

IMPORTANT DATES

Monday, September 26: Rosh Hashana, Schools Closed

Wednesday, September 28: B.O.E Work Session

Monday, October 3: SHTA Executive Board Meeting, Fernway

Wednesday, October 5: Yom Kippur, Schools Closed.

Monday, October 10: SHTA Representative Meeting, Fernway

SHTA *news*

September 19, 2022

ISSUE NO. 1

Message from the President

It's good to be back in school. I have missed my students and my peers. It also feels like a new start with so many different schedules and approaches introduced in our buildings. I am optimistic that this will be a good year, because it must be. That doesn't mean I am unrealistic about the challenges consistently facing educators, or that I've fallen into "toxic positivity". I am optimistic because our students are depending on it.

I am also focusing on optimism for the new teachers added to our ranks. During a time of unprecedented turnover in education, we have to keep our newest members in mind as well. How do we encourage our newest members to see this as a career that can sustain them? How do we help them balance their personal lives and their professional lives? How do we support them through all the hoops they must jump through in order to attain Continuing Contract? How can we help them truly "see" students through despite demands for testing and other forms of data-based accountability? These are the challenges I have to optimistically hope we can help our new teachers navigate so they will stay in Shaker and create the foundation for the next generation of Shaker Heights educators. We all came to Shaker because of the reputation it had and as a place where educators can flourish. I have to be optimistic that we can give new educators an experience that will live up to this reputation and convince them to make Shaker their professional home.

I know that I cannot do this alone. In fact, none of us can. That's why we have the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association to help new teachers benefit from a contract that protects their rights and helps them maintain a reasonable work/life balance. We have to help them appreciate that we have a collective bargaining agreement that honors their time and compensates them adequately. Likewise, they have to be informed that their continuing education is valued by our Association and we have negotiated for contractually guaranteed reimbursement for credit hours that they receive in obtaining education that continues to hone their craft. And, finally, that we have a contract and as an Association will represent and defend them should relationships with administration becomes contentious.

Speaking of administrators, we cannot keep new educators in this district without you. We need new teachers to feel supported and validated by administration. We also need administrators who understand and support our collective bargaining agreement, because it is an *agreement* that benefits both teachers and administration. We also need administrators who will make the most space and provide the most support in allowing and

encouraging new teachers to experiment and expand their teaching practice without the threat of a negative evaluation. I am optimistic that we have many of these collaborative administrators throughout this district and will continue to do so.

It's been both an eventful summer and beginning of the school year. I spoke regularly with superintendent Dr. David Glasner. I updated the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association and Cuyahoga County Educator Summit Facebook pages. I worked on joint statements with the Board of Education on HB216 and HB99. I worked on a payroll issue with Professional Rights & Responsibilities Chairperson Mike Sears and affected members. I communicated with SHTA Evaluation Facilitators Lena Paskewitz, Andrew Glasier, and Addie Tobey about Peer Evaluation concerns. I asked Vice President Darlene Garrison to reach out to members recovering from health and family issues. I communicated on hiring issues with SHTA Secretary Lisa Hardiman and Special Education Chairperson Tito Vazquez. Lisa and Tito participated in an unprecedented number of interviews on behalf of the Black Teachers' Task Force Steering Committee and the SHTA Executive Board. I am extremely grateful for their dedication on behalf of our Association and District. I communicated with Sick Day Transfer Chairperson James Schmidt on sick day transfer issues. I toured the buildings with SHTA Vice President Darlene Garrison, Lisa Hardiman, SHTA Treasurer Bill Scanlon, and SHTA Personal Right & Responsibilities Chairperson Mike Sears along with Dr. Glasner, Director of School Leadership Felicia Evans, and Assistant Director of Buildings and Grounds Sean Brown Sr. I welcomed new teachers with Darlene Garrison, Bill Scanlon, Mike Sears, SHTA Membership Chairperson Chante Thomas, and SHTA Teacher Education Chairperson Wendy Lewis. I attended our SHTA Executive Board Summer Meeting generously hosted by Chante Thomas. I worked with SHTA Lawyer Susannah Muskovitz on ongoing legal issues. I communicated with Human Resources Director Tiffany Joseph on Americans with Disabilities Act concerns. I communicated with Sean Brown on security latches on doors in buildings. I communicated with SHTA Social Chairperson Selena Boyer about our upcoming Happy Hour. I worked with Mike Sears on grievance issues. I discussed school counselor concerns with members. I communicated with Pre-School members on workload and physical plant limitations. I reached out to members to serve on our new Building Committees.

I have said it many times before, and I will likely say it many times again. Being SHTA President is one of the biggest honors of my life. It is work that I value and treasure. I am proud to represent the extraordinary educators of Shaker Heights City Schools. Likewise, I am honored to serve alongside SHTA Officers, SHTA Executive Board Members, SHTA Representatives and our 470 members. It truly is a pleasure to work with and for all of you. You are all ultimately the source of my optimism. Please do not hesitate to reach out if there is an issue, I can help you with at morris_j@shaker.org or x6030.

*Respectfully submitted,
John Morris*



VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The 2022 - 2023 school year is in full swing and I'm sure everyone is ready for a fantastic school year. I must admit that summer vacation went by quickly and I certainly hope that you had a safe, healthy and relaxing summer break.

Over the summer, I had an opportunity to tour the school buildings with members of our Executive Board and participants from Central Office. We had a chance to see improvements, repairs, and walked on hallway floors that appeared to be made of glass. Our custodial staff always does an amazing job getting our buildings ready for students and staff. I applaud all involved in this process. A special thank you to our custodians, who make it all possible.

It was so nice attending the New Employee Summer Meeting at Shaker Heights High School. There were so many new faces and it was a pleasure having the opportunity to mix and mingle with them. SHTA Officers and Executive Board Members shared information about our Association and answered all the questions that were asked. One hour after meeting Shaker's newest educators, I was off to our first Executive Board meeting of the 2022-2023 school year. SHTA Membership Chairperson Chante Thomas opened up her beautiful home to host our first meeting.

As Vice President, I will attend PTO meetings representing SHTA. This school year, there are three meetings scheduled that will be listed on the district calendar. The first meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 14th in-person at Van Aken Market District. The PTO does so much for our schools and students, we ask that all teachers consider donating to the PTO. I am looking forward to working with co-presidents Sharee Thornton and Erika LoPresti.

This year, I am a member of the Investments Committee. I will be working with SHTA Treasurer Bill Scanlon, Chante Thomas, and Six Grade Educator, Todd Keitlen. Our first meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 4th.

