for additional security personnel with Mr. Juli. The current security team is effectively handling bag inspections in the morning but lacks support in the hallways after students enter the building. Staff has questions about safety and security. The entire week of 10/7 there were no bag checks to my knowledge and staff is concerned that we are moving backwards rather than toward a more efficient acceptable process. Mr. Juli expressed that he is concerned with safety and hopeful that we can quickly get some kind of system in the building soon. Unsure if we will do random bag checks, or continue bag checks.
- Attended a fact-finding meeting with a member, Mr. Juli, and Assistant Principal Katie Slifkin on 9/26. The member nor I have heard back from administration about the follow up to this meeting.
- Discussed with Mike Sears the concerns of two members regarding inadequate procedures and policies. While there is a district handbook, it does not address the specific issues raised by the members.
- Members asked about the lag in pay from the district. To follow that up, members recently brought up their frustration after the approval of a monthly allowance for our new treasurer for an auto allowance.
- Met with Mr. Juli to discuss hallway disruptions. He shared that Assistant Principal James Dubsy is developing a plan for hallway sweeps on how and when they will be conducted.
- Addressed members' questions regarding the protocol for calamity days at the high school. Mr. Juli confirmed that in such cases, the school would follow the scheduled day as outlined in the calendar sent by Administrative Assistant Laurie Brem at the beginning of the year.

Innovative Center--Anne Scott

- New IC staff members still do not have a fob/keys to access the STJ Building and locked doors in the IC space.
- The IC has two designated rooms upstairs for meetings as well as a student-free place for teachers to take their lunch. Both spaces are consistently used by community members. We are curious if we can keep those doors locked and all have keys to those spaces.
- The rear emergency exit door was broken. It has now been repaired. We would like to thank assistant principal of the I.C. Isaiah Wyatt and Public Works for getting that fixed.

Executive Board Reports

Publications—Andrew Glasier

- Updated Facebook page
- Updated SHTAWeb.org
- In the process of getting SHTA off of X (formerly Twitter)
- Reports due by Wednesday at midnight
- There will be FOUR editorials this month!
- If a member is not getting the newsletter, please let me know

Evaluation-Lena Paskewitz (Andrew Glasier)

- Addie Tobey will be co-chair for this semester along with Tiffany Joseph
- Professional Growth Plan should be updated by tomorrow, October 15th
- Both the Librarians and Gifted Intervention Specialists have updated their evaluations and now must be reviewed and approved by the Evaluation Committee.

Policy-Tim Kalan

- Dues started being deducted starting with October 1st paycheck
- Contacting members about leave
- Attended finance committee meeting last week

Public Relations-Bob Bognar

- Will have new T-shirts for sale-soft zip hoodie
- Stocking caps with logo will be new
- Polos
- Advertisements in *Shaker Life* magazine were submitted

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion- Angela Goodrum

- Continuing with finding articles and books

Special Education-Tito Vazquez

- Met with the Director of Student Services Dr. Meghan Shelby over special education concerns across the district.
- Worked with SHTA President Dr. John Morris over Special Education concerns.
- Discussed an issue of equity for students at the Innovative Center for Personalized Learning with I.C. Coordinator Mr. Isaiah Wyatt.
- Represented a member concerning classroom size and safety concerns at Lomond Elementary.
- Spoke with members who have issues concerning job placement, personnel issues and work options.
- Communicated with Shaker Heights High School Exceptional Children Department Chairs Tana Thompson and Keesha Bryant over concerns at the high school.
- Continue to work collaboratively with administrators for the benefit of both students and teachers.

Legal Aid-James Schmidt

- No Report

Legislative-Matt Kloder

This month I wanted to highlight some proposed bills and items on November ballots. Also, remember to **vote on Tuesday, November 5th!**

