

## *In Memoriam*



Our Shaker Heights family was struck with a profound loss over winter break. On December 27<sup>th</sup>, Kayla Sweeney passed away. She was a passionate teacher who taught at Mercer and most recently at Fernway. Kayla exemplified compassion and dedication during her years with Shaker as she worked with students with exceptional needs. She was loved by the families of the students she worked with. She invested countless hours, energy, and love into her students. Her work with children with special needs was a calling, not just a choice; she would see her students during the summer to continue with the work she so enjoyed. She was an advocate for our most vulnerable students, constantly standing up for them, giving them a voice. It was this empathy and patience, this inspiring desire to impact young children's lives that will be Kayla's lasting legacy.

*Matt Zucca*  
*2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher, Fernway School*

## IMPORTANT DATES

Tuesday, January 24: BOE Work Session

Sunday, January 29: BOE Work Session

Tuesday, January 31: BOE Work Session

Monday, February 6: SHTA Executive Board Meeting, Fernway

Monday, February 13: SHTA Representative Meeting, SHHS

# SHTA *news*

January 23, 2023

ISSUE #4

## Message from the President

It's good to be back in school and with my peers in the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association. It was nice to have the time off to spend with friends and family, but I'm grateful to be back. I hope you all had a good break and were able to renew and recharge. I also hope you were able to rest and relax as we end the period that I like to think of as "Winter Two", the long haul from January through March, as we wait for warmer weather and more sunlight.

In the midst of break, we experienced the tragic loss of one of our own, Mercer and Fernway's Kayla Sweeney. Her loss is a sad reminder of how fragile life is and how much we need to support each other. Kayla was a kind, dynamic young teacher. Her loss was profound, but she will continue to positively impact the lives of her family, colleagues, and students for years to come. It was my privilege to attend her funeral mass with Tito Vazquez, Lena Paskewitz, Jean Reinhold, Amy Hannah, and Chris Hayward. I also know many of you attended Kayla's calling hours as well.

At the mass, Father Ryan emphasized how Kayla's life was unique and "unrepeatable". I would offer that we were fortunate to know Kayla and to have experienced the joy she shared with her students and colleagues. Our job is to carry on her work and legacy with the children she dedicated her life to educate. Listening to her friends and family talk about Kayla, that seems to be the best tribute to her legacy that we can offer.

During the last two months, I continued to speak with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner weekly. I communicated with Human Resources Director Tiffany Joseph. I met with Special Education Chair Tito Vazquez on member issues. I spoke with Personal Rights and Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears about personnel concerns. I attended the Insurance Committee meeting. I helped facilitate an SHTA and New Administrators introduction meeting. I assisted a member with a safety concern. I worked with High School Head Representative James Schmidt on a Building Concern. I facilitated a grievance meeting between administration and a member. I communicated with Fernway Head Representative Matt Zucca. I asked Vice President Darlene Garrison for help supporting Fernway teachers. I spoke with Vice President Darlene

Garrison, Secretary Lisa Hardiman, and Treasurer Bill Scanlon concerning Association issues. I met with Calendar Committee multiple times to present calendar options to the community for the next two years. I consulted on a grievance. I met with a member for a mediation. I solicited Executive Board Members to attend safety training. I attended the January 11<sup>th</sup> regular School Board Meeting with Vice President Darlene Garrison. I attended a grievance disposition meeting with members. I communicated with members concerning a building safety issue

Please read Matt Zucca's tribute to Kayla Sweeney in this newsletter. It is a further testament to how much she will be missed. Don't hesitate to reach out if her loss is too difficult for you. We are here for each other. That's what unions do. It's a pleasure and honor to be a part of our SHTA support network. I can always be reached at [morris\\_j@shaker.org](mailto:morris_j@shaker.org) or x6030.

*Respectfully submitted,  
John Morris*



# OFFICERS' REPORTS

## VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to the second semester!! This school year is moving right along. I hope that you had a wonderful holiday vacation and enjoyed time with family and friends.

The Shaker Schools Foundation will be hosting their 31st annual gala fundraiser, ***A Night for the Red & White***. This year's event will support the district's commitment to success for every Shaker student, in every Shaker classroom on March 18, 2023, at the Cleveland Downtown Hilton Hotel. Staff members are offered two discounted tickets at \$150 each. [Tickets](https://shakerschoolsfoundation.org/redandwhite/) are on sale and can be purchased on the Shaker Schools Foundation website: <https://shakerschoolsfoundation.org/redandwhite/>.

Please consider donating to ***A Night for the Red & White*** silent auction. Your generous contribution to the silent auction will directly support "*Excellence is Inclusive: Providing Opportunities for all Shaker Students.*" Unique experiences offered by our staff are very popular at our auction. Can you share your interests, passions, and talents with our community by donating an opportunity or experience for our students and their families?