If you have not attended Shaker's annual *Night for the Red & White*, you are missing a spectacular event. I will be working with the Shaker Schools Foundation representing the SHTA. Planning parties, believe it or not, is one of my favorite hobbies. I am definitely looking forward to being a part of this committee.

A friendly reminder to all SHTA Fellowship Grant recipients, your receipts for reimbursement are due by Friday, September 30th. Make sure that you email me your information and receipts to garrison_d@shaker.org. It will take approximately 2-3 weeks from the time I receive your documents to receive your reimbursement check. Please don't miss out on this opportunity. The new Rebecca Thomas Fellowship Grant application for the 2022-2023 school year will be shared with the membership on Wednesday, October 5th via Google Form.

Wishing you a safe and healthy school year. I am looking forward to working with you as Vice President of the SHTA. I am so proud to be an officer for the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at garrison_d@shaker.org or 216-295-4997.

***Respectfully submitted,
Darlene Garrison***

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Hello! My name is Lisa Hardiman and this year I am serving the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association in the role of Secretary. I would like to welcome everyone back to a new school year. I hope that you found many ways to enjoy the summer and are refreshed and motivated to face all the excitement and challenges that the 2022-2023 school year will bring. I will be scheduling both Representative Council meetings and Executive Board meetings this year. I take notes and record reports for representatives, officers and executive board members which are a part of the monthly SHTA newsletter. I am also in charge of the SHTA drawing which takes place in February, the winner of which will get two free tickets to *A Night For the Red and White*. I also serve on the Black Teachers' Task Force Steering Committee. SHTA is here to support its members as we strive to educate our children. Please, do not hesitate to talk to your building representatives with any issues or questions you may have. You can always contact me at (216) 295-4867 or Hardiman_1@shaker.org.

Respectively submitted,
Lisa Hardiman

TREASURER'S REPORT

For those of you new to our Association, I have the honor of serving as the treasurer. I maintain our finances by creating a budget, paying bills, and monitoring our dues income. I oversee our investments as chairperson of the Investments Committee that meets with our Edward Jones financial planner twice a year. I meet individually with our accountants to ensure our tax forms are up to date. I go through the process of having our accountants perform a compilation of our books each year with an audit performed every four years. I report our financial activity to the Representative Council and the members at large. I am also the treasurer for our Political Action Committee, for which I file paperwork with the State Board of Elections twice each year.

In May, the members of our Association approved the budget reflected by the current financial report. Also included is the summary of last year's financials (fiscal year 2021-22). If anyone has any questions about the Association's finances please give me a call at ext.#6296.

Payroll deduction for dues (\$33 per pay), for those who choose that option of payment, will begin with the October 1st paycheck. Anyone who prefers to pay her/his \$330 dues all at once can send a check to Chante Thomas at Woodbury School.

The Investments Committee (Todd Keitlen, Darlene Garrison, Chante Thomas, and myself) will be meeting next month with Brady Krebs, our Edward Jones advisor, to discuss our investments and whether any changes need to be made.

Every year I, along with most of my colleagues, start off the year with a hopeful spirit. I have hope that my students are all going to do the right thing and push themselves in the classroom. I have hope that the Shaker sports teams are going to win most of their games. I have hope that each senior at SHHS will have a vision for the future. I have hope that my administrators will make decisions that benefit our students and staff. I have hope that I will be able to keep up with my grading and be more organized than ever this year. I have hope that Shaker will become a more inclusive place where people of all varieties can achieve greatness. This is the hope that keeps me going. I fight to ride this wave of hope as far and as long as I can. I love this place and hope this wave pushes all of us along well into the school year.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Scanlon

**Shaker Heights Teachers' Association
Balance Sheet
As of September 14, 2022**

**Shaker Heights Teachers'
Association
Profit and Loss
July 1 - September 14, 2022**

	Total
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Key Bank (checking)	92,722.41
Key Bank Aisha Trust	0.00
Key Bank Investments	0.69
Key Investments2	0.00
Total Bank Accounts	\$ 92,723.10
Other Current Assets	
A/R - Aisha Trust	-2,225.43
Edward Jones 13760-1-1	562,952.86
Edward Jones 13768-1-3	908,507.69
Uncategorized Asset 0.12	
Total Other Current Assets	\$ 1,469,235.24
Total Current Assets	\$ 1,561,958.34
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 1,561,958.34
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Total Liabilities	
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	0.00
Retained Earnings	1,560,348.75
Net Income	1,609.59
Total Equity	\$ 1,561,958.34
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$ 1,561,958.34

	Total
Income	
Investments	0.00
Change in Value in Edward Jones	23,184.72
Edward Jones-Fees & Charges	-1,310.58
Total Investments	\$ 21,874.14
Total Income	\$ 21,874.14
Gross Profit	\$ 21,874.14
Expenses	
Operations	0.00
Accounting	9,334.40
Compensation	1,623.02
Conferences & Meetings	522.50
Executive Board	100.00
Fellowships & Grants	500.00
Insurance	5,419.00
Legal	2,721.63
Publications	44.00
Total Operations	\$ 20,264.55
Total Expenses	\$ 20,264.55
Net Operating Income	\$ 1,609.59
Net Income	\$ 1,609.59

Shaker Heights
Teachers' Association
Profit and Loss
July 1 - September 14,
2022

	Total
Income	
Investments	0.00
Change in Value in Edward Jones	23,184.72
Edward Jones-Fees & Charges	-1,310.58
Total Investments	\$ 21,874.14

Shaker Heights Teachers' Association
Profit and Loss
July 2021 - June 2022

	Total
Income	
Income	0.00
Member Dues	151,173.00
Total Income	\$ 151,173.00
Investments	0.00
Change in Value in Edward Jones	-145,664.83
Edward Jones-Fees & Charges	-8,639.75
Total Investments	-\$ 154,304.58
Other Types of Income	872.00
Miscellaneous Revenue	45.24
Total Other Types of Income	\$ 917.24
Uncategorized Income	50.00
Total Income	-\$ 2,164.34
Gross Profit	-\$ 2,164.34
Expenses	
Operations	0.00
Accounting	323.88
Banking	111.15
Total Accounting	\$ 435.03
Compensation	68,861.76
Conferences & Meetings	1,326.24
Executive Board	10,124.06
Fellowships & Grants	3,051.01
Insurance	5,944.00
Legal	13,477.50
Negotiations	39,786.70
Officers' Expenses	134.00
Payroll Taxes	1,035.77
Public Relations	6,190.46
Publications	842.95
Social	5,593.51
STRS (TPO Contribution)	9,414.80
Total Operations	\$ 166,217.79
Total Expenses	\$ 166,217.79
Net Operating Income	-\$ 168,382.13
Net Income	-\$ 168,382.13

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES REPORT

Welcome to the 2022-23 School Year! I hope everyone had a nice summer and is happy to return to a more normal school year than the previous two.