- **HB 595** - A new bill was drafted in August by Ohio legislators and education advocates proposing the state adopt universal pre-k. While this bill is currently in House Financing Committee hearings, the goal is to vote on the bill before the end of the year. ([more info here](#))
- **H.R. 3724** - In the U.S. House of Representatives this proposed bill has been dubbed the “End Woke Higher Education Act.” The proposed bill moves to bar the requirement of D.E.I. programs at colleges and universities. Although this bill has passed in the House of Representatives, it will likely not pass in the Senate. However, it should be noted that D.E.I. continues to be a targeted policy of certain politicians. ([more info here](#))
- **SB 29** - Passed in November of 2023, SB 29 needs to be effectively implemented in every Ohio district by October 2024. Under this law, schools need to disclose to families the technology tools their students have access to and only a district’s central office will be authorized to add a program to a student device. Additionally, it moves to protect student data and privacy from technology developers by ensuring only the district maintains access to this information. ([more info here](#))
- **Ballot Watch: Private School Choice** - Although this issue is not on Ohio’s ballot, it should be noted that a number of states have issues in their November election regarding private school choice. This article notes that the Ohio Supreme Court’s election may prove to have an effect on the outcome of this challenged policy and the use of vouchers from June from a number of school districts. ([more info here](#))
- **Ballot Watch: Ohio’s Issue 1** - This article provides an overview of Issue 1, which moves to redistrict the state through the creation of an independent commission council instead of the current council which consists of only politicians. Many people question the current districting policies and cite that they have led to gerrymandering. Note that the bill language is confusing, so please pay attention to the language. ([more info here](#))

Building Safety and Sick Day Transfer-Matthew Zucca

- Fielded questions regarding the Sick Day Transfer program.
- Reached out to building member, to remind them of the support from SHTA.
- Requested building information for meeting norms for building committee meeting as well as BELT meetings; found differences and discrepancies between buildings.
- Discussed grievance planning process with Mike Sears to address k-5 planning time.

Social-Selena Boyer

- No Report

Professional Rights and Responsibilities-Mike Sears

- Attended SHTA meetings in September and October.
- Went to a Supplemental Committee meeting in September.
- Assisted building representatives at the Middle School and High School.

PAC (at-large)-Eileen Sweeney and Jessica O’Brien

- Updating PAC Facebook page.
- E. Sweeney is working on position paper about candidates and Issue 1 (see below).

Old Business-None

New Business-None

Good of the Order-

- President Dr. John Morris thanked Fernway reps for delicious food

Motion for adjournment was made by James Schmidt and seconded by Lee Appel
Meeting adjourned at 6:25 pm.



**The October 2024 SHTA
Representative Council Meeting
at Fernway School.**



Overload of Testing: A Call for Reform

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.

Students today face an overwhelming barrage of standardized tests, many of which are not state-mandated. At Shaker, students take the MAP test in reading and math three times a year, Aimsweb testing three times a year, and 3rd and 4th graders must also complete the Ohio State Tests. This overemphasis on testing significantly detracts from valuable classroom learning time and strains the resources of intervention and literacy specialists. These specialists, who should be providing specially designed instruction to students with identified learning needs, are instead occupied with administering this myriad of tests. As a result, students miss crucial classroom instruction and intervention time while these specialists are busy testing throughout the year.

Instead of constant testing, students should engage in enriching learning experiences that foster curiosity and a love for learning. The Ohio State Tests offer a comprehensive measure of student learning over the year. In contrast, the MAP test, given three times annually, assesses academic knowledge spanning material from K-12, as well as grit and persistence.

However, the frequency of the MAP test is problematic. Each year, several students perform at the highest percentiles on the fall MAP assessment. In order to demonstrate growth, I am forced to prepare material I am not initially prepared to teach. Over the years, I have developed lessons on topics such as the four quadrants of the coordinate grid, volume, surface area, the area of triangles and parallelograms, and relationships among the circumference, diameter, area, and radius of a circle.

Administering the MAP test only at the beginning of the year would be far more beneficial. The current frequency leads to frustration and disengagement, with some students rushing through the tests and others spending excessive time on them. Teachers also spend countless hours analyzing results that often reflect momentary focus (or lack thereof) rather than true abilities.

It is time to rethink our approach to standardized testing. By conducting the MAP test once at the beginning of the year and relying on Ohio State Test scores in the spring, we can reclaim valuable instructional time essential to our students' learning needs. For grades that do not take the Ohio State Tests, the MAP could be administered once more at the end of the year.