**Examples include:**

- Unique handmade items
- Bowling and pizza with the principal
- Tickets to a sporting event or lunch with a teacher
- Principal, coach, and sports announcer for a day
- Special lessons, tutoring, a round of golf, a tennis match, or a cooking class
- Museum membership or package
- Movie outing with a teacher
- A party with a small group or class
- Shopping excursion

We encourage you to be creative! Please complete the attached [Silent Auction donation form](#) and return it to Erica Verderber at the Administration Building, or email your contract to [verderber\\_e@shaker.org](mailto:verderber_e@shaker.org) by March 3, 2023, or fill out the [online form](#).

Lisa Hardiman, SHTA Secretary, has planned a raffle drawing for members to win tickets to the annual fundraiser gala. The money raised from the sale of raffle tickets will help cover the cost of tickets and the silent auction donation given by the association. Your building representatives will be selling tickets for this drawing. Thank you so much for your support and contributions.

Winners of the Dr. Rebecca L. Thomas Fellowship Grant, please remember to submit all receipts to me in order to receive your reimbursement. You can receive up to \$100 to use for your personal professional development. The grants may be used towards any of the following activities:

- Professional Workshops
- Seminars
- Professional Conferences
- College Course work
- Membership fees for professional associations (Does not include SHTA)

***Fellowship Grants may not be used for classroom materials, supplies or special projects.***

Thank you so much for your continued support and if you need anything, please feel free to contact me.

***Respectfully submitted,  
Darlene Garrison***

## TREASURER'S REPORT

I'm in my 27th year of teaching in Shaker. Unfortunately, I have had a couple of instances this year where I needed SHTA support.

The reason I'm drawing attention to my challenges is because the process made me wonder how many of us really know how much SHTA does under the radar to support union members every week of the school year. I've heard our SHTA President take phone calls and in his reassuring voice say, "Don't stress about this; we'll work it out." I've witnessed our SHTA Vice President reaching out to support staff members dealing with the unexpected loss of a colleague. I've listened to our Executive Board discuss a small bump in the road that, without SHTA intervention, could have turned into a major roadblock. I am aware that building representatives work things out behind the scenes with their principals so that staff and students can focus on educational goals. These things happen all the time, but are often never heard about beyond the SHTA Leadership.

Needing SHTA assistance myself just made me so appreciative of all the leaders and our fellow members do to support one another. Most of us don't realize the volume of concerns, questions, and issues that are dealt with by the Association Leadership on a regular basis.

I communicated with our Edward Hawkins & Co. accountants to finalize the audit of our 2021-22 books and to get our year-end tax forms submitted. I have monitored incoming dues, paid Association bills, and written Fellowship checks. A full financial report is included here.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Bill Scanlon*

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

Shaker Heights Teachers' Association	
Profit and Loss	
July 1, 2022 - January 19, 2023	
	Total
<b>Income</b>	
Income	0.00
Member Dues	122,331.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 122,331.00</b>
<b>Investments</b>	0.00
Change in Value in Edward Jones	7,032.66
Edward Jones-Fees & Charges	-3,882.10
<b>Total Investments</b>	<b>\$ 3,150.56</b>
<b>Other Types of Income</b>	0.00
Miscellaneous Revenue	15.00
<b>Total Other Types of Income</b>	<b>\$ 15.00</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 125,496.56</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>\$ 125,496.56</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Operations	0.00
Accounting	9,464.00
Banking	0.00
<b>Total Accounting</b>	<b>\$ 9,464.00</b>
Compensation	26,623.99
Conferences & Meetings	2,153.94
Executive Board	1,599.00
Fellowships & Grants	1,769.02
Insurance	5,419.00
Legal	4,034.13
Officers' Expenses	354.00
Payroll Taxes	362.51
Public Relations	-1,346.75
Publications	44.00
Social	330.00
STRS (TPO Contribution)	3,500.14
<b>Total Operations</b>	<b>\$ 54,306.98</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 54,306.98</b>
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>\$ 71,189.58</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ 71,189.58</b>

<b>Shaker Heights Teachers' Association</b>	
<b>Balance Sheet</b>	
<b>As of January 19, 2023</b>	
	<b>Total</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
<b>Bank Accounts</b>	
Key Bank (checking)	181,025.98
Key Bank Aisha Trust	0.00
Key Bank Investments	0.69
Key Investments2	0.00
<b>Total Bank Accounts</b>	<b>\$ 181,026.67</b>
<b>Other Current Assets</b>	
A/R - Aisha Trust	-2,225.43
Edward Jones 13760-1-1	554,745.40
Edward Jones 13768-1-3	897,991.57
Uncategorized Asset	0.12
<b>Total Other Current Assets</b>	<b>\$ 1,450,511.66</b>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$ 1,631,538.33</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 1,631,538.33</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	
<b>Equity</b>	
Opening Balance Equity	0.00
Retained Earnings	1,560,348.75
Net Income	71,189.58
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>\$ 1,631,538.33</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>\$ 1,631,538.33</b>

# EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

## PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES REPORT

I represented a member at a Step II grievance hearing on December 6; the issue is in the process of being resolved to the member's satisfaction. I attended an SHTA Executive Board/Administration Meet and Greet on December 12 at the high school. I also attended the Executive Board and Representative Council meetings in January. I consulted on a Step I grievance and disposition at the high school.

