

IMPORTANT DATES

BOE Regular Meeting (NEW DATE)

Tuesday, March 16

BOE Work Session

Tuesday, March 23

PASSOVER begins at sunset

Saturday, March 27

EASTER

Sunday, April 4

PASSOVER ends

Sunday, April 4

Spring Recess

March 27- Monday April 5

SHTA Executive Board Meeting

Tuesday, April 6

SHTA Representative Council Meeting

Monday, April 12

RAMADAN begins

Monday, April 12

SHTA *news*

March 15, 2021

ISSUE NO. 7

Message From the President

“Stay in your lane.” This has become a popular phrase among leaders in both business and education over the past ten years. “Stay in your lane” means focus on what your particular job maybe and don’t focus on what others in leadership positions are doing, or how they are making decisions. It seems to make sense on the outset as a function of organizational chain-of-command. However, it does not fit in schools, and particularly not in Shaker.

During the past year of COVID-19, I have heard from the media and certain community members that teachers, specifically teachers’ unions, should “stay in their lane” and comply to the mandates of administration, county, local, state, and federal government. My reply is “Which lane? We occupy so many of them!” We are employees of our district, governed by our contract, but we are also professionals, tax payers, community members, parents, residents, scientists, mathematicians, experts in our fields, and thinking individuals. In essence, pick the lane and many of our 470 members have the right to occupy that lane.

And that’s why we will continue to speak the truth for our members, through this pandemic and beyond. With over 530,000 deaths in the US and two relatively unknown variants in the environment, the stakes are too high for us to simply remain quiet in the face of the science. Even with teachers receiving their second vaccination, that does not mean we have given up on health and safety for our students and community. We are members of the larger community meaning that we are invested in far more than our own relative personal safety. One of our primary fears as teachers is still that one of our classrooms becomes the center of an outbreak or cluster.

So, the next time you read or hear that teachers should “stay in their lane”, remind the speaker (if you can) that teachers occupy so many lanes that they are going to have to be more specific. In the meantime, we will continue to lend voice to the most pressing concerns facing our members in this and any environments. Because that’s what a union does.

It’s been a hectic month. I updated SHTA and CCES Facebook Pages with Publications Editor Andrew Glasier. I spoke with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner weekly and attended the Equity Action and Advisory Team February and March Meetings. I worked with Boulevard Head Representative, Angela Anderson, on member communications. I communicated with a member on a medical concern. I represented a member in a county

interview. I worked with SHTA lawyer, Susannah Muskovitz, on several issues. I finalized an agreement with Dr. Glasner and the district concerning members who could not return to schools due to medical conditions. I worked with Lomond Principal George Clarke and HR Director Barb Maceyak on successfully returning a teacher to the classroom. I applaud both Principal Clark and Ms. Maceyak on their positive collaboration, sensitivity, and professionalism in this matter. I communicated with Middle School Representatives on adding more representatives for the building. I communicated with Special Education Chairperson Tito Vazquez regularly on ongoing Special Education concerns. I worked with Secretary Darlene Garrison and Treasurer Bill Scanlon on supporting a building Head Representative with a medical issue. I attended the Insurance Committee Meeting with Professional Rights and Responsibilities Chairperson Mike Sears and Past President Becky Thomas. I reviewed Calendar Proposals and attended the March Calendar Meeting facilitated by Chief Academic Officer Dr. Marla Robinson. I attended a leadership meeting with Interim Vice President Lisa Hardiman, Secretary Darlene Garrison, Professional Rights and Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears, and Occupational Health and Safety Chair James Schmidt along with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Marla Robinson, and Chief Operating Officer Jeff Grosse to discuss district issues. I worked on a communications issue with Boulevard Head Representative Angela Anderson. I communicated with Elections Chairperson Chante Thomas concerning the Middle School representative vote for added representatives, I communicated with Social Chairperson Selena Boyer on the May Recognition Reception. I sent out invitations to the Support Teacher Negotiations Team for our meeting. I attended the virtual *The Night for the Red and White*. I spoke with a member about equity and seniority concerns.

I still love this job and representing the teaching professionals that I am fortunate enough to serve, even during a pandemic. It's hard to believe that it's been a year since this began and we have farther to go. Know that we are here for you as colleagues, fellow SHTA members, and people you can rely on. Don't hesitate to reach out if you need help. You can always contact me at morris_j@shaker.org.

*Respectfully submitted,
John Morris*



VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Like many of you, I am hoping that the worst of this horrifying year is behind us. The number of new cases is decreasing as more people receive the vaccine. Most of us have gotten both shots and are hopefully feeling like ourselves again. If we believe news sources, the end of this is coming and normalcy is in view. I would like to thank the district's Custodial Staff for all of their diligence. They have gone above and beyond to complete the necessary cleaning and precautions to keep us all safe.

On a happy note, the 29th annual *The Night for the Red & White* which took place virtually on Saturday, March 6th although very different, was a huge success! Thank you to Holly Coughlin, Executive Director of the Shaker Schools Foundation for all that you do for our schools, students and teachers.

During the last month, I have attended a Teacher Advisory meeting which was facilitated by Superintendent Dr. David Glasner and Chief Academic Officer Dr. Marla Robinson. Director of Student Data Systems and Accountability, Dr. Chris Rateno presented information about student enrollment and how it has changed during the pandemic.

I also attended two leadership check-in meetings with Dr. John Morris, Dr. David Glasner, Dr. Marla Robinson, Jeff Grosse, Darlene Garrison, Michael Sears, and James Schmidt. I appreciate these meetings because we have the opportunity to share our concerns, communicate our needs, and ask the administration important questions.