My name is Mike Sears and I teach 8th grade American History at the Middle School. This is my 24th year in the district and my 27th year in education. This is my 18th year of involvement with SHTA, and my 13th year as the chairperson for Professional Rights and Responsibilities Committee. This position is also called Grievance Chair. My extension at school is #4770 and e-mail (sears_m@shaker.org) is a great way to contact me. I enjoy working with the members and, as we tell our students. “There is no such thing as a stupid question.” My cell phone number is (216) 571-0447. It is a good idea to text me first and introduce yourself. I may not answer calls from numbers I do not recognize.

I also serve on the district’s Insurance Committee, which meets quarterly. Medical Mutual of Ohio replaced Anthem as our major medical health insurance company in January, 2018. Anthem is still our dental provider. Prescription drug information from Express Scripts is included on our Medical Mutual cards. Medical Mutual of Ohio runs our flexible spending account program. Members should have cards from Anthem (dental only) and Medical Mutual with member services phone numbers they can call as questions arise. If any member has a concern regarding health benefits, I can help point them in the right direction. However, directly contacting the service provider is often the best way to have your questions answered. For other needs related to Human Resources, here is an updated link to their [website](#).

During the past few years that we have used Medical Mutual as our insurance provider, many members have had to appeal Emergency Room claims that were initially denied. I have a record of most of those appeals, which is helpful as we continue to work with Medical Mutual to provide better service to our members. However, if you filed an appeal for a denied ER claim and did not contact me about it, please let me know so I can add your experience to our records. Also, if you have other concerns about services provided by Medical Mutual, please let me know so we can address the problems in upcoming Insurance Committee meetings.

The paycheck from September 16th should include a step increase if you qualify for one this year. Another way to advance on the salary schedule is by reaching continuing education levels like B.A. + 15 or M.A. + 30. The Board approves these changes in November and April.

The district policy for Maternity Leave is in the contract. However, new mothers decide how many sick days they want to use and if they want to take any unpaid leave through the Family and Medical Leave Act. If you are pregnant, please contact me right away so we can look at a calendar, and I can assist you in a plan that works best for you and your family. You should be aware that notes from doctors do not always allow additional sick days to care for babies. For example, a note that discusses “failure to thrive” is an acceptable medical reason to use a sick day, but a note that mentions “bonding with the baby” will not be approved because that is not considered a medical condition that allows for a sick day.

Paternity Leave is in our contract. New fathers may use up to 10 sick days to help care for a new baby. No documentation from doctors is required for this leave. For both maternity and paternity leave, contact me before you contact administrators so you understand your rights.

It is your responsibility to keep the Human Resources Department informed of changes in your family status (over the summer as well as during the school year) concerning **births, adoptions, deaths, divorce, marriage, or entry into military service**. If these changes are not reported within **30 days** you will not be permitted to make this change until the next open enrollment, which is usually in November. **Please contact Human Resources before the 30-day deadline. This may cost you money if you miss this deadline.**

Personal days are personal. No one needs to know why you are taking a personal day. You do **not** need to fill out a form about a personal day. You may simply enter it on Frontline. However, you are responsible for keeping track of your own personal days. If you enter a 4th or a 5th personal day, you will forfeit pay for those absences. You may not use personal days before or after a holiday unless you fill out the personal day request form. Both the building principal and the Human Resources Department must approve the request. Administrators consider each case on an individual basis. If you have a question about this, please contact me.

If you use more than 5 sick days in a row, a building secretary will have to enter days 6 and up into Frontline. The Human Resources Department reserves the right to ask you for a doctor's note explaining your absence beyond one week. If you use 10 sick days in a row, the Human Resources Department will send you a form about Family and Medical Leave. You may choose to continue using sick days with appropriate documentation or you may go on an extended and unpaid leave for family or medical reasons. Please call me if you are in this situation or if you anticipate being out for an extended time.

In recent months, I have:

- Worked on two grievances that are ongoing
- Met with PTO leaders about how they can support teachers
- Assisted members with questions about their upcoming maternity leaves
- Attended SHTA Executive Board meetings in August and September
- Toured the schools to see both ongoing and recently completed building projects
- Spoke to Middle School Principal Michelle Hughes about supplemental contracts
- Proposed possible solutions to the Middle School's long lunch periods during a meeting with SHTA Middle School Head Building Representative John Koppitch, Middle School Principal Michelle Hughes, and Middle School Assistant Principal Tom Flood
- Expressed concerns about accessing student records through Power School to Director of Student Data Systems and Accountability Chris Rateno
- Reassured members regarding public records requests from parents and community members

The current contract is available on our web site, <http://shtaweb.org>. I strongly recommend reading it and using it as a reference. I am also happy to help you with issues of interpretation and clarification. Best wishes for a wonderful school year!

*Respectfully submitted,
Mike Sears, chairperson*

EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Greeting colleagues and friends! Thank you for the continued opportunity to serve the Association as the Evaluation Chairperson. 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. 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 throughout the year through this newsletter and during SHTA Representative Council Meetings.

All buildings should have staff meetings to review the [Evaluation 2022-2023 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.

This year, we will include use of High Quality Student Data (HQSD) as 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. Please complete this [HQSD Instrument Request](#) form to request consideration of a different instrument. 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, as they are the new components for this year.
- 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.

Please complete your Annual Professional Growth Plan in the OES system by October 15th. 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 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. Please double check that you have access to your partner's evaluation so that any errors can be corrected right away. Andrew Glasier (High School), Addie Tobey (Woodbury and Middle School) and I (Elementary) will continue to serve as the Co-coordinators of the program this year. We are happy to assist you in any way we can throughout the process.

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

My name is Anastacio "Tito" Vázquez, Jr and I am the SHTA District Chairperson for the Department of Exceptional Children. I want to welcome you to the 2022-2023 school year and introduce myself to those who are new to the district and a welcome back to those who are returning. This introduction is to briefly provide you information of my duties that are extended to all who are SHTA members. This is the start of my 20th year at Shaker as an Intervention Specialist and my 33rd as a district employee.

In my role as SHTA Exceptional Children District Chairperson, I am the liaison between SHTA and the Director of Exceptional Children, Ms. Elizabeth Kimmel. I meet monthly with Ms. Kimmel to discuss

concerns/issues to improve the functioning of the department. In addition, I communicate with Special Education Department Chairs and attend all Special Education Department meetings at Woodbury, SMS and SHHS.