I worked with a member, Human Resources Director Tiffany Joseph, and Human Resources Specialist Stacy Poole, regarding bereavement and sick leave usage. I've also spoken to members recently about dental insurance, stretch pay, family illness, and the school calendar.

I spoke to several members about extended absences for medical reasons, and answered their questions about salary and benefits while on leave. Members who may need an extended leave for medical reasons should contact Human Resources Benefits Specialist Nellie Trier Brown. If it is a maternity leave, expectant mothers should review [Maternity Leave Considerations](#), the slides Nellie created in October, 2022. They can also be found on the right side of the Insurance and Benefits website.

The Supplemental Committee met on December 6 and January 10 to approve new proposals. If any members started new clubs or activities, they should check with their principals first about being approved for a supplemental contract. Once approved by a principal, members can email Human Resources Specialist Stacy Poole ([poole\\_s@shaker.org](mailto:poole_s@shaker.org)) to request an application for a new supplemental contract.

The next Insurance Committee meeting is scheduled for February 23.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Mike Sears, chairperson*

## EVALUATION COMMITTEE

**By May 10**

~~By May 10~~ ~~Final Summary Completion~~

Greetings! As the Evaluation Chairperson, I continue to work with Human Resources Director Tiffany Joseph and the Evaluation Committee to address questions, concerns, and protocols. First semester observations and conferences for Formal Evaluations are being concluded around the district to meet the January deadline. Please be sure to add signatures to finalize the observation. As always, I continue to be available to assist individuals with any part of the process.

Please refer to the [Evaluation 2022-2023](#) slide deck for detailed information and resources. Be sure to utilize the resources on slide 26. The "Navigating OhioES" videos may be of particular help to those who are having trouble.

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

*Respectful Submitted,  
Lena Paskewitz, Evaluation Chairperson*

## OTES 2.0 MIDYEAR REMINDERS

### FULL EVALUATION CYCLE REQUIRED COMPONENTS

- [Professional Growth Plan](#) (PGP) or [Improvement Plan](#) (IP)
- One Formal Holistic Observation followed by a conference
- [Walkthroughs](#)- focused on specific(s) areas to support growth
- One Formal Focused Observation; focused on specific area(s) for support
- Final Summative Conference; [Final Holistic Rating](#)

### TIMELINES for FULL EVALUATIONS

- **By September 30** OTES 2.0 Staff Meeting
- **By October 30** Professional Growth Plans Completed and Discussed
- **By January 15** First Formal Observation (If you have yet to have your first observation, please work with your evaluator to schedule it as soon as you can!)
- **By May 1** Second Formal Observation
- **By May 10** Final Summative Completed

### LESS FREQUENT EVALUATION CYCLE (AKA Informal Evaluation) REQUIRED COMPONENTS

- Professional Growth Plan (PGP)
- One **observation**
- One **conference** with discussion of progress on the Professional Growth Plan
- Final Holistic Rating Carried Forward (Accomplished or Skilled)

### TIMELINES for OFF-CYCLE EVALUATIONS

- By September 30** OTES 2.0 Staff Meeting
- By October 30** Professional Growth Plans Completed and Discussed
- Between Nov. 1 and May 1** Formal Observation and Conference
- By May 10** Final Summative Completed and Pinned

### SPECIAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

For the past month, I have supported an Intervention Specialist over a classroom management concern. I participated in a meeting with SHHS assistant principal Marinise Harris, to come up with an action plan for an Intervention Specialist. I have answered questions from special education and general education teachers concerning students' IEPs both during and after the work day. I represented a member in a mediation meeting concerning an ongoing concern with district administration and communicated with Human Resource Director Ms. Tiffany Joseph to solve a member concern. 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 members' concerns.

I met with the Director of Exceptional Children Elizabeth Kimmel, in the fourth of our monthly meetings to discuss concerns/issues to improve the functioning of the Exceptional Children Department. I have communicated with special education K-6 and 7-12 supervisors Erin Dzolic and Jennifer Currie concerning various questions, comments, and concerns that arise throughout the district. I am participating in the Exceptional Children's Leadership Team led by Dr. Denise A. Snowden, Ph.D. with various district administrators and educators. I participated in a mediation with high school SHTA members and administration. I participated in interviews for district-wide paraprofessional positions.

I have been in the planning discussion with Dr. Nicole Patterson, Ph.D., concerning upcoming events for the Black Teachers Task Force. I participated in interviews for the DEI Student Support Specialist position with Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer Dr. Lawrence Burnley, Dr. Nicole Sherman Patterson, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Learning Specialist, Holly Coughlin, Director of Shaker Schools Foundation and other staff members.

I attended the Mass of Christian Burial for our beloved SHTA educator Kayla Sweeney with SHTA Executive Board members Dr. John Morris and Lena Paskewitz.