I was also involved in several Black Teachers' Task Force Steering Committee meetings. One of them was attended by Director of Human Resources, Barbara Maceyak, Dr. David Glasner, and Dr. Marla Robinson. I am so pleased by the creation of this group and other important initiatives that Shaker is taking toward equity this year. There have been numerous supposed efforts during my 26 years as a Shaker Heights teacher, but this is the first time I feel the efforts and approaches are sincere, widespread, and attainable.

Please enjoy your Spring Break.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hardiman



TREASURER'S REPORT

We've received the second dose of the vaccine and in the aftermath of the recovery, I'd like to thank SHTA President Dr. John Morris for his continuous support for all our members. After receiving the shot, I felt great on Tuesday, then had a horrible night's sleep and ended up with a fever for the next 35-40 hours. The Administration's original plan (which seeing the aftermath of the shot was ludicrous) was to give us Tuesday off to get the shot and be back in school Wednesday. It's thanks to John that administration changed to giving us Wednesday off. [And then it's their inability to provide enough subs that resulted in Thursday's changes.] Thank you, John, for lobbying with the Administration on our behalf and for your continuous advocacy.

During this past month, I communicated with our accountants at Edward Hawkins & Co to discuss our financial report from last fiscal year (2019-20). They provided the final report. If anyone is interested in seeing it, just send me a note and I can get you a copy.

A proposed budget for next year will be presented to Representative Council at the April Representative Council meeting. This gives the SHTA Representatives a chance to discuss the budget with their members before finalizing it for the May ballot.

The current financial report is attached.

*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, 2020 - March 11, 2021

	Total
Income	
Income	0.00
Member Dues	149,325.00
Total Income	\$149,325.00
Investments	0.00
Change in Value in Edward Jones	224,989.12
Edward Jones-Fees & Charges	-5,203.12
Total Investments	\$219,786.00
Other Types of Income	0.00
Miscellaneous Revenue	15.24
Total Other Types of Income	\$15.24
Total Income	\$369,126.24
Gross Profit	\$369,126.24
Expenses	
Operations	0.00
Accounting	94.50
Compensation	12,807.81
Conferences & Meetings	289.95
Fellowships & Grants	854.00
Insurance	5,419.00
Legal	7,379.19
Negotiations	2,000.00
Officers' Expenses	51.82
Payroll Taxes	117.26
Public Relations	4,792.50
Publications	44.00
STRS (TPO Contribution)	965.75
Total Operations	\$34,815.78
Total Expenses	\$34,815.78
Net Operating Income	\$334,310.46
Net Income	\$334,310.46

Shaker Heights Teachers' Association

Balance Sheet

As of March 11, 2021

	<u>Total</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Key Bank (checking)	212,546.09
Key Bank Aisha Trust	0.00
Key Bank Investments	0.69
Key Investments2	0.00
Total Bank Accounts	\$212,546.78
Other Current Assets	
A/R - Aisha Trust	-2,225.43
Edward Jones 13760-1-1	589,530.85
Edward Jones 13768-1-3	917,228.95
Total Other Current Assets	\$1,504,534.37
Total Current Assets	\$1,717,081.15
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,717,081.15
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Total Liabilities	
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	0.00
Retained Earnings	1,382,770.69
Net Income	334,310.46
Total Equity	\$1,717,081.15
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$1,717,081.15



EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES REPORT

During the past month, I:

- Attended a fact-finding meeting with an Intervention Specialist facilitated by Director of Exceptional Students Dr. Elizabeth Kimmel
- Attended the March SHTA Executive Board meeting
- Attended the March SHTA Representative Council meeting
- Attended an Insurance Committee meeting facilitated by Gallagher Benefit Services
- Attended leadership meetings about 4th quarter with SHTA president John Morris, SHTA Vice President Lisa Hardiman, SHTA Secretary Darlene Garrison, Superintendent David Glasner, Chief Academic Officer Marla Robinson, and Chief Operating Officer Jeff Grosse
- Spoke to Lisa Hardiman about requesting personal days before or after a holiday
- Communicated with H.R. Senior Administrative assistant Emily Rucker about a member's paternity leave request
- Met with H.R. Director Barbara Maceyak about an updated personal day request form that aligns better with the language in the collective bargaining agreement
- Assisted Middle School building representatives with a special election
- Responded to members emails about maternity leave, FMLA, and salary classification

Important Announcements:

- Members had questions about the new personal day form from HR. Nothing has changed. Personal days are personal. The only time a personal day request form needs to be completed and submitted to a building principal is when the personal day falls directly before or after a holiday.
- Our insurance claims used around 100 % of our funds in 2020. Ideally, we would like this number to be 80 % or 90 % so we can maintain our reserves and our current rates. However, district employees continued to go to their doctors for medical care and file claims, even during the pandemic. The good news is that our employees received the care they needed and felt safe about it. The amount of money both we and the district contribute to our self-insured plans increased slightly in January, which should also help us avoid deficit spending in 2021.
- Medical Mutual provides the school district with a fund for wellness activities. If you have ideas for programming, please reach out to me at sears_m@shaker.org and I will pass them along to HR.

*Respectfully submitted,
Mike Sears, chairperson*

EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Hello Everyone! I hope everyone has recovered from vaccinations! I am also glad to hear that efforts are being made to ensure that all teachers who were unable to receive their vaccines on February 16 and March 9 will get them very soon.

I continue to work closely with H.R. Director Barb Maceyak and the evaluation committee to plan for the transition to OTES 2.0 for the 2021-2022 school year.