Stacy Stoller
4th Grade Teacher
Boulevard School

Mental Health- do not give us a tagline; give us a lifeline

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This year, I had hope. As a high school counselor and a somatic (mind/body) therapist, perhaps I needed to believe this year would be different. We kicked off the year with a phenomenal speaker and discussion about Empathy. In our opening building meeting the head administrator shared, "In the 2024-25 school year we will continue to focus on both physical and emotional safety for all staff and students. Additionally, we will focus on academic excellence and staff and student health and wellness." After a long summer of fixing schedules that still were not correct, I needed to believe this was true for my own mental health. I was then asked by the administration during our first days back to provide a mindfulness space and practice after ALICE training. The purpose was for anyone who might need a moment to decompress after this kind of experience. I believed from this request that our leader truly had embraced that taking care of mental health mattered.

Therefore, after the ALICE training concluded, I walked into the room where I was going to lead the mindfulness and was speechless. Room 216 had become a space shared with study hall, grad lab, the after school tutoring, and last year we blended it with the mental health empowerment programs for students, faculty, and staff. This room was where I, along with others, led mindfulness, breathwork, aromatherapy, yoga, and overall mental health tools for everyone in the High School community. This project was put together with intentional care, packed with students, faculty, and staff. This initiative was financially backed by the Shaker Foundation for Flexblock and after-school programs. A senior chose to enhance the Zen experience with their art talent for their senior project. Why was I speechless? Everything was taken down and thrown to the side. I was confused, I was assured by a top administrator in our building that I was going to be sharing the room with a different group this year, but that I could keep it as it was the previous year. I emailed the administration after the meditation concluded to share what I witnessed and found out that everything was being moved into storage. All the money and time that went into the program was being tossed away. An administrator's response was condescending, ending with, "I am sorry this happened to you". YOU? This room was for our ENTIRE high school community for mental health empowerment. Faculty and staff who were not able to attend sessions would often stop to share how they appreciated all that a group of us are doing. They said they felt "seen, "and they would always end with," Please keep doing these projects". I was naive to believe our administrators' words on opening day.

I am grateful for the two assistant principals who found out about what happened and quickly provided an alternative space. They came in over the weekend to move everything to show support. They offered to help in any way possible. This was leadership: showing empathy and care for the wellness of our high school community. The assistant principals over the past five years have always been supportive of this initiative and have found ways to support mental health. I have still never heard back from the leaders I sent the original email to about what happened other than the inappropriate response.

After finding out about Room 216, I began to hear story after story like mine. Faculty and staff have felt belittled when they asked for clarifications on attendance, bell schedules, and classroom assignments. Their emails are not being returned time after time. This was just in the first two weeks of school. There have been many initiatives launched and put to rest during and since COVID-19 online learning. I will speak for the high school, deleveling, PowerSchool, block schedules (with different bell schedules the last 4 years), flex block, and crew time just to name a few. Through all of these initiatives and changes the narrative is that the high school

faculty seems resistant to change. Has anyone asked the simple question, “WHY? “. Repeatedly, the faculty and staff have asked for solutions but feeling more and more unseen, unheard, and unappreciated.

I have been reflecting on how so many colleagues have shared how they are suffering. Those who will reveal to me they are not doing okay mentally or emotionally or those who will share that they are having physical pain wondering if I had any suggestions. Dr. Bessel van der Kolk’s book, “*The Body Keeps the Score*” always comes to my mind when I hear the collective pain. What the research boils down to is that our entire body system is connected; we cannot disconnect our physical health from mental health. I hear of back, neck, hip, arm and feet pain along with stress, anxiety, and overwhelming feelings. They are all tied together because there is no reprieve from the high stakes of being in education.

There is an article in the Harvard Business Review that was spot on for what is happening to us, titled: “[How ‘Carewashing’ Alienates Employees.](#)” These superficial experiences have led to some colleagues going on medical leave for mental health, leaving the field, or suffering daily in silence but experiencing physical and mental pain. I have had two experiences over the past few years where I needed to call for help because my colleague was not feeling safe. -

Many of us at the high school have witnessed horrific fights and threats from students, parents, and trespassers. Educators have become recognized as first responders. Therefore, we are vulnerable to secondary trauma. It is defined as, “Secondary trauma can impact resilience and affect worker performance...inability to express negative feelings through denial of difficulties at work, emotional withdrawal that can impact personal and professional relationships”.