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

## **POLICY COMMITTEE**

When contractual issues come up that aren't satisfactorily addressed, our contract provides a grievance mechanism that supplies a procedure to seek redress. An important role in our Association related to this process is outlined in our BY-LAW V STANDING COMMITTEES, section K. Professional Rights and Responsibilities (GRIEVANCE) Committee:

*There shall be a Professional Rights and Responsibilities Committee. The function of this committee shall be:*

- 1. To interpret the Agreement between the Association and the Board on behalf of the Association. Final interpretations may be subject to review by legal counsel, the Representative Council or Executive Board.*
- 2. To assist in the preparation of, and to implement, all grievances as outlined in Article XII of the Agreement. The Agreement is to be construed only as a reference point and not as part of the By-Laws.*
- 3. To assist in the resolution of any professional problems of any of the members where the good offices of the Association may be utilized.*
- 4. To receive allegations of breaches of professional ethics against any of the members and to seek solutions using Association channels.*

Mike Sears (sears\_m@shaker.org) is our venerable Professional Rights and Responsibilities chair, and he is always ready to lend an attentive ear, and provide a carefully considered course of action if you are seeking a remedy for a contractual problem. A grievance is not meant to be a personal attack on a building administrator; in fact, it is an opportunity for a building administrator to seek district assistance to address problems that they were initially unable to provide on their own.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Tim Kalan, Chairperson*

## **MEMBERSHIP/ELECTIONS COMMITTEE.**

As the Membership/Elections Chairperson, I monitor the payroll deductions to maintain an accurate count of SHTA membership. With the assistance of Shelley McDermott, our assistant treasurer, I updated our payroll sheets, deleted members who are no longer with us, changed member names, and building locations. I also coordinate elections in the spring.

At this time, we have 474 members of SHTA.

The 2022-2023 Elected Representative Council Members are:

Boulevard - Cathy Grieshop

Onaway - Paula Klausner

Fernway - Victoria Rosen, Matt Zucca

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

Innovation Center - Linda Roth

May your dreams blossom and make you happy in many ways.

Have a wonderful New Year!

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Chante Thomas, chairperson*

## **DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE**

As we continue to focus on marginalized students in our district, understanding our approach to students and colleagues is important. As we look at our interactions with students, utilizing small group scenarios can help lay the foundation for a healthier environment. I made individual knapsack bags with scenarios that are teacher friendly, but allow students to engage in productive conversations on race. Each head representative received a knapsack to help open a dialogue with students and teachers. A noted researcher, Dena Simmons recommends these actions for instructors to take in their commitment to anti-racist teaching, in her article "[How to Be an Antiracist Educator](#)". She focuses on six key steps:

- Engage in Vigilant Self-Awareness.
- Acknowledge Racism and the Ideology of White Supremacy.
- Study and Teach Representative History.
- Talk About Race with Students.
- When You See Racism, Do Something.
- Shape an Antiracist Future.

With this as a guide, our students and colleagues will realize that we are promoting an anti-racist school and community.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Angela Goodrum*

## **SOCIAL COMMITTEE**

The SHTA is starting 2023 off right with a fun event at Academy Tavern on Friday, January 27th (4:15pm). Academy Tavern is located at 12800 Larchmere Boulevard. Please come and hang out for a while! We would love to see you!

*Respectfully submitted,  
Selena Boyer*

## **NEW TEACHER COMMITTEE**

Happy New Year Everyone! I hope you all had a great break and a good long MLK weekend. Before break, I had the pleasure of attending the meet and greet with SHTA and administration. It was nice to put faces with names.

Recently, I helped a few members with tenure issues. Stacy Poole is always ready to help. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have. If you are taking classes online, please be sure to contact either Stacy Poole or myself to ensure that the classes are being done through an institution that is accredited through the District.

Continue to plug along. We are at the halfway point! In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, please reflect on this quote- *“True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of Justice.”*

*Respectfully submitted,  
Wendy Lewis*

## **SHTA PAC COMMITTEE**

Happy New Year! We hope that your year is off to a smooth start. Our *PAC Take Action* page is up and running on [shtaweb.org](http://shtaweb.org) page! We will keep the page updated to provide an easy way for you to stay informed and speak up about bills that affect public education.

We are currently following *Ohio Senate Bill 1*, which will dismantle the State Board of Education and give the governor power over education policy in Ohio. It is important for us to pay attention to and take action.

Along with updating our [shtaweb.org](http://shtaweb.org) page, we continue to update [SHTA PAC Facebook](#) page. Be informed and have a strong voice!

*Respectfully submitted,  
Cathy Grieshop and Jessica O'Brien  
SHTA PAC Co-Chairs*

## **SICK DAY TRANSFER COMMITTEE**

This month, I executed a transfer of sick days from SHTA members to a member at the High School who is enrolled in the Sick Day Transfer Program. I also assisted a member with the enrollment and eligibility process for the Sick Day Transfer Program. Many thanks to Onaway Head Representative Paula Klausner, SHTA Policy Committee Chair Tim Kalan, Treasurer Bryan Christman, Assistant Treasurer Shelley

McDermott, Human Resources Specialist Nellie Brown, and Director of Human Resources Tiffany Joseph for their combined efforts in helping to resolve a complex issue. If you are running out of sick days and you believe you may qualify for the Sick Day Transfer Program as described in Side Letter B of our contract, please reach out to me with any questions you have, and for assistance with the application process. You must apply and meet certain criteria described in Side Letter B to be accepted into the Sick Day Transfer Program, so if you are facing a medical issue you believe qualifies, please contact me via email as soon as possible for assistance.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
James Schmidt, Chairperson*

## **LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**

The Statehouse News Bureau [reports](#) on the busy Ohio legislature in December, but they did *not* make the sweeping changes that had been on the table, but these changes will still be discussed in 2023. The proposed changes in the 2000-page bill included:

- The newly named department would take most of the power from the State Board of Education and give it to the Governor.
- Banning transgender students from girls high-school athletics.
- Renaming the “Ohio Department of Education” to be “The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce”.