Here are the current updates:

- OTES 2.0 Bridge Training is required for all administrative and peer evaluators. A synchronous virtual training is scheduled for June 7-8. Evaluators also have the option of registering for an asynchronous virtual training.
- The application for participation in the Peer Evaluation Program next year has been sent out earlier than usual. They are due by March 19 and principals will approve or deny by March 26. This earlier application process is to allow time for training to be effectively planned. Participants new to the program will need to take the full OTES 2.0 training, whereas evaluators who have been credentialed in the OTES 1.0 system will just need the Bridge Training.
- As you may already know, we will be shifting from a separate Student Growth Measure (SGM) to using High Quality Student Data (HQSD) throughout the evaluation process. You may remember that last year we surveyed teachers regarding the assessments currently used that meet the HQSD criteria. We will continue to seek input to determine how we can most effectively make this shift. That being said, it looks like HQSD will not be mandated as part of 2021-2022 evaluations, but we still plan to identify assessments, as well as how we can best approach this element of evaluation over the next few months and over the next school year.
- We will have a transition from using eTPES and uploading Shaker forms to using the new Ohio Evaluation System (OES) and the OTES 2.0 rubric and forms.

As I have communicated many times this year, our evaluation practices should not look the same as other years. Earlier this year, a colleague shared a post from Dr. Brad Johnson. It said:

I think teacher evaluations right now should focus on the following questions:

- *How are you doing?*
- *Are you taking care of yourself?*
- *How is your family?*
- *How can I best support you right now?*

Just think about how this approach would serve to build trust, show empathy, and support teachers and students! So, as we finish up our evaluations over the next couple of months, please consider setting the rubric and checklists and demands aside. Let's not fret about evidence and data and ratings. All of this will be waiting for us next year to tackle again. For the remainder of this year, let's just be there for each other as friends and supportive professionals, whatever the task before us. I truly believe this approach will yield the best results for our students in the end.

Before I close, I would like to take a moment to follow-up on my previous reflections regarding collaboration in our district. Superintendent Glasner and I have discussed my concerns about consistent and effective collaboration practices on more than one occasion. In a recent Teacher's Advisory Committee meeting, I asked how, in addition to TAC, are teachers being collaborated with to problem solve and make decisions. His response was that decisions are made at the upper administrative level and that teacher involvement in how those decisions are implemented is up to building administrators. While I am not going to lay out the seemingly obvious consequences to this approach here, I will point out the following: In buildings where teachers are being genuinely included in problem solving and have true leadership roles, things are running more smoothly and morale is higher, despite the extreme challenges we are all facing daily. Teachers are professionals who have a high degree of leadership, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. Why wouldn't their input be sought after at every level, in every building?

*Respectfully submitted,
Lena Paskewitz, chairperson*

SPECIAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

This past month I attended and participated in all SHTA Executive Board meetings. I interacted, communicated and collaboratively solved various concerns with the Director of Exceptional Children Elizabeth Kimmel in our monthly virtual meetings, including multiple phone conversations on a weekly basis. I provided information and guidance to various SHTA members concerning personnel issues and work options. I communicated with SHTA President Dr. John Morris over various district wide Exceptional Children concerns. I have communicated with Elizabeth Kimmel on multiple fact-finding concerns with SHTA members.

I represented multiple SHTA members in Fact Finding meetings. I participated in a fact-finding meeting with a SHTA member, Lomond administrators principal George Clark, and vice principal Tina McCauley, Elizabeth Kimmel and K-6 Special Education Supervisor Eileen Sweeney concerning delivery of services, expectations of caseload concerns for exceptional students.

I attended and participated in two Black Teachers Task Force meetings; one for the Steering Committee and one with Shaker Administration.

I continue to work collaboratively with SHHS Assistant Principal Ms. Jacquelyn Baker on various issues to improve the functionality and support to the Exceptional Children department at SHHS. Ms. Baker should be commended for the care, effort and support that she provides students, paraprofessionals and intervention specialist in the Exceptional Children Education department at SHHS.

I would like to bring praise and attention to various educators who go above and beyond to support the Exceptional Students in our district. There are plenty to name, but this month I would like to point out Lomond Elementary Intervention Specialist Amanda Stolarski. Prior to coming to Shaker, Amanda Stolarski was an Intervention Specialist teaching a self-contained classroom for students with significant emotional needs in the Euclid City School district for six years. As Shaker developed the Behavior Focused Classroom to address our students needs at the primary level, Amanda applied and was accepted to lead our new program. Housed at Lomond, the Behavior Focused Classroom currently has eight students ranging from 1st to 4th grade. Amanda is responsible for developing and implementing lesson plans, behavior plans, and a level system that tracks students' academic and behavioral growth. The ultimate goal is to get each student back into their general education setting with the appropriate tools, mindset, and confidence to be successful. Amanda has proven to be the person for this job! Despite our setbacks due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Amanda was able to successfully implement structures that allowed her students to be fully engaged during remote learning. This success has continued as 100% of her students have returned to in-person learning. Some of her students will have already transitioned to general education classes with success. Others will begin within the next few weeks. Amanda has been a sigh of relief for our students and families. Families have made it a point to let our administrative team know how thankful they are for her commitment, open and honest communication, and for fostering the growth of their children. We too are thankful for what she has brought to Shaker in serving our students with special needs.

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

PAST PRESIDENTS COMMITTEE

My favorite activity this month was working with SHTA Publications Editor Andrew Glasier on the #greatblackretiredteachersofshaker project. The Facebook posts on the teachers who were featured received numerous responses from past colleagues and students. These respondents reflected on the impact that the

teachers made on their life and learning, often remembering a favorite teacher with great joy and gratitude. Congratulations to Andrew for this wonderful project.

In addition to working on the Facebook posts, I assisted with editing the Newsletter. I also attended the February 6 meeting of Board of Education and the February 11 meeting of the Finance and Audit Committee. Both meetings had reports on long term facilities planning, which is in the initial stages. I attended the February 25 meeting of the Insurance Committee.