The harm that is being done by stating this is that this year is about “Empathy, Wellness and Health” has our bodies keeping score towards deterioration. The mismanagement of Room 216 is symbolic of the complete disregard for us. Our administrators are not mental health professionals, they are educators. Perhaps, they are suffering as well. As leaders of our buildings ask for real help. Do not continue to disparage us. You do not have to have all the answers. You do need to find solutions. We have given grace over and over; but to the detriment of our health.

What I have always admired about the Shaker Height School District is how we have been the pioneers in education, forward-thinking and innovative. It is time to be innovative for our faculty and staff, which in turn makes us thrive for our students. I challenge the administration to this: Why are we not being our Shaker selves and paving the way for innovative solutions? Hire professionals to help us, write grants, team up with universities, and make us a think tank for transforming educators' wellness. Choose to see us. I know mental health is an epidemic in education, we are not unique. We need a plan. Suggestion: start by simply asking how we need help, and how we can help one another. We at the high school have been using a grassroots approach for what feels like against the top leaders in the school. Do not give us a tagline. Give us a lifeline. “ ; ” is the symbol for mental health awareness to show solidarity.

Let’s be Shaker - ;

Cathy Charles Szendrey
Shaker Heights High School Counselor

Warm, Safe, and Dry?

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Last month's near-riot after our fire alarm was the most physically afraid, I've felt in my 20 years of working at Shaker Heights High. Most of the student body was congested in the first-floor hallway, when students started shouting, chanting, shoving and jumping. At five feet tall, all I could see were elbows and backpacks in either direction. I knew our associate principal's back was somewhere ahead of me, looking as helpless as I feel, and I could see our Dean's head towering over the kids, and his hands as they flew up in what looked like a giant shrug of desperation. At that point, I had to ask myself why I haven't walked out yet and found a job in a cozy bookstore somewhere.

There were many things that contributed to the chaos of the day. Were there policies that should have been in place but weren't? Perhaps. Was there communication that should have happened but didn't? Likely. Were there choices made that could have been better? Probably. Was there somewhere else we could have had kids shelter from the lightning? Maybe (though our Monday-morning quarterbacking didn't really come up with many alternatives - and our labyrinthine halls take a long time to clear). Would it be easy to cast blame here and there, sprinkling it across everyone like confetti? Absolutely. But that isn't what this piece is about.

Because the truth is, we've had more objectively terrifying moments. Terrible things have happened to our students, our colleagues, our communities, our country, and we face the existential crisis and forge ahead, because we're teachers and show up for our kids. This time, as far as I know, there wasn't even any *real* violence. Kids were just kind of being kids in a crazy situation. What this day made me face is the fact that I haven't felt safe in this building for a good long time. Nor have I felt warm (except when the classroom is 90 degrees - there is no in-between) or dry (touring my son's school for open house and seeing carpet everywhere, my mind kept repeating "they must not leak here very often"), which are supposedly the pillars of our facilities managers' mission. None of this would have happened if we had a functional building with a logical layout.

This building is held together by string, paperclips, and prayer. Our custodians' herculean efforts can only go so far. The high school is like Snow White's poisoned apple, shiny and pretty outside and hazardous below the surface. Frankly, it's a disgrace.

I know I'm probably shouting into the void here; the community of Shaker Heights has made it clear that they have no concern with the high school's facility issues. The current plan won't have the community even vote on a new building until I'm nearing retirement. What can we do in the mean time? I truly don't know. But something has to happen, because I'm sure I'm not the only one thinking that a bookstore job sounds pretty warm, safe, and dry.

Valerie Doersen
Language & Literature Teacher
Shaker Heights High School

Vote, Vote, Vote: A Voting Guide from the PAC of the SHTA

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As we approach the November election, it is time for each of us to reflect on our responsibility to exercise our right to vote. This year there is more at stake. We must advocate for the future of our nation, communities, and families through voting. This is more difficult with the highly politicized climate we live in today. As an SHTA member, I urge you to seek various sources of information to vet your candidates. Below is a summary of the presidential and Ohio Senate candidate's stances on some issues. I have used a variety of sources including the candidate's websites, the League of Women Voters website, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, and the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania to present a neutral perspective.

Issue 1 is on the ballot this year. It proposes to replace Ohio's current system for determining congressional districts. This issue has far-reaching implications for future policies. It determines the makeup of the Ohio House. If you recall, the Ohio House of Representatives attempted to take away our collective bargaining rights in 2015. I worry about what legislation the Ohio House may pass in a gerrymandered system in the coming years.