Shaker Heights School Board Vice President Heather Weingart [testified](#) at a meeting of the Ohio Board of Education. She spoke about supporting students that are questioning their gender and sexuality, and she spoke against proposed changes at the state level that threaten that support.

American Federation of Teachers president Randi Weingarten, had positive things to [say](#) about the midterm elections last November. In her statement, she said when education issues were on the ballot, and where pro-education candidates were on the ballot, the public generally made the pro-education choice.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
David Klapholz*

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

Greetings SHTA members. This month I attended an executive representative council meeting. I confirmed the SHTA advertisement in the Shaker Heights High School yearbook. I also began planning teacher appreciation gifts for the 2022-23 school year. I also inventoried leftover SHTA teacher appreciation gifts for the upcoming SHTA happy hour.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Robert Bognar*

## Spirit of Shaker Scholarship Proposal

In recognition of our district's goal of academic excellence, and in recognition of the role teachers play in achieving that goal, the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association is considering the creation of an annual scholarship. This scholarship would be open to a child of a current member of the SHTA who is completing their senior year of high school, to be used at any post-secondary educational institution. The award amount will be proposed as \$1,000 (or more, contingent on available funds in the SHTA budget). The criteria being considered for awarding the scholarship include:

- A. A written application sheet
- B. A brief statement (350 words or less) from the applicant indicating how a teacher or teachers have impacted the applicant's life.
- C. A completed resume or activity sheet- including activities, volunteer work, employment and honors awarded. Attention will be paid to sustained commitment to a variety of activities and leadership roles.
- D. Letters of reference from two teachers who can attest to the applicant's good citizenship and character.
- E. A GPA of 3.0 or better (on a 4-point scale)
- F. A letter of acceptance to a post-secondary institution.

This proposal will be discussed at the February SHTA Representative Council meeting. Please share any feedback with one of your building representatives.

*Aimee Grey*  
*SHHS Representative*



## MINUTES FROM THE SHTA REPRESENTATIVES MEETING

*SHTA President, John Morris* started the January 17, 2022 Representative Council Meeting at 4:35 PM. **The meeting took place at Mercer Elementary School.** Dr. Morris introduced Mercer principal Mrs. Roneisha Campbell.

*Roneisha Campbell, Principal of Mercer Elementary School,* welcomed SHTA Representative council to Mercer Elementary School. She expressed appreciation for SHTA Secretary, Lisa Hardiman, and Mercer Head Representative Nicole Cicconetti, for their leadership. Mrs. Campbell highlighted Mercer's service project where students created blankets to be distributed to those in need. She told everyone to enjoy the meeting.

**A motion for approval of the MINUTES** from the November, 2022 Representative Council meeting was made by James Schmidt and seconded by Bob Bognar.

### Administration Report

**Director of Human Resources, Tiffany Joseph** was present for the Representative Council Meeting. She announced the Get Moving Challenge, put together by Human Resources Specialist, Nellie Brown. It is for reducing stress and other issues. Also, 38 people attended the second session of STRS. Ms. Joseph said she was glad to see everyone!

### Officers' Reports

#### *President, John Morris*

- Talked with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner weekly
- Communicated with Human Resource Director Tiffany Joseph
- Communicated with Special Education Chair Tito Vazquez on member issues
- Communicated with PR&R Chair Mike Sears about personnel concerns
- Attended the Insurance Committee meeting
- Attended the SHTA and New Administrator Meet and Greet
- Helped a member with a safety concern
- Worked with HS Head Representative James Schmidt on a Building Concern
- Facilitated a grievance meeting between administration and a member
- Attended the funeral of Fernway Teacher Kayla Sweeney
- Communicated with Fernway Head Representative Matt Zucca
- Asked Vice President Darlene Garrison for help supporting Fernway teachers
- Communicated with Vice President Darlene Garrison, Secretary Lisa Hardiman, and Treasurer Bill Scanlon concerning Association issues
- Met with Calendar Committee and work group to present calendar options
- Consulted on a grievance
- Met with a member for a mediation
- Asked Executive Board Members to attend safety training – Tito Vazquez, Jeremy Bishko, Lisa Hardiman, Bill Scanlon, Chante Thomas, and Selena Boyer have all expressed interest
- Attended the 1/11 School Board Meeting with Vice President Darlene Garrison
- Attended a grievance disposition meeting with members
- Communicated with member concerning a building safety issue

#### *Vice President, Darlene Garrison*

- Processed payments for the 2022 - 2023 Dr. Rebecca L. Thomas Fellowship Grant.
- Attended meet and greet with administration and SHTA Executive Board.