Coming up is the March 11 meeting of the Finance and Audit Committee and the March 16 meeting of the Board of Education. One thing that I am focusing on is how the Covid Relief Bill might impact Shaker. There is funding in this bill to assist schools with their preparations/modifications for returning to school. While Shaker has already made many adjustments, for example, to air filtration systems, it will be interesting to see if funds can be reimbursed.

*Respectfully submitted,
Becky Thomas, chairperson*

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

The Centers for Disease Control released new guidelines for reopening schools; it is not a simple message. Of note:

- local positivity rates *should* be used when making decisions about opening
- teachers do not need to be vaccinated to open schools
- 6 feet of distance is required in districts with high positivity rates ([Education Week](#))
- masks are required

Is the honeymoon over? Chalkbeat [reports](#) that the Biden administration's Department of Education has decided that states still need to administer standardized tests during the pandemic, but the format can be changed and the results might not matter.

More on testing: at the state level, the Plain Dealer [reports](#) that the Ohio House is moving a bill along that will require standardized testing at the end of the year, but it allows changes in format. Just a year ago the Ohio legislature allowed districts to skip testing.

Chalkbeat [reports](#) that federal aid to schools in the stimulus package will not resemble 'race to the top'. Instead, states will have discretion over what to do with the money. In a previous plan, states and districts would have competed for the money, but the current mood is that competition would exacerbate inequities.

Chris Christie is attacking teachers' unions again, this time in an OP-Ed piece in the [Wall Street Journal](#) over the issue of going back into the schools.

*Respectfully submitted,
David Klapholz, Chairperson*

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

We are currently planning our Annual District Recognition Reception! This year's District Recognition will be available for viewing on Thursday, May 20, 2021. Out of an abundance of caution, the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association has decided to make this a VIRTUAL EVENT. The Association will honor all of our teachers from

this year and last year that are retiring, worked in the district for fifteen and twenty-five years and the individuals who are newly tenured. Please mark your calendar. Stay tuned for more details!

*Respectfully submitted,
Selena Boyer, Chairperson*

POLICY COMMITTEE

The time is approaching to determine who will represent our buildings in the SHTA's representative council. **ARTICLE VIII section B** says.

Any member who has been a member for the three years immediately preceding the election or appointment shall be eligible to be a member of the Representative Council. This requirement will not apply to Support Teachers until three years from the date their bargaining unit was certified by SERB.

Our representative council is the SHTA's deliberative body that provides a forum to hear our voices. If you are interested in being a representative or have questions about it, don't hesitate to contact me, or your building representative.

*Respectfully submitted,
Tim Kalan, Chairperson*

MEMBERSHIP & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

To our amazing members, I hope you are doing well. It feels good to be fully vaccinated. Let's hope the worst is behind us. Our organization has 464 SHTA and SHTA ST members! Here is the breakdown by building:

Boulevard 31 total members
Fernway 31 total members
Lomond 40 total members
Onaway 34 total members
Mercer 34 total members
Woodbury 69 total members
Middle School 84 total members
High School 143 total members
District 1 member

*Respectfully Submitted,
Chante Thomas-Taylor*

The PAC of the SHTA COMMITTEE

With more and more students and teachers heading back to in-person learning, there are a lot of considerations to think about. I have been posting articles about the return to school across the nation on our [Facebook Page](#). Other issues to keep up with are Aisha's Law and standardized testing. Please see the links below for more information.

[Aisha's Law update](#)

[Standardized testing during the pandemic](#)
[Miguel Cordona's 5 point plan to get children in school.](#)
[The CDC and opening schools.](#)

Spring is just around the corner carrying its promise of a new beginning. We will get through this together. Take care of yourselves!

Respectfully Submitted,
Cathy Grieshop

LEGAL AID COMMITTEE

No report is a good report! Thanks again to all the people who work together to solve problems when they arise. Communication and collaboration keep us from needing to enact Legal Aid!

Respectfully Submitted,
Cathy Grieshop

SHTA ST COMMITTEE

If you haven't had a chance to read my editorial in the February newsletter, please take a few minutes to do so. It is reprinted in this issue in the editorial section at the end of the newsletter. There is information that you may not be aware of and that we all should know.

Respectfully Submitted,
Margaret "Peg" Rimedio

SICK DAY TRANSFER COMMITTEE

I clarified the conditions for becoming eligible for the Sick Day Transfer Program for a member.

Respectfully Submitted,
James Schmidt

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

On February 12th, the CDC released new guidance for schools titled [Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Mitigation](#) (updated Feb. 26, 2021), clarifying and amending some of their previous recommendations as well as changing the indicators of community transmission. In short, we are not following the most current CDC guidance at several of our schools based on reports from teachers regarding the physical distancing that is occurring in classrooms. Here are some excerpts from the [Executive Summary](#) of this report that detail the three essential elements of safe K-12 in-person instruction, the first of which is mitigation strategies. The full text of each section is linked via the heading of each essential element.