I will also represent you in Fact Finding Meetings and any meetings with administrators at your need or request. Please remember to include the SHTA Representative in your building in all communications of concerns also. If you have any concerns that you feel are a potential contract issue, be sure to contact me.

I am able to be reached at:

216-392-6652 (cell)

216-295-6275 (work)

vazquez_t@shaker.org

This summer and past month:

I have participated in no less than 50+ interviews over the summer as a member of The Black Teachers' Task Force Steering Committee. I participated on the interview committee of all of the new hires to the Exceptional Children Department.

I have represented members of the Exceptional Children Departments at Mercer, Boulevard, Woodbury, Shaker Middle School and the SHHS school over staffing concerns, caseloads and paraprofessional concerns. I discussed a paraprofessional concern with fellow SHTA Legal Aid Chairperson Jeremy Bishko over IEP support concerns at Shaker Middle School. In addition, I communicated with Special Education Department Chairs and attended all Special Education Department Meetings at Woodbury, SMS and SHHS. I worked with SHTA President Dr. John Morris over Special Education concerns.

In the first of my monthly meetings with Ms. Kimmel, we discussed concerns about improving the functioning of the Exceptional Children Department. I sent a welcome email to the entire district Exceptional Children Department introducing myself and my duties to all and to all administrators. I have met with and problem solved with Exceptional Children educators over paraprofessional concerns. I hope you had a great start of the year!

Respectfully submitted,

Anastacio Tito Vazquez, Jr. M.Ed. Chairperson

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Welcome back to school! My name is Selena Boyer and I am pleased to be the SHTA Social Committee Chairperson for the Association again this year! I teach first grade at Fernway.

Our first gathering is quickly approaching! We will have our Back to School SHTA Happy Hour on Friday, September 30th at Voodoo Brewery Cleveland, located at 2279 Lee Road in Cleveland Heights. We hope to see you there!

For those of you that have never come to one of our social events---please give us a try. I guarantee that you will meet new people and have fun. If you have suggestions for me for possible events feel free to contact me. Thanks for your support!

Respectfully submitted,

Selena Boyer, Chairperson

POLICY COMMITTEE

My name is Timothy Kalan, and in addition to teaching art at Onaway Elementary School, I am the SHTA Policy chairperson. The policy chair's main concern is stewardship of the SHTA constitution which defines our Association and provides us with the protocols that determine the structure of our operation. This document, which is now newly amended, can be found at <http://www.shtaweb.org/>, along with our contract, newsletters and other interesting items. I also serve on the district's teacher evaluation committee, and run a native gardening club at both my schools. Any questions concerning our Association's internal mechanisms can be directed towards me, as well as any concerning our evaluation system and the implementation of the [new-and-improved OTES 2.0](#), (or [ecological gardening!](#)).

*Respectfully submitted,
Tim Kalan, Chairperson*

MEMBERSHIP/ELECTIONS COMMITTEE.

Welcome back to the 2022-2023 school year! My name is Chante Thomas. I hope you had a restful summer break. This is my eighth year serving as your SHTA Membership /Elections Chair and I am beginning my 28th year of teaching at Woodbury School. If you need me I can be reached by email at thomas_c@shaker.org or at #5601.

I am responsible for maintaining our membership directory and monitoring the collection of dues from payroll, or receiving a direct payment from the member. Members who select payroll deduction shall have ten (10) equal deductions starting with the first pay in October of the current school year. Members who choose to pay by check must do so in full, prior to October 1st of the current school year. Payroll deduction shall automatically continue from year to year unless the member notifies the Association and payroll office in writing, prior to October 1st of the current school year, that he or she wishes to stop payroll deductions.

Our membership form can be found on our website at www.shtaweb.org. Completed forms should be scanned or mailed to my attention at Woodbury School. Any certificated employee of the Shaker Heights City School District who is employed as a Teacher becomes a member upon payment of the annual dues.

The 2022-2023 Elected Rep Council Members are:

Boulevard-	Cathy Grieshop
Onaway-	Paula Klausner
Fernway -	Victoria Rosen
Lomond -	Jill DiPiero, Steve Smith, Veronica Malone
Mercer-	Nicole Cicconetti, Cathy Richards, alt
Woodbury -	Stacey DeYoung, Aquita Shepherd, Lee Appel
Middle School-	John Koppitch, Erika Pfeiffer, Matt Klodor,
High School –	James Schmidt, Brian Berger, Jessica O'Brien, Tod Torrence, Aimee Grey, Enid Vazquez, Kim Roberts, Joel Rathbone
IC -	Linda Roth

*Respectfully submitted,
Chante Thomas, Chairperson*

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Welcome Back. I am the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Chair for the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association. Over the past 30 years, understanding diversity has been in the forefront for me. I understood early the need to be inclusive in my classroom and everyday life. Growing up in Cleveland and East Cleveland, I learned what community meant to my family. Attending predominantly white institutions made me aware of the differences between populations and the everyday discriminatory practices that were both blatant and subtle. It became a mission to ensure that those I interacted with understood the necessity to rethink their knapsack; what are you carrying into meetings and the classroom that is affecting your ability to reach all children? This question is one that should be examined daily

This year, my hope is that each school will choose a book, read together, and discuss its implications. Next month, I will share the books from the previous year and how each book gives insight to the challenges we currently have in Shaker. This month, I am sharing "*Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom*" by Lisa Delpit. The book focuses on how, as educators, we can use our students' cultural identity and community to increase positive interactions and outcomes. "Delpit suggests that many academic problems attributed to children of color are actually the result of miscommunication, as primarily white teachers and 'other people's children' struggle with the imbalance of power." When students feel included in the lesson, positive interactions occur.

Respectfully submitted,
Angela Goodrum

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

The Legislative Committee has the responsibility of keeping SHTA members up to date about the latest in legislation involving education. To that end, I have signed up for newsletters from the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the Ohio Federation of Teachers, the Association of American Educators, the Ohio Education Association, Policy Matters Ohio, ChalkBeat, and Education Week.

The New York Times [reported](#) on Ohio's [law](#) that would let teachers have guns in school. The required training has gone from 700 hours to 24 hours.

A [bill](#) has been proposed in the New York State legislature to limit class sizes.

If you have ideas about where I should get the latest legislative news, please let me know. I'm looking forward to a great school year.

Respectfully Submitted,
David Klapholz

SHTA PAC COMMITTEE

Welcome back to school! It is a pleasure to serve as SHTA Political Action Committee Co-Chairpersons again this year. We are Cathy Grieshop, first-grade teacher at Boulevard school and Jessica O'Brien, high school social studies teacher. Our job as chairpersons is to share information about current political campaigns or events that affect teachers, unions and students.