- Attended the Calling Hours for Fernway teacher Kayla Sweeney.
- Organized donuts and coffee for the Fernway staff.
- The funds from this year's Red & White Gala will support the district's commitment to success for every Shaker student, in every Shaker classroom.
  - Wrote the "Help Support A Night for the Red & White" letter to members of the SHTA.
  - On January 9th, had a conversation with the Silent Auction Team for the Night for the Red & White to organize the participation lists for the Silent Auction. Will meet with Holly Coughlin, Director of Shaker Schools Foundation this week.
  - Brainstormed ideas for the SHTA Silent Auction item. Will finalize gift ideas to share at the February SHTA Rep. Council meeting.
  - This year, teachers can purchase two discounted tickets priced at \$150. The price has slightly increased due to inflation. All tickets include: A fabulous evening of community and fun, valet parking, 2 drink tickets to be used for cocktails and soft drinks, champagne toast, dinner, dancing, and our special 'Spotlight on Students' showcase.
- Watched the December 13th BOE meeting where the annual Strategic Plan was shared.
  - 70-page document
  - Will not be printed this year
  - Community will receive a mailing with a QR code to download the document
  - Two major goals: Learning & Teaching and DEI
- Attended the January 10th BOE meeting
- Will be attending the second Shaker Alumni Hall of Fame Meeting on Thursday, January 19th.
- Will be attending the second PTO meeting on Tuesday, January 24th at 7:00PM

***Secretary, Lisa Hardiman***

- Taking notes during Representative Council meeting
- Sent invitations for various meetings
- Gave input on an Association issue
- Serving on Mercer's Building committee
- Advised a member on a personal day issue
- Will be distributing tickets to head representatives for the annual SHTA drawing. This year *A Night for the Red & White* will be March 18th at the Hilton downtown. There will be two names drawn with two free tickets for each winner.
- Watched to the Shaker Heights Board of Education meeting
- Attended the SHTA and Administration get together in December at Shaker Heights High School upper cafeteria

***Treasurer, Bill Scanlon***

- Passed out financial report and shared the profits and losses from the report including some of the line items
- Had a meeting with administration in December
- Helped file a grievance at the high school
- Met with accountants; filed taxes for 1099 and books for last year
- Sponsored a show
- Answered tax questions

## **Building Representative Reports**

### ***Boulevard—Cathy Grieshop***

- Our third-grade and fourth-grade teachers need time off to complete the gifted training. They feel they would get much more out of an in-service day than reading a book on their own.
- We are beginning to work with Principal Neal Robinson about a building health and safety issue.
- Thank you to our PTO for the fun breakfast and to Neal Robinson for buying us lunch before winter break.

### ***Fernway-Matt Zucca***

- Continue to hold Building Committee meetings
- Thank you to PTO for December “snack cart”
- Working on an “In Memoriam” for Kayla Sweeney
- Thanks to SHTA and others for the support as we move forward and process our grief

### ***Lomond-Jill DiPiero***

- No report.
- The faculty and staff would like to thank the Lomond PTO for their thoughtfulness in December. We appreciated all of the snacks in the teacher's lounge in December

### ***Mercer-Nicole Cicconetti***

- On behalf of Mercer, we send our condolences to the family of former Mercer teacher, Kayla Sweeney, who passed away recently.

### ***Onaway—Paula Klausner***

- Attended teacher advisory group meeting and it was a fruitful and collaborative meeting last week.

### ***Woodbury—Stacey DeYoung***

- Meeting regularly with principal Eric Foreman

### ***Middle School—John Koppitch***

- Represented two members in fact finding investigations.
- Principal Mrs. Michelle Hughes and I have been meeting weekly to collaborate on member/school concerns.
- Met with Mrs. Hughes about the lack of hall monitoring in the third wing before school (7:30-7:45), we discussed a possible stipend or hourly pay position to offer to members who were interested.
- Mrs. Hughes hosted a staff outing at Pinstripes the Friday before winter break and it was well attended.
- Mrs. Hughes and I discussed the candidates for tenure and the OTES conversation process.
- Mrs. Hughes stated middle school assistant principals Mr. Flood and Mr. Brown, will be conducting team meetings to review the core 4 expectations.
- Mrs. Hughes asked me to present to our members the possibility of evening parent conferences, I then submitted a survey to our members.

### ***High School—James Schmidt***

- Continue to meet weekly with principal Mr. Eric Juli to resolve SHTA related issues at the High School.
- Worked on a grievance with several members around evaluation that we have resolved. The disposition will be retained by members of the evaluation committee and me to ensure the process is followed as agreed upon by Mr. Juli in the 2023-2024 school year.
- Attended several fact-finding meetings to represent teachers in meetings with building administration.

- Working on, what I believe, to be the final two issues with supplemental contracts. Mr. Juli has promised to follow up with Human Resources and hopefully these two issues will be addressed at the next Board meeting.
- The Finance and Audit Committee meeting is tonight and all are welcome, I will be there.