Essential Elements of Safe K-12 School In-person Instruction

- 1. [Mitigation strategies to reduce transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in schools](#)**

Regardless of the level of community transmission, all schools should use and layer [mitigation strategies](#). Five key mitigation strategies are essential to safe delivery of in-person instruction and help to mitigate COVID-19 transmission in schools:

- Universal and correct use of [masks](#)
- [Physical distancing](#)
- [Handwashing and respiratory etiquette](#)
- [Cleaning](#) and maintaining healthy facilities
- [Contact tracing](#) in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the health department

Schools providing in-person instruction should prioritize two mitigation strategies:

1. Universal and correct use of [masks](#) should be required, at all levels of community transmission. Require consistent and correct use of face masks, by all students, teachers, and staff to prevent SARS-CoV-2 [transmission through respiratory droplets](#).
2. ***Physical distancing (at least 6 feet) should be maximized to the greatest extent possible. To ensure physical distancing, schools should establish policies and implement structural interventions to promote physical distance of at least 6 feet between people. [Cohorting or podding](#) is recommended to minimize exposure across the school environment.***

While here in Shaker we are requiring appropriate mask wearing, we are failing to appropriately physically distance at a time when our community falls under the High Transmission (Red) category. The second essential element addresses the newly redefined indicators of community transmission.

2. [Indicators of community transmission](#)

School administrators, working with local public health officials, should assess the level of risk in the community since the risk of introduction of a case in the school setting is dependent on the level of community transmission. CDC recommends the use of two measures of community burden to determine the level of risk of transmission: total number of new cases per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days; and percentage of nucleic acid amplification test (NAATs) results that are positive during the last 7 days. The two measures of community burden should be used to assess the incidence and spread of [SARS-CoV-2 in the surrounding community](#) (e.g., county). The transmission level for any given location will change over time and should be reassessed weekly for situational awareness and to continuously inform planning.

While risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 in a school may be lower when indicators of community spread are lower, this risk is also dependent upon the implementation of school and community mitigation strategies. If community transmission is low but school and community mitigation strategies are not implemented or inconsistently implemented, then the risk of exposure and subsequent transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in a school will increase. ***Alternately, if community transmission is high, but school and community mitigation strategies are implemented and strictly followed as recommended, then the risk of transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in a school will decrease.***

The most important point to consider here is that “if community transmission is high, but school and community mitigation strategies are implemented and strictly followed as recommended, then the risk of transmission of

SARS-CoV-2 in a school will decrease.” This does not mean we should use 6 feet as a starting point. In fact, in the full text of this section, the CDC states, “When communities implement and strictly adhere to mitigation strategies, the level of community transmission is slowed. This will in turn enable schools that are open for in-person learning to stay open and help schools that have not yet reopened to return to in-person instruction. The application and utility of these indicators are inextricably linked to both schools and communities following recommended mitigation strategies.” Now is not a time to begin to bend the most up to date and scientifically reliable guidance.

The third essential element of the Operational Strategy from the CDC is

3. [Phased mitigation, learning modes, and testing](#)

At any level of community transmission, all schools have options to provide in-person instruction (either full or hybrid), through strict adherence to mitigation strategies¹. Recommended learning modes vary to minimize risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission in school by emphasizing layered mitigation, including school policies requiring universal and correct mask use. The recommended learning modes (in-person, hybrid, virtual) depend on the level of community transmission and strict adherence to mitigation.

This document presents an operational plan for schools that emphasizes mitigation at all levels of community transmission.

- K–12 schools should be the last settings to close after all other mitigation measures in the community have been employed, and the first to reopen when they can do so safely. Schools should be prioritized for reopening and remaining open for in-person instruction over nonessential businesses and activities.
- In-person instruction should be prioritized over extracurricular activities including sports and school events, to minimize risk of transmission in schools and protect in-person learning.
- Lower incidence of COVID-19 among younger children compared to teenagers² suggests that younger students (for example, elementary school students) are likely to have less risk of in-school transmission due to in-person learning than older students (middle school and high school).
- Families of [students who are at increased risk of severe illness](#) (including those with special healthcare needs) or who live with people at increased risk should be given the option of virtual instruction regardless of the mode of learning offered.
- Schools are encouraged to use cohorting or podding of students, especially in moderate (yellow), substantial (orange), and high (red) levels, to facilitate testing and contact tracing, and to minimize transmission across pods.
- Schools that serve populations at risk for learning loss during virtual instruction should be prioritized for reopening and be provided the needed resources to implement mitigation.
- When implementing phased mitigation in hybrid learning modes, schools should consider prioritizing in-person instruction for students with disabilities who may require special education and related services directly provided in school environments, as well as other students who may benefit from receiving essential instruction in a school setting.

Decisions should be guided by information on school-specific factors such as mitigation strategies implemented, local needs, stakeholder input, the number of cases among students,

teachers, and staff, and school experience with safely reopening. **A decision to remain open should involve considerations for further strengthening mitigation strategies and continuing to monitor case incidence and test positivity to reassess decisions.**

Despite careful planning and consistent implementation of mitigation, some situations may occur that lead school officials to consider temporarily closing schools or parts of a school (such as a class or grade level) to in-person instruction. These decisions should be made based on careful considerations of a variety of factors and with the emphasis on ensuring the health and wellness of students, their families, and teachers and staff. Such situations may include classrooms or schools experiencing an active outbreak and schools in areas experiencing rapid or persistent rises in case incidence or severe burden on health care capacity.

[Multiple SARS-CoV-2 variants are circulating globally.](#) Some variants seem to spread more easily and quickly than other variants, which may lead to more cases of COVID-19. Rigorous implementation of and adherence to mitigation strategies is essential to control the spread of variants of SARS-CoV-2. As more information becomes available, it is possible that due to increased levels of community transmission resulting from a variant of SARS-CoV-2, mitigation strategies and school guidance may need to be updated to account for new evidence on risk of transmission and effectiveness of mitigation.