We hope you had a wonderful start to this school year. Over the summer, we updated the PAC Facebook page while keeping track of important legislation introduced in the Ohio Legislature. This year we hope to add a new page to the SHTA [website](#) to make it easier for members to find legislative information, and to take action to protect students, teachers and education. Our goal is to make accessing this information convenient to members and also to get members to respond to legislation and legislators that are impacting education. We need you to speak up!

November 8th is the next Election Day. The deadline for [registering to vote](#) is October 11. If you know anyone who has recently turned 18 or is not registered to vote, please make sure they get [registered!](#) We will continue to follow important issues and inform you through the [SHTA Political Action Committee Facebook page](#) and email.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Cathy Grieshop & Jessica O'Brein, Co-Chairpersons*

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

As Public Relations chair I would like to welcome back all of our members. My responsibilities include placing ads in various publications such as Shaker Life Magazine, the Shakerite and the Gristmill. I also am responsible for making donations to various organizations that help to enrich the lives of our Shaker students. In addition, I purchase teacher appreciation gifts for our members that are given out during Teacher Appreciation week. As stated in the SHTA Constitution and By-Laws, I will continue to work at fostering mutual understanding, good will and respect between and among students, staff, community and administration.

As always, we are committed to using American made and union printed items in our promotion. A new T-shirt order is underway. Please use this [link](#). We have expanded our selection to meet the needs of our membership. We must be committed to supporting each other and committed to safe and fair practices for ALL of our members.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Bob Bognar, Chairperson*

SICK DAY TRANSFER COMMITTEE

Greeting SHTA members! My name is James Schmidt and I am the Sick Day Transfer Program (SDTP) chairperson for the SHTA. My role is to facilitate transfers of sick days from eligible members of the SHTA to other SHTA members who have qualified for the SDTP. I encourage everyone to read our newest contract at [shtaweb.org](#) for the details regarding the Sick Day Transfer Program, but the abridged version is that if you are an SHTA member who is in danger of running out of sick days due to a catastrophic illness as described in the contract language, you may be eligible to receive donations of sick days from other members who are willing to donate those days to you. If you feel this may apply to you or if you have questions about eligibility, please send me an email schmidt_j@shaker.org and I will be happy to assist you with your questions. Last year we had five members qualify for the SDTP and the donations from SHTA members around the district were essential to help these members stay in full pay status for as long as possible. I look forward to assisting our members once again this year.

*Respectfully Submitted,
James Schmidt, Chairperson*

LEGAL AID COMMITTEE

I am looking forward to serving you as the chairperson for the Legal Aid Committee. The Legal Aid Committee is here to help members in need of legal assistance. Having attended the Shaker Heights schools as a student, grades 1st to 12th, I have now taught grade 7 Sciences for the past 18 years at the Middle School. I can be reached at #4741 if you have any questions. Have a great school year!

*Respectfully submitted,
Jeremy Bishko, Chairperson*

NEW TEACHER COMMITTEE

Greetings teachers and welcome to the 2022-2023 school year. My name is Wendy Lewis and I am your New Teacher Education Representative. This is my 29th year teaching, all in Shaker! I teach 6th grade IAS at Woodbury. My job with SHTA consists of keeping new teachers abreast of important dates and deadlines. Please be sure to read the information in the SHTA Newsletter carefully.

With that being said, I am sure many of you might have taken classes over the summer. Remember to save your payment receipts and request your transcripts for tuition reimbursement and salary reclassification. The first opportunity to submit receipts and turn in transcripts will be late this fall. Details and deadlines will be forthcoming.

Please save the date for our first SHTA social that will be held at Voodoo Brewery on Lee Rd. in Cleveland Heights. This will take place on September 30. Look for flyers that are posted around your buildings. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have. My district email is: lewis_g@shaker.org. This seems like it will be a fun and exciting year.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Gwendolyn "Wendy" Lewis, Chairperson*

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Publications is in charge of creating, editing, and seeking submissions for the newsletter. I also often write editorials for the newsletter. I also update our SHTA social media accounts, Facebook & Twitter, as well as communicate with membership through email for our officers & Executive Board.

If you know of a member NOT receiving the SHTA Newsletter or email communications, please have them email me directly at glasier_a@shaker.org.

If you wish to write an editorial for the newsletter, please email directly at glasier_a@shaker.org. Our cut off for publication is the Wednesday after the Representative Council Meeting. I hope we may have an editorial from each of our school buildings!

*Respectfully Submitted,
Andrew Glasier, Chairperson*

MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

SHTA President, Dr. John Morris started the September 12, 2022 Representative Council Meeting at 4:32 PM. **The meeting took place at Woodbury Elementary School.**

Mr. Eric Forman, Principal of Woodbury Elementary School welcomed SHTA membership. He said that the school year has started positively at Woodbury. Mr. Forman expressed excitement about the school year ahead.

MINUTES from the May 9, 2022 Rep. Council meeting were approved.

Administration Report

Superintendent Dr. David Glasner was present for the Representative Council meeting

- Expressed appreciation for all that teachers are doing.

Director of Human Resources Tiffany Joseph, was present for the Representative Council Meeting.

- There continues to be postings for needed bus drivers in the district.
- As a result of interviews, there are 3-4 possible bus driver hires
- An Assistant Supervisor over safety has been hired. The person has a wealth of experience and will mirror PBIS practices.

Officers' Reports

President, Dr. John Morris

- Spoke regularly with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner
- Updated SHTA and CCES Facebook pages
- Worked on joint statements with the BOE on HB216 and HB99
- Worked on a payroll issue with Professional Rights & Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears and affected members
- Communicated with SHTA Peer Evaluation Facilitators Lena Paskewitz, Andrew Glasier, and Addie Tobey about Peer Evaluation concerns
- Asked Vice President Darlene Garrison to reach out to members recovering from health and family issues
- Communicated on hiring issues with Secretary Lisa Hardiman and Special Education Chair Tito Vazquez. Lisa and Tito participated in an unprecedented number of interviews on behalf of the Black Teachers' Task Force Steering Committee and the SHTA Executive Board. I am extremely grateful for their dedication on behalf of our Association and District.
- Communicated with Sick Day Transfer Chair James Schmidt on sick day transfer issues
- Toured the building with Vice President Darlene Garrison, Secretary Lisa Hardiman, Treasurer Bill Scanlon, and Professional Rights & responsibilities Chair Mike Sears along with Superintendent David Glasner, Director of School Leadership Felicia Evans, and Assistant Director of Building and Grounds Sean Brown.
- Welcomed new teachers with Vice President Darlene Garrison, Treasurer Bill Scanlon, PR&R Chair Mike Sears, Membership Chair Chante Thomas, Teacher Education Chair Wendy Lewis
- Attended our SHTA Executive Board Summer Meeting generously hosted by Chante Thomas
- Worked with SHTA Lawyer Susannah Muskovitz on ongoing legal issues
- Communicated with Human Resources Director Tiffany Joseph on ADA concerns

- Communicated with Assistant Director of Buildings and Grounds Sean Brown on security latches on doors in buildings
- Communicated with Social Chair Selena Boyer about our upcoming Happy Hour
- Worked with PR&R Chair Mike Sears on grievance issues
- Discussed guidance counselor concerns with members
- Communicated with Pre-School members on workload and physical plant limitations
- I am asking head reps to select one to six members for the newly contracted Building Committee that meets once a month with building administration. Please email me names by next week. One rep or alternate and one member minimum per elementary with up to six and one rep per secondary.