2024 Election At-A-Glance

President Race	Donald Trump-Republican	Kamala Harris Democrat
Economy	<p>Mr. Trump enacted a large package of tax cuts as president and pursued protectionist trade policies, including a trade war with China. He wants to cut taxes further and enact sweeping tariffs. He has stated he will not cut Medicare or Social Security but has not provided a plan to keep the programs solvent.</p> <p>Most economists think inflation, interest rates and deficits would be higher under the policies of Mr. Trump.</p> <p>The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania estimates that the Trump Campaign tax and spending proposals would increase primary deficits by \$5.8 trillion over the next 10 years</p>	<p>Ms. Harris supports the Biden's administration spending on infrastructure and renewable energy. She wants to ban price gouging, create incentives to build housing, expand tax credits for middle and low-income households, and offset the costs by increasing taxes on corporations and wealthy Americans.</p> <p>The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania estimates that the Trump Campaign tax and spending proposals would increase primary deficits by \$1.2 trillion over the next 10 years</p>
Immigration	<p>Mr. Trump enacted sweeping anti-immigration policies when he was president. He plans on implementing the largest deportation operation in American history if elected. He plans to round up undocumented immigrants and detain them in camps while they wait for deportation. This policy will</p>	<p>Ms. Harris supported a bipartisan proposal that would have hired thousands of new border security agents and asylum officers and closed the border if crossings reached an average of more than 5,000 immigrants a day over a week. This deal died in Congress after Mr. Trump came out against the bill.</p>

	rely on a form of expulsion that does not involve due process earnings.	Ms. Harris has championed addressing the root causes of migration from Latin America. Her Partnership with Central America, which has secured more than \$5 billion in pledges from private companies to support Central American countries
Abortion	Mr. Trump believes abortion rights are a state issue. He would allow states to restrict abortions as they see fit, including potential monitoring of pregnancies or criminal charges for patients. He calls himself, “proudly the person responsible” for overturning Roe v. Wade. Supports I. V. F. treatments and the Hyde Amendment banning all federal funding for abortions. His campaign will not comment on its position on FDA approval for abortion drugs.	Enshrine the protections of Roe v. Wade in federal law. She will restore the protections ensured by Roe. Supports access to invitro fertilization methods, and access to mifepristone, an abortion drug.
Foreign Policy	Mr. Trump has criticized foreign alliances like NATO and suggested that he would encourage Russia to invade a member country if he didn’t think the country was paying enough for its defense. He has indicated that he is reluctant to send further military aid to Ukraine and has said he wants to “eliminate” the United States’ economic dependence on China. Mr. Trump supports Israel in its war against Hamas in Gaza. He has condemned pro-Palestinian demonstrators in the United States but has also urged Israel to “finish up” the war because it is losing support. He recently stated he doubted a two-state solution was possible.	Ms. Harris supports an active global role for the United States, including in NATO and other military alliances, and wants to continue to send military aid to Ukraine. She has not given many details on policies towards China but has said she wants to protect the United States against China’s economic practices without cutting ties entirely. Ms. Harris has stated Israel has a right to defend itself against Hamas and that the United States should continue to send its weapons while calling for a cease-fire and putting an emphasis on the humanitarian crisis that Israel’s bombardment and invasion have caused in Gaza. She supports a two-state solution.
Climate	Mr. Trump denies the established climate science, disparages renewable energy over fossil fuels. His administration rolled back more than 100 environmental protection regulations. He plans a similar agenda if elected again. Mr. Trump withdrew the United States from the Paris climate agreement. He disavowed emission reductions.	Ms. Harris supports the established climate science and President Biden’s policies, including subsidies for renewable energy. She has promotes environmental social justice programs, which focus on the impact of climate change on marginalized communities. Ms. Harris would keep the United States in the Paris climate agreement, with commitments to emission reductions.
Education	Mr. Trump has promised to eliminate the Department of Education. He supports Universal Choice, expanding parental rights, and ending teacher tenure. Mr. Trump opposes student loan forgiveness.	Harris opposed Trump’s plan to close the Department of Education. Her platform proposes calling on Congress to triple Title I funding, and to fully fund IDEA to give schools the resources to educate disabled students. On the campaign trail, she has mainly focused on affordability measures for early childhood and higher education. Harris has promised to continue the Biden-Harris administration’s push for universal preschool, which has repeatedly stalled in Congress. She has also promised to build on the Biden-Harris administration’s programs to