1. Ismail SA, Saliba V, Bernal JL, Ramsay ME, Ladhani SN. SARS-CoV-2 infection and transmission in educational settings: a prospective, cross-sectional analysis of infection clusters and outbreaks in England. *Lancet Infect Dis* 2020; published online Dec 8. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099\(20\)30882-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099(20)30882-3)

It is important here to note the relationship between the three essential elements. The mitigation strategies must be adhered to regardless of community transmission levels. The community transmission levels dictate what mode the operation of the schools should take based on adhering strictly to the mitigation strategies and depending on the community transmission level. As of the writing of this report, Cuyahoga County is at the High Level (Red) for community transmission. The next lower level is Substantial Transmission (Orange) and as a result, I have decided to provide both sets of guidance for the recommended modes of instruction since it is possible that we could see a reduction in this transmission level in the future. For both High and Substantial Transmission, the guidance at the elementary for schools that do not implement screening testing is:

- **All schools: Universal and correct use of masks is required; physical distancing; handwashing and respiratory etiquette; cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities; contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine.**
- **Elementary schools in hybrid learning mode or reduced attendance**
- **Physical distancing of 6 feet or more is required**

For High Transmission:

- **Middle and high schools in virtual only instruction unless they can strictly implement all mitigation strategies, and have few cases;**
- **schools that are already open for in-person instruction can remain open, but only if they strictly implement mitigation strategies and have few cases**

For Substantial Transmission:

- **Middle and high schools in hybrid learning mode or reduced attendance**
- **Physical distancing of 6 feet or more is required**

The following table is excerpted from Table 2 from the Operational Strategy:

Low Transmission ¹ Blue	Moderate Transmission Yellow	Substantial Transmission Orange	High Transmission Red
<p>All schools: Universal and correct use of masks is required; physical distancing; handwashing and respiratory etiquette; cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities; contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine.</p> <p>Diagnostic testing²: Symptomatic students, teachers, and staff and close contacts referred for diagnostic testing</p>			
<p>K-12 schools open for full in-person instruction Physical distancing of 6 feet or more to the greatest extent possible³</p>	<p>Elementary schools in hybrid learning mode or reduced attendance⁴ Physical distancing of 6 feet or more is required</p>		
	<p>Middle and high schools in hybrid learning mode or reduced attendance Physical distancing of 6 feet or more is required</p>	<p>Middle and high schools in virtual only instruction unless they can strictly implement all mitigation strategies, and have few cases; schools that are already open for in-person instruction can remain open, but only if they strictly implement mitigation strategies and have few cases⁵</p>	

¹Levels of community transmission defined as total new cases per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days (low, 0-9; moderate, 10-49; substantial, 50-99; high, ≥100) and percentage of positive tests in the past 7 days (low, <5%; moderate, 5-7.9%; substantial, 8-9.9%; high, ≥10%).

²Diagnostic testing for SARS-CoV-2 is intended to identify occurrence of SARS-CoV-2 infection at the individual level and is performed on individuals with or without suspected COVID-19 infection in accordance with the test’s authorization and labeling.

³If physical distancing of at least 6 feet among all students, teachers, and staff within a class, cohort, or pod is not possible at all times, schools should ensure physical distancing between classes, cohorts, and pods.

⁴Hybrid learning or reduced attendance is intended to maximize physical distance between students. Schools may consider hybrid learning models or instructional modes where substantial percentages of students are in virtual only instruction. At all levels of community transmission, schools should provide families the option to participate in virtual learning if a student or family member is at risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

⁵Strict implementation of mitigation strategies refers to policies that require consistent and correct use of masks, physical distancing of at least 6 feet, all other key mitigation strategies.

Implementing and requiring 6 feet of physical distancing is not murky, debatable, or unclear. It is “**required**” at either of the top 2 levels of transmission in both elementary and secondary levels and the only time “required” is not used is when the community levels of transmission are Moderate or Low and it comes with the footnote:

³If physical distancing of at least 6 feet among all students, teachers, and staff within a class, cohort, or pod is not possible at all times, schools should ensure physical distancing between classes, cohorts, and pods.

Our administration is aware of these new documents. I emailed them to Superintendent Dr. David Glasner as well as Director of Exceptional Students Elizabeth Kimmel. The disregard for these guidelines and the most up to date guidance by the leading authority on this topic is disconcerting and the failure to acknowledge this disregard publicly is disingenuous. Our schools are not following the CDC guidance in favor of returning as

many students to the classroom as possible, the reasoning for which has still not been provided by our administration.

I would recommend that you familiarize yourself with the following article as an additional measure to decrease the likelihood of viral transmission in your classroom:

[Ventilation in Schools and Child Care Programs](#)

[How to use CDC building recommendations in your setting](#)

Bring in as much outdoor air as possible.

- **If safe to do so, open windows and doors.** Even just cracking open a window or door helps increase outdoor airflow, which helps reduce the potential concentration of virus particles in the air. ***If it gets too cold or hot, adjust the thermostat.*** Do not open windows or doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk (such as falling, exposure to extreme temperatures, or triggering asthma symptoms).

As a final point, there is a false narrative that still persists regarding children and their ability to get the virus, transmit the virus, and viral transmission in schools. Here is the conclusion of the CDC’s page on Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in K-12 schools. The link goes to the full text.

[Conclusions from Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in K-12 schools](#)

“COVID-19 transmission in schools is associated with community transmission. Transmission spread within schools can be limited with strict implementation of layered mitigation strategies.^{14,32,34} When community rates of COVID-19 are high, there is an increased likelihood that SARS-CoV-2 will be introduced to, and potentially transmitted within, a school setting. Evidence to date suggests that when schools implement mitigation strategies with fidelity, transmission within schools can be limited.