Vice President, Darlene Garrison

- Participated in building walk-throughs with President Dr. John Morris, Treasurer, Bill Scanlon; Secretary Lisa Hardiman, Professional Rights & Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears, Superintendent, Dr. David Glasner, School Leadership Director Felicia Evans, and Assistant Director of Building & Grounds, Sean Brown.
- Worked with Professional Rights & Responsibilities Grievance Chair Mike Sears and a SHTA Member on a contractual issue.
- Attended the Shaker Heights City Schools New Employees Summer Meeting.
- Discussed PTO meeting dates for the 2022 - 2023 school year with PTO Co-President Sharee Thornton.
- Attended the summer SHTA Executive Board Meeting hosted by Membership Chair Chante Thomas.
- Attended SHTA Executive Board Meeting on Tuesday, September 6th at Fernway Elementary.
- Sent a reminder email to SHTA Fellowship Grant recipients in regards to the September 30th deadline for submitting receipts for reimbursement.
- Mailed reimbursement checks to SHTA Fellowship Grant recipients.
- Will be attending the Board of Education meetings for the 2022 - 2023 school year, starting with the September 13th meeting.

Secretary, Lisa Hardiman

- Participated in building walkthroughs with President John Morris, Vice President Darlene Garrison, Professional Rights and Responsibilities chair Mike Sears, Treasurer Bill Scanlon, and members of the administration including Superintendent David Glasner, Director of School Leadership Felicia Evans, and Assistant Director of Building and Grounds Sean Brown.
- Along with fellow Black Teachers' Task Force Steering Committee member and SHTA Special Education Chair, Tito Vazquez, participated in numerous interviews during the summer months for various positions in the district.
- Attended September's Executive Board Meeting at Fernway Elementary School.
- Discussed and clarified contract language with regard to class size with members

Treasurer, Bill Scanlon

- Shared Balance Sheet
- Attended New Teacher meeting
- Attended summer Executive Board meeting
- Went on building walk-throughs with members of administration and SHTA Executive Board members
- Paid bills

Building Representative Report

Boulevard—Cathy Grieshop

- Welcomed Stacy Stoller to the representative council. She will represent Boulevard with me.
- Concerned about the lack of cell service in the building. We are not able to use Navigate360 if we are not able to get cell service. Also, we don't always have our phones on us.
- Thanked Principal Neal Robinson for being actively attentive to the needs of the students and teachers. He is not afraid to roll up his sleeves and help when and where needed.

Fernway-Matt Zucca

- Appreciative of the flexibility during Professional Development days
- Thank you to the custodial staff for the work in the building and grounds

Lomond-Jill DiPiero

- Appreciative of the flexibility during Professional Development days
- Met with Principal George Clark about dismissal. Decided that dismissal needs to start earlier.
- Teachers want more training on Navigate 360 application
- There have been questions about safety drills including them sounding very similar

Mercer-Nicole Cicconetti

- Thank you to the Mercer custodial staff for moving a large majority of our teachers to different classrooms
- In communication with our 3 ES teachers regarding their caseloads and lack of paraprofessionals, and the need for consistent substitute paraprofessionals; this concern is first and foremost, regarding the safety of both students and staff within the ES units.
- With the lack of those paraprofessionals for our most fragile population, it then impacts the other assigned paraprofessionals in general education classrooms, as well as our building substitutes then being placed in temporary paraprofessional positions. With 3 building subs being used for these roles, Literacy Specialists have been/will then be called upon to substitute for classroom teachers.
- We appreciate Principal Roneisha Campbell's support with these concerns; she herself has stepped in multiple times in the role of paraprofessional

Onaway—Paula Klausner

- Thank you to the fabulous custodial staff who did an amazing job
- Concerns about ClassWallet. It has made it easier for administrators but is more complicated for teachers.
- Questions about gifted students: Why is it based on only one test? How to plan for the gifted kids?
- PowerSchool is a big problem
- Building principal has not been able to meet with SHTA reps yet.

Woodbury—Stacey DeYoung

- We've had a very positive start to this school year. Everyone at Woodbury is responsible for making that happen.
- I'd like to thank Erin Herbruck for all of her hard work in her new role as Fifth Grade Student Support Coordinator (Dean). The fifth-grade teachers truly feel supported!
- Met with Lee Appel and Aquita Shepherd to discuss building concerns, organization, and plans for reaching out to teachers new to Woodbury.
- Met with several SHTA members to discuss various concerns.

- Meet weekly with principal Mr. Eric Forman to discuss teacher concerns.
- Many teachers have concerns regarding ClassWallet and Mr. Forman has communicated that the office will support getting items that are needed throughout the year.
- Woodbury has a new schedule this year, and teachers have lost a large amount of planning time, and are now responsible for recess and lunch supervision. For some this leads to a lack of a restroom break (over 3-4 hours without a break).
- Another topic that is causing concern is Intervention Specialists being asked to give up a planning period in order to attend a CPT meeting. This issue is being addressed through communication between the Intervention Specialist Department Chair and Mr. Forman.

Middle School—John Koppitch

- Mike Sears and I met with principal Michelle Hughes prior to the first day of school to address issues with scheduling and the school day.
- Some members were frustrated with the school safety presentation and have many questions remaining about building safety, supplies, and protocol.
- Erika Pfeiffer met with a traveling member about schedule concerns; after bringing it to Mrs. Hughes' attention, Mrs. Hughes spoke to Eric Juli and corrected the situation.
- There is a concern about parents requesting and receiving a teacher's MAP scores from years past?
- There were some concerns about teachers not receiving an uninterrupted 50-minute lunch and planning periods during MAP testing days. Teachers were granted relief from lunch duty on those testing days.