***Innovative Center--Linda Roth***

- No Report

**Executive Board Reports**

***Publications—Andrew Glasier***

- Attended Representative Council and Executive Board meetings
- Attended the SHTA & administrators meet and greet
- Took pictures and posted on Facebook and Twitter
- Worked with peer evaluators
- Writing an editorial for the newsletter

***Evaluation - Lena Paskewitz***

- People should be wrapping up semester 1 evaluations
- People should get everything to OHIOES by January 15th

***Teacher Education-Wendy Lewis***

- Attended the administration & SHTA gathering,
- Helped a member with a tenure issue

***Membership/Elections-Chante Thomas***

- I monitor the payroll deductions to maintain an accurate count of SHTA membership.
- With the assistance of Shelley McDermott, our assistant treasurer, I updated our payroll sheets, deleted members who are no longer with us, changed member names, and building locations.

***Policy-Tim Kalan***

- Attended Teacher Evaluation meeting
- Attended SHTA and administration mixer

***Public Relations-Bob Bognar***

- Attended an executive representative council meeting.
- Confirmed the SHTA advertisement in the Shaker Heights High School yearbook.
- Began planning teacher appreciation gifts for the 2022-23 school year.
- Inventoried leftover SHTA teacher appreciation gifts for the upcoming SHTA happy hour.

***Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion-Angela Goodrum***

- Made individual knapsack bags with scenarios that are teacher friendly but allow students to engage in productive conversations on race.
- Each head representative received a knapsack to help open a dialogue with students and teachers.
- With this as a guide, our students and colleagues will realize that we are promoting an anti-racist school and community.

***Special Education-Tito Vazquez***

- Supported an Intervention Specialist over a classroom management concern.

- Participated in a meeting with SHHS Unit Principal Marinise Harris to come up with an Action plan for an Intervention Specialist.
- Answered questions from special education and general education teachers concerning students' IEPs both during and after the work day.
- Represented a member in a mediation meeting concerning an ongoing concern with district administration.
- Communicated with Human Resource Director Ms. Tiffany Joseph to solve a member concern.
- Communicated with Special Education Department Chairs and attended all Special Education Department Meetings at Woodbury, SMS and SHHS.
- Worked with SHTA President Dr. John Morris over member concerns.
- Met with the Director of Exceptional Children Elizabeth Kimmel in the fourth of our monthly meetings to discuss concerns/issues to improve the functioning of the Exceptional Children Department.
- Communicated with special education K-6 and 7-12 supervisors Erin Dzolic and Jennifer Currie concerning various questions, comments, and concerns that arise throughout the district.
- Planning discussion with Dr. Nicole Patterson, Ph.D. concerning upcoming events for the Black Teachers Task Force.
- Participating in the Exceptional Children's Leadership Team led by Dr. Denise A. Snowden, Ph.D. with various district administrators and educators.
- Participated in a mediation with high school SHTA members and administration.
- Participated in Interviews for the DEI Student Support Specialist position with Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer Dr. Lawrence Burnley, Dr. Nicole Sherman Patterson, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Learning Specialist, Holly Coughlin, Director of Shaker Schools Foundation and other staff members.
- Participated in Interviews for district wide paraprofessional positions.
- Attended the Mass of Christian Burial for our beloved SHTA educator Kayla Sweeney with SHTA Executive Board members Dr. John Morris and Lena Paskewitz.

#### ***Legal Aid-Jeremy Bishko***

- No Report

#### ***Legislative-Dave Klapholz***

- The Statehouse News Bureau reported on the busy Ohio legislature in December, but they did not make the sweeping changes that had been on the table, but these changes will still be discussed in 2023. The proposed changes in the 2000-page bill included:
  - The newly named department would take most of the power from the State Board of Education and give it to the Governor.
  - Banning transgender students from girls' high-school athletics.
  - Renaming the "Ohio Department of Education" to be "The Ohio Department of Education Workforce"
- Shaker Heights School Board Vice President Heather Weingart testified at a meeting of the Ohio Board of Education. She spoke about supporting students that are questioning their gender and sexuality, and she spoke against proposed changes at the state level that threaten that support.
- American Federation of Teachers president, Randi Weingarten, had positive things to say about the midterm elections last November. In her statement, she said when education issues were on the ballot, and where pro-education candidates were on the ballot, the public generally made the pro-education choice.

#### ***Social-Selena Boyer***

- Organizing SHTA Happy Hour which will be January 27th at Academy Tavern on Larchmere Boulevard
- Created and passed out Happy Hour flyers to head representatives to be posted in buildings

***Professional Rights and Responsibilities-Mike Sears***

- Represented a member at a grievance hearing. The grievance is in the process of being resolved to the member's satisfaction.
- The Supplemental Committee met in both December and January.
- The next Insurance Committee meeting is scheduled for February 23.

***Sick Day Transfer-James Schmidt***

- Executed a transfer of sick days from SHTA members to a member at the High School who was previously enrolled in the Sick Day Transfer Program.
- Assisted a member with the enrollment and eligibility process for the Sick Day Transfer Program. Many thanks to Bryan Christman, Shelley McDermott, Nellie Brown, and Tiffany Joseph for their combined efforts in helping to resolve a complex issue.