Reducing transmission in schools is a shared responsibility. A combination of effective mitigation strategies (including consistent and correct [use of masks](#); [physical distancing](#); [handwashing and respiratory etiquette](#); [cleaning](#) and maintaining healthy facilities; and [contact tracing](#) in combination with [isolation](#) and [quarantine](#)) implemented with strict adherence can limit transmission in the school setting. CDC has developed [guidance](#) for mitigation strategies that K-12 school administrators can use to help protect students, teachers, and staff and slow the spread of COVID-19, as well as other [tools and resources](#) to assist with implementation of mitigation strategies and returning to in-person learning.”

Thank you for all that you do for our students every day. I send my own children to Shaker and I know how hard you all work for every single one of the children in our community. Wear a mask, wash your hands, stay physically distant, and be well.

***Respectfully Submitted,
James Schmidt***

MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING MARCH 9, 2020: SHAKER HEIGHTS MIDDLE SCHOOL

SHTA President, John Morris started the March 08th Rep. Council Meeting at 4:30PM.

Miata Hunter, Principal of Shaker Heights Middle School was present to greet SHTA members. She welcomed the membership to the Middle School and thanked all teachers for what we do for the students of Shaker Heights. Ms. Hunter wished us well for a productive meeting.

MINUTES from the February 08th Rep. Council meeting were accepted. Motion to approve minutes made by Jessica O'Brien and seconded by Paula Klausner.

Administration Report

Barb Maceyak, Director of Human Resources

- Tomorrow, will be posting Job Sharing and requests for a reduced schedule/times for next year. If you have a partner who you would like to job share with you, look for the posting in your building tomorrow.
- Teacher initiated request, for any teacher who would like to initiate a transfer.
- Please make sure that you are keeping an eye on your license if it is your year to renew.
- Continuing to work with SHTA Evaluation Chairperson Lena Paskewitz on getting the training ready for OTES 2.0.
- People who have to miss their 2nd vaccine, information will be coming out tomorrow. Including people who missed the first vaccine, information will be coming out tomorrow.

P.T.O. Report – There was no PTO Representative present to give a report.

Officer's Report

President, John Morris

- Updated SHTA and CES Facebook Pages with Publications Editor Andrew Glasier
- Spoke with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner weekly
- Attended Equity Action and Advisory Team February and March Meetings
- Communicated with a member on a medical concern
- Represented a member in a county interview
- Worked with our lawyer Susannah Muskovitz on several issues
- Finalized an agreement with the district concerning members who could not return to schools due to medical conditions
- Worked with Lomond Principal George Clarke and HR Director Barb Maceyak on successfully returning a teacher to the classroom. I applaud both Mr. Clark and Ms. Maceyak for their positive collaboration, sensitivity, and professionalism in this matter.
- Communicated with Middle School Representatives on adding more reps for the building
- Communicated with Special Education Chairperson Tito Vazquez regularly on ongoing Special Education concerns
- Worked with Secretary Darlene Garrison and Treasurer Bill Scanlon on supporting a building Head Representative with a medical issue.
- Attended Insurance Committee Meeting with Professional Rights and Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears and Past President Becky Thomas
- Attended a leadership meeting with Interim Vice President Lisa Hardiman, Secretary Darlene Garrison, Professional Rights and Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears, and Occupational Health and Safety Chair

James Schmidt along with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Marla Robinson, and Chief Operating Officer Jeff Grosse to discuss district issues

- Communicated with Social Chairperson Selena Boyer on the May Recognition Reception
- Worked on a communications issue with Boulevard Head Representative Angela Anderson
- Communicated with Elections Chair Chante Thomas concerning the Middle School representative vote for added reps
- Reviewed Calendar Proposals and will attend Calendar Meeting on March 3rd facilitated by Chief Academic Officer Dr. Marla Robinson
- Sent out invitations to the Support Teacher Negotiations Team for our meeting
- Attended the virtual *The Night for the Red and White*
- Communicated with a member about equity and seniority concerns

Interim Vice President, Lisa Hardiman

- Attended Teacher Advisory Meeting facilitated by Dr. David Glasner and Dr. Marla Robinson.
- Participated in quite a few Black Teacher Task Force Steering Committee meetings
- Communicated with Mike Sears for a member concerning personal days around spring break
- Communicated with Shaker School's Foundation Director Holly Coughlin about donations from SHTA for *The Night for the Red & White*
- Attended 2nd Leadership meeting with Central Office and members from SHTA

Secretary, Darlene Garrison

- Continuing to take notes and preparing them to share with the membership
- Attended Leadership check-in meeting with Central Office and members from SHTA
- Attended *The Night for the Red & White*, representing SHTA
- Assisted a member with a concern along with administration from Woodbury. Easy resolution
- Worked with President John Morris on a medical concern for one of our members

Treasurer, Bill Scanlon

- Communicated with our accountants to square away financial records and 1099 forms that were sent out
- Meet with other officers to talk about issues
- Communicated with Board Members and Dr. David Glasner about my disapproval for pushing to get more students to come back to the buildings without resolving safety issues.
- Financial Report is attached, the Profit & Loss page and the Balance Sheet.
 - Member dues \$149,000 this year and done with payroll deduction unless you started later.
 - Edward Jones investments are doing very well, we are at 1.7 million dollars in evaluation.
 - Accountants gave us a report for last fiscal year. If you are interested in the report, I can give it to you upon request.

Executive Board Reports

Teacher Education, Lisa Hardiman

- No Report

Membership/Elections, Chante Thomas(absent)

- Report will be in the newsletter. Will report that a non-traditional election was done at the Middle School for additional Reps.

Policy, Tim Kalan

- Dealing with coverage issues at Onaway. Specialists are covering when substitutes cannot.
 - H.R. Director Barb Maceyak - Wixey was holding out until the subs were able to be vaccinated.
 - Hopefully we will see an increase in subs taking on jobs once they receive their vaccinations.