High School—James Schmidt

- I continue to meet weekly with principal Mr. Eric Juli to seek mutually agreeable solutions to contractual issues and SHTA members' issues within our building.
- Our school year is off to a much better start than last year, even with PowerSchool undoing counselors' changes and altering students' schedules without notice. Our building was ready for students thanks to the efforts of Tom Murray and our amazing custodial staff. We have new policies in place at the beginning of the school year to help students get to class on time and stay safe while in school that we hope will be followed consistently throughout the year by everyone in the building.
- While composing this report, I received the news that PowerSchool can now be used to look up schedules and contact information for all students in the building, which will allow us to help our students in a greater capacity. The SHTA members at the high school truly appreciate Mr. Juli's and Mr. Rateno's efforts in this matter.
- Several teachers expressed concerns over not receiving their supplemental contracts prior to the start of the school year. Per the last collective bargaining agreement, the Human Resources department will accept the indication of your intent to continue with the supplemental contract until September 15th. What is not clear is when the HR department will be issuing those supplemental contracts. It would be helpful if this process occurred prior to the start of the school year, as many academic activities that are covered by supplemental contracts begin before September 15th. Mr. Juli did reply to those who reached out with questions about their individual status with various supplemental contracts, which was much appreciated.
- There is an ongoing issue with a teacher who is working outside normal contractual terms by mutual consent of both the member and the administration. The teacher needs to receive the agreed upon contract and compensation as soon as possible, or there will be a grievance filed in response to the contract violation without the agreed upon compensation.
- There is an ongoing issue where some members were not paid for their commencement participation. We expect this to be addressed in the next pay period.

- I am working with our counseling department on an ongoing issue and hope that the parties involved can reach an agreement.

Innovative Center--Linda Roth

- We have had a busy, exciting, and challenging start of the school year with a lot of “new” happening at the IC including near capacity enrollment, new systems, and new goals. We have spent considerable time co-creating personalized courses and projects with students, orienting students to Project Based Learning and to IC structures while simultaneously figuring out students’ schedules.
- We have experienced some scheduling and logistical issues that we are all collaboratively working to resolve. For example, IC teachers do not yet have class rosters in PowerSchool and we are working alongside IC administrator Matt Simon in terms of scheduling and course planning for students. One goal of the IC is to be representative of the Shaker Schools community. The IC disproportionately serves exceptional students (44% at the IC vs. 16.5% at main campus - sources: IC internal data and ODE’s most recent report card for SHHS). Currently at the IC, there is only one intervention specialist and no school counselor. In a school without a bell schedule, it can be difficult to maintain set planning and lunch times. Matt Simon has been working with the teachers to establish a break schedule that adheres to contract language.
- On a personal note, I would like to *shout out* Mr. Simon for sharing his appreciation and respect for teachers on a daily basis, even when he is wearing many hats to ensure that our students have the best possible experience.

Executive Board Reports

Publications—Andrew Glasier

- Updated Facebook and Twitter accounts
- Sent opening letter out to all members
- Editorials are coming
- Updated information in constitution
- Updated SHTAweb.org
- Reminded executive board that blurbs are due by Wednesday at midnight

Evaluation - Lena Paskewitz

- All buildings should have OTES review meetings by September 30, with a focus on HQSD as this is the newly implemented element this year.
- Professional Growth Plans should be completed by October 15
- There are about 130 peer evaluators this year

Teacher Education-Wendy Lewis

- Attended summer executive board meeting
- Happily welcome 37 new teachers to the district this year
- Sent welcome email to new members

Policy-Tim Kalan

- Amended constitution to reflect the vote in May
- Met with D.E.I. Executive director Dr. Lawrence Burnley

Public Relations-Bob Bognar

- Paid some accounts for publications
- Attended executive board meetings
- Setting up new T-shirt sale

- Will be selling black and red Polos
- Shirts are union printed

Special Education-Tito Vazquez

- SHTA Secretary Lisa Hardiman and myself participated in no less than 50+ interviews over the summer as a member of The Black Teachers’ Task Force Steering Committee.
- Participated on the interview committee of all of the new hires to the Exceptional Children Department.
- Represented members of the Exceptional Children Departments at Mercer, Boulevard, Woodbury, Shaker Middle School and the SHHS school over staffing concerns, caseloads and paraprofessional concerns.
- Discussed a paraprofessional concern with fellow Executive Board member Jeremy Bishko over IEP support concerns at Shaker Middle School.
- Communicate with Special Education Department Chairs and attend all Special Education Department Meetings at Woodbury, SMS and SHHS.
- Worked with SHTA President Dr. John Morris over Special Education concerns.
- Met with the first of my monthly meetings with Director of Exceptional Students Ms. Elizabeth Kimmel to discuss concerns /issues to improve the functioning of the Exceptional Children Department.
- Sent a welcome email to the entire district Exceptional Children Department introducing myself and my duties to all and to all administrators.
- Met with and problem solved with Exceptional Children educators over paraprofessional concerns.

Legal Aid-Jeremy Bishko

- Attended the September Executive Board meeting
- Collaborated with Special Education Committee Chairperson Anastacio “Tito” Vazquez, Jr. on paraprofessional concerns.

Legislative-Dave Klapholz

- The Legislative Committee has the responsibility of keeping SHTA members up to date about the latest in legislation involving education. To that end, I have signed up for newsletters from the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the Ohio Federation of Teachers, the Association of American Educators, the Ohio Education Association, Policy Matters Ohio, ChalkBeat, and Education Week.
- The New York Times reported on Ohio’s law that would let teachers have a gun in school. The required training has gone from 700 hours to 24 hours.
- A bill has been proposed in the New York State legislature to limit class sizes.
- If you have ideas about where I should get the latest legislative news, please let me know.
- I’m looking forward to a great school year.

Social-Selena Boyer

- First SHTA Happy Hour will be September 30th at Voodoo Brewery in Cleveland Heights. Hope to see you all there!
- Representatives were given flyers to hang at their buildings.

Professional Rights and Responsibilities-Mike Sears

- Toured schools with administrators and SHTA
- Met with PTO leaders
- Worked on two grievances

Sick Day Transfer-James Schmidt

- I encourage everyone to read our newest contract at shtaweb.org for the details regarding the Sick Day Transfer Program, but the abridged version is that if you are an SHTA member who is in danger of running out of sick days due to a catastrophic illness as described in the contract language, you may be

eligible to receive donations of sick days from other members who are willing to donate those days to you. If you feel this may apply to you or if you have questions about eligibility, please send me an email at schmidt_j@shaker.org and I will be happy to assist you with your questions. Last year we had 5 members qualify for the SDTP and the donations from SHTA members around the district were essential to help these members stay in full pay status for as long as possible. I look forward to assisting our members once again this year.