		<p>forgive student debt. The administration has so far approved nearly \$170 billion in student loan forgiveness for almost five million borrowers, but Harris has not made any specific promises about what future student debt relief would look like.</p>
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Senate Race	Bernie Moreno Republican	Sherrod Brown Democrat
Economy	<p>Mr. Moreno voices his opinion against government mandates for electric vehicles, advocating for market-driven decisions and a pause on government incentives and mandate. While not anti-union, Moreno expresses concerns about some union demands, particularly in the auto industry. He emphasizes the need for a balance between union demands and the realities of a global economic environment.</p>	<p>Mr. Brown supports union workers. A union card ensures higher wages, better benefits, and greater retirement security. He has fought for workers to organize and collectively bargain. Mr. Brown is fighting to increase the minimum wage. He has fought to bring back the auto industry back to Ohio and manufacturing back to the United States.</p>
Immigration	<p>Mr. Moreno wants to bar immigrants for life if they are caught illegally crossing into the United States. He supports completing building the wall to keep out illegal immigrants. Mr. Moreno supports stricter immigration policies advocated by Mr. Trump.</p>	<p>Mr. Brown supported a bipartisan proposal that would have hired thousands of new border security agents and asylum officers and closed the border if crossings reached an average of more than 5,000 immigrants a day over a week. This deal died in Congress after Mr. Trump came out against the bill.</p> <p>Mr. Brown introduced and passed the Interdict Act which President Trump signed into law. It provided border control with technology to detect dangerous drugs.</p>
Abortion	<p>Pro-life. He is anti-abortion with no exceptions. He supports overturning the will of Ohioans with a national abortion ban and has said he's, "100% pro-life with no exceptions" He opposes guaranteeing a woman's right to contraception, including birth control pills.</p>	<p>100% Pro-choice. He believes a woman's health care decisions should be between her and her doctor-not politicians.</p>
Education	<p>Mr. Moreno supports the elimination of the Department of Education. "I'm going to advocate for to make certain that we get rid of the Department of Education by the end of our first year in office," Moreno said. "The parents ultimately should be in charge of what their kids are taught as a collective whole. We have to have a school and educators that teach kids all of the points of view, not just a very radical left-wing point of view, which is the problem we have right now," Moreno said. He supports Universal Choice, expanding parental rights, and ending teacher tenure.</p>	<p>Mr. Brown asserts, "We must ensure that all Ohio students have access to a quality education, and the opportunity to achieve their dreams – regardless of what zip code they live in or the color of their skin or what their parents do for a living. I've fought to protect public education and public charter schools, and to hold accountable shady for-profit charters that scam students and taxpayers."</p>

Issue 1 Summary

As reported by Cuyahoga League of Women Voters-This is a non-partisan group and never endorses candidates.

What is the Citizens Not Politicians (CNP) Amendment and why do we need it?

- The CNP Amendment is a citizen initiative to end gerrymandering. It bans lobbyists and politicians from the redistricting process and instead establishes the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission, empowering citizens to draw fair districts using an open and transparent process.
- We need it because Ohio is one of the most gerrymandered states in the country, with voting districts drawn to favor political party interests over the needs of our communities.
 - Our current redistricting process was dragged out for over two years, with maps being ruled unconstitutional by the Ohio Supreme Court a whopping SEVEN times (five times for state legislative maps and twice for congressional ones). This ended up costing Ohio taxpayers tens of millions of dollars, but still didn't result in fair, impartial districts.
 - We need a new process that takes the power to draw district lines out of the hands of self-interested politicians.

The Citizens Not Politicians Amendment will:

- Create a 15-member Citizens Commission made up of Democrats, Republicans and Independents who represent the different geographic areas and demographics of Ohio.
- Ban current or former politicians, political party officials, and lobbyists from sitting on the Commission for six years.
- Require fair and impartial districts by making it unconstitutional to draw maps that favor any political party or individual politician.
- Require the commission to operate under an open and independent process.

*Respectfully submitted,
Eileen Sweeney
PAC Chairperson*

The SHTA PAC is on  .  @

[PAC of the Shaker Heights Teachers Association](#)