***PAC (at large)-Cathy Grishop and Jessica O'Brien***

- PAC Page is up and running on SHTAweb.org website
- Watching Senate Bill 1

**Executive Session**

**Old Business** - none

**New Business**-none

**Good of the Order-**

- President John Morris thanked the Mercer representatives for a good meeting and the delicious food, especially the pizza.

Motion for adjournment was made by James Schmidt. It was seconded by Andrew Glasier.

Meeting adjourned at 5:50 pm.

***Respectfully Submitted,  
Lisa Hardiman***



# SHTA



Academy Tavern  
12800 Larchmere Blvd.

Friday, January 27  
4:15 p.m.



## ***SYSTEMS ARE FAILING US***

*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.*

It has been a positive school year for me. After last year's disaster of a year, students, parents, and teachers are coming together to rebuild. After several difficult years, my students also have been working hard to improve their stamina and concentration in classes. My colleagues and I are challenging ourselves and our students to become stronger academically and socially. It feels like we all have been moving forward. Yet, the year has not gone by without issues.

I have concerns that many of the systems the administration has created and installed are failing us. There are systems put in place without support, time, or incentives to complete. There are no clear directives. We have struggled not with students, but with these systems, and these systems are failing us.

The purchase and change to PowerSchool is a clear example. Not only was the program not properly set up, but the training was done piecemeal. Technology coaches were working through issues with the rest of us, dealing with how to find student data, how to set up classroom grade scales, and more. Our experience and our students' and their parents' experiences with PowerSchool have been frustrating, and it shouldn't have been. What was done during the summer to prepare for this? Who was involved in the implementation? Why was the choice of this new system made? Building an important data system while we are using it is not a strategy for success.

*Navigate 360* is another example. Safety has to be a primary concern throughout the district. With buildings built nearly 100 years ago, we need a secure plan that is clearly introduced and can be easily implemented. The *Navigate 360* app is not the answer. There are parts of older buildings where cell service is unavailable, making *Navigate 360* inactive. There are over 100 outside doors at the high school. Students text each other to open doors. Security personnel has been reduced over the years. How does *Navigate 360* address these circumstances? What is the plan to protect our children? And how does this app help us our security?

Evaluation issues continue to plague us. We have teachers not being evaluated until the last minute. They are given little time to learn from their observations. With the many changes in building administration, principals need time and space to build relationships with the teachers they are going to evaluate. Human resources and principals need to know who will be evaluating who, and reach out to the people to build this relationship early in the school year. Why must some teachers not find out until December who their evaluator is?

Transportation has also been an issue. A conversion to a new system meant field trip requests got lost. My students and I waited for an hour and a half, as my principal called the bus garage and asked for a bus and driver, to take us to the Cleveland Museum of Art. This was not the first time. I was extremely embarrassed when my students and I arrived an hour late at the Islamic Center of Cleveland to study Islam. If teachers are creating learning opportunities, shouldn't the system support them?

There seems to be no vision for our professional development. On our professional development day last Friday, we began the process of creating a student profile for Shaker Heights students. We were promised this would be the beginning of a larger process that would continue in the future. What happened to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work that was talked about at the beginning of the year? Why did we have to meet in small groups at the beginning of the year? Where is the vision? Why is there no continuity?

Preschool issues have already been documented in the October Newsletter by the teachers of that program. Their concerns have only slowly been addressed—this is shocking. The data shows good preschool programs help to erase racial disparities in academic achievement. Why have we not moved faster to a universal preschool?

As of September 2021, Ohio law requires school districts to provide yearly notice to parents about their procedures related to the requirements of positive behavior intervention and supports (PBIS). At Shaker Heights High, we have been piloting small programs with a reward system for a year and a half. At what point do we move forward with PBIS? Is this considered full implementation? In a post-pandemic academic setting, are the needs for PBIS more important than ever?

Finally, the deleveling of classes was done without a plan. While deleveling has merits, doing so without training, support, and much smaller class sizes, is as racist and harmful as the problem it was trying to correct. All of a sudden, teachers had classes, some as large as 25 to 28 students, with such variable reading levels, it was impossible to differentiate to support all students. Shouldn't such a massive change in culture been done with a plan to support teachers? Shouldn't teachers and staff have been properly trained to go from a leveled to a de leveled system? At the very least, shouldn't class sizes have been greatly reduced for teachers to work with students individually?

Simple planning. Purposeful actions. Communication. Follow-through. This is what we need from our administration. The issues I have discussed do not lack merit, they lack preparation, consistency, and organization. They would greatly benefit from teacher involvement in the planning and implementation. Most of these decisions were done with little or no teacher input. As I have talked to my colleagues, SHTA members have been working very hard to create a safe, open, and strong academic environment for our students, only to find systems breaking down which require too much of our time and energy to repair. If the administration took care of the basics, we could focus on helping our students achieve.

**AG**

The SHTA PAC is on  .  @

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