Executive Session

Old Business - none

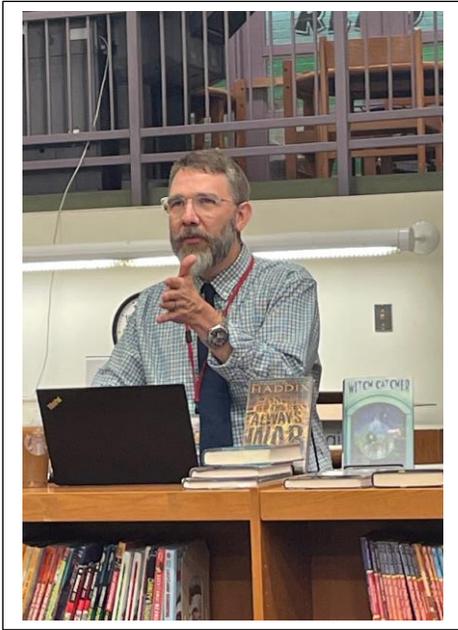
New Business-none

Good of the Order-

- President John Morris thanked Woodbury representatives for a good meeting.

Motion was made for adjournment by James Schmidt. It was seconded by Jeremy Bishko. Meeting adjourned at 5:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hardiman



**SHTA
Representative
Council
September
Meeting hosted at
Woodbury
School**



SHTA Is now on  @SHTAssoc
FOLLOW US!

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

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.

PROTECT OUR COUNSELORS TO PROTECT OUR KIDS

One of the many things that Shaker Heights Schools has historically been known for is our leadership in innovation and willingness to stand out and speak up for what we believe to be right. Oftentimes, we are progressive in our efforts, going ahead of the curve. One example of this is the way that Shaker Heights High School utilizes their School Counselors. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) offers research-based standards for School Counselors to assist them with providing appropriate and effective services to their students through their school counseling program. While many high schools in Ohio choose not to follow ASCA guidelines, SHHS has a longstanding history of compliance with those standards.

There is a growing trend in school districts to assign 504 Plan management to School Counselors, a responsibility that ASCA deems "inappropriate" for the scope of School Counseling. While they advise that School Counselors contribute to the discussion on what is best for the students' educational needs, their management of 504 Plans is plainly discouraged. Shaker Heights Schools is in the process of assigning 504 Plans to their School Counselors, which is concerning. Our district is fortunate to have a strong team of School Counselors who are wholly focused on the best interest of their students. It is more than likely that their ASCA compliant programming has had a substantial impact on their ability to maintain this focus and perform their invaluable work.

The SHHS School Counseling Department's current programming aligns closely with ASCA's standards. High school counselors meet individually with every student on their caseload to provide individual consultations for scheduling and post-secondary preparation each year. They offer evening programming for families and help families network with relevant resources. They attend college workshops and research other post high school options for students not attending college-- all to best advise students on their futures. The counselors are available to provide everyday support for students, families, teachers, and administrators, which has become paramount, given the uptick in mental health concerns. They are available to students and their families through every facet of their experience at SHHS and are a faithful constant in their journey.

When speaking with School Counselors across Northeastern Ohio who work in districts that are not ASCA compliant, they share that they are not able to provide the same level of personalized care for their students as SHHS Counselors. Taking on responsibilities deemed as "inappropriate" by ASCA, such as 504 Plan management, does not allow them the time to attend meetings and workshops with representatives from colleges and universities; constrains them from performing scheduling presentations in large groups, rather than meeting with students and families individually; and limits their availability for individual students and parents who come to see them, even in crisis.

In recent years, Ohio's legislature has begun to recognize the importance of following the ASCA National Model. House Bill 333, which presents a definition of the duties of School Counselors, is working its way through the legislative process with great promise, due to its bipartisan support. In its current text, HB 333 advises school districts to define the terms of their School Counselors' duties based on ASCA's school counseling program model. Additionally, The Ohio Standards for School Counselors, adopted by the State Board of Education in 2015, directs school administrators to ASCA's website to seek guidance for defining counselors' roles in their district. These recent moves come years after Shaker Heights Schools had already been implementing ASCA's guidance and we should be very proud of that.

HB 333 also advises school districts to “designate at least one employee of the [School Counseling] department to serve as a liaison for School Counselors across the state.” This liaison will represent Shaker Heights Schools when collaborating with other districts on best practices for School Counselors in Ohio. If Shaker Heights Schools redefines the role of School Counselors in the district, they must carefully consider the experience they wish for their students to have and how they would like to be represented to other schools in the state, through the voice of their liaison.

So, the question that arises is this: are we, as Shaker Heights innovators and proudly student-focused educators, going to take the lead in this effort, showing other districts across the state how following the ASCA National Model is done, or are we going to follow behind the trend, pulling a necessary resource away from our students’ toolboxes? This is our moment to choose.

The Shaker Heights High School Counseling Department

HOT ONES & THE POWER OF KINDNESS

This summer I binge watched “Hot Ones” where “famous people” are interviewed as they eat 10 wings, from mild to very hot. Watching Offset, Shaq, Paul Rudd, Kristin Bell and many other guests all react the same way they moved towards the “hot” side. I somehow found something comforting about watching all of them get red, snotty, and teary-eyed. It reassured me that deep down, we all have something in common.

Around wing eight, a lot of the guests had some deep thoughts as the Scovilles coursed through their veins. People talked about how we all come into the world the same way and we all leave the same way. Others talked about how the elements that make up life on earth: hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen and carbon are also four of the most commonly found elements in the universe. It’s like when people were eating the hottest wings, all ego and pride were ripped away and you got to see who they really were.

Every year I do some sort of activity to get to know my students. This year I asked them, among other things, “what do you look for in a teacher?” The answers included: nice, kind, funny, fun, trusting, supportive, good, and good listener. The common thread through all of their responses was that they want someone who is just a kind human.

Since we are all the same and our students all want kind teachers, I would love to see the district make kindness a priority during our Professional Learning Days. We explicitly teach our students how to be patient, empathetic and have self-control -- all components of kindness. Let’s make kindness the driver behind how we interact with all community members. If kindness is the number one thing our students want, let’s put our time and effort into addressing that. Worst case scenario -- people in our community are nicer to one another. Best case scenario -- people are nicer and our students are more successful.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jeremy Bishko
Shaker Middle School
SHTA Legal Aid Chairperson*

PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL



BACK TO SCHOOL HAPPY HOUR!



Voodoo Brewery Cleveland

2279 Lee Rd., Cleveland Heights

Friday, September 30th

4:15 p.m.