Public Relations, Bob Bognar

- Reached out to our t-shirt supplier, they now have a promotional website that they can provide us.
 - payments will be sent directly to them
 - hopefully we will be able to purchase 4 different types of shirts

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Angela Goodrum

- Met with Dr. Wilder, good conversation about collaboration across the board with the central office.
- Preparing for a panel discussion with administration
- It has been a very good experience and our meetings are very productive.

Evaluation, Lena Paskewitz

- Continuing to work on a plan for training for OTES 2.0, which will be rolled out next year. Training scheduled to take place right after school is out. Email coming out within the next week.
- HQSD, next year it will not be a mandated piece for evaluation, just for next year.

Legislative, Dave Klapholz

The Centers for Disease Control released new guidelines for reopening schools; it is not a simple message. Of note:

- local positivity rates should be used when making decisions about opening
- teachers do not need to be vaccinated to open schools
- 6 feet of distance is recommended in districts with high positivity rates ([Education Week](#))
- masks are required

Is the honeymoon over? Chalkbeat [reports](#) that the Biden administration's Department of Education has decided that states still need to administer standardized tests during the pandemic, but the format can be changed and the results might not matter.

Chalkbeat [reports](#) that federal aid to schools in the stimulus package will not resemble 'race to the top'. Instead, states will have discretion over what to do with the money. In a previous plan, states and districts would have competed for the money, but the current mood is that competition would exacerbate inequities.

Chris Christie is attacking teachers unions again, this time in an OP-Ed piece in the [Wall Street Journal](#) over the issue of going back into the schools.

Publications, Andrew Glasier

- Sent out emails to membership
- Sent out newsletter to members, administrators & community and had it posted at SHTA [web.org](#)
- Updated Facebook and Twitter account
- # Great Black Retired Teachers of Shaker social media campaign with Becky Thomas
- Editorial: James Schmidt 3 feet is not CDC approved
- Executive Board please have blurb ready Wednesday at midnight

Past President, Becky Thomas

- Attended Feb. 6th Board of Education Regular Meeting
- Attended Feb. 11th Finance and Audit Committee Meeting
- Assisted with SHTA Newsletter editing
- Assisted Andrew Glasier with #greatblackretiredteachersofshaker
Andrew Glasier's idea for these FaceBook was inspired! Thanks for letting me assist.

- Attended the Feb. 25th Insurance Committee meeting
- Plan to attend the Mar. 16th meeting of the Board of Education and the March 11th meeting of the Finance and Audit Committee.

Social, Selena Brown

- Planning district reception virtually. Working with Stacey Poole, she's great to work with. Things have been very pleasant.
 - Planning to talk to Holly Coughlin for assistance
 - Will honor members from last year as well

Legal Aid, Cathy Grieshop

- Legal Aid, No Report
- PAC - Continue to update the Facebook Page and including Aisha's Law being reintroduced in Columbus.

Professional Rights and Responsibilities, Mike Sears

- Attended a fact-finding meeting with an Intervention Specialist facilitated by Elizabeth Kimmel
- Attended SHTA Executive Board meeting
- Attended an Insurance Committee meeting facilitated by Gallagher Benefit Services
- Attended leadership meetings about 4th quarter with John Morris, Lisa Hardiman, Darlene Garrison, David Glasner, Marla Robinson, and Jeff Grosse
- Spoke to Lisa Hardiman about requesting personal days before or after a holiday
- Communicated with Emily Rucker about a member's paternity leave request
- Met with Barbara Maceyak about an updated personal day request form that aligns better with the language in the collective bargaining agreement
- Assisted Middle School building reps. with a special election
- Responded to members emails about maternity leave, FMLA, and salary classification

Occupation Health and Safety, James Schmidt

- I met with Dr. Glasner, Dr. Robinson, and Mr. Grosse along with other SHTA members to discuss district Health and Safety matters on 3/4/21.
- I worked with fellow High School teacher Marty McGuan to identify a space that was not receiving adequate ventilation. I brought it to Mr. Grosse's attention and upon investigation, the Ladies' restroom on the first floor at the High School will be receiving an air purifier. The Men's' restroom will not, as it receives outside mechanical air from vents.
- On February 12th, the CDC released new guidance for schools titled [Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Mitigation \(link to PDF format\)](#) (updated Feb. 26, 2021), clarifying and amending some of their previous recommendations as well as changing the indicators of community transmission. In short, we are not following the most current CDC guidance at several of our schools based on reports from teachers regarding the physical distancing that is occurring in classrooms. My full report in the newsletter contains excerpts from the CDC guidance and a clear explanation of how the new guidance should be implemented. When I presented these to Dr. Glasner, he repeated that we were going to try to maintain 6 feet of physical distancing (formerly known as "social distancing") until we couldn't and that the Cuyahoga County Board of Health had published guidance that stated 3 feet of physical distancing was acceptable. I cannot find this guidance anywhere on the CCBH website unfortunately. All of the most current data supports 6 feet of social distancing in addition to all other mitigation factors which are:

- Universal and correct use of [masks](#)
- [Physical distancing](#)
- [Handwashing and respiratory etiquette](#)
- [Cleaning](#) and maintaining healthy facilities
- [Contact tracing](#) in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the health department

Schools providing in-person instruction should prioritize two mitigation strategies:

1. Universal and correct use of [masks](#) should be required, at all levels of community transmission. Require consistent and correct use of face masks, by all students, teachers, and staff to prevent SARS-CoV-2 [transmission through respiratory droplets](#).
2. ***Physical distancing (at least 6 feet) should be maximized to the greatest extent possible. To ensure physical distancing, schools should establish policies and implement structural interventions to promote physical distance of at least 6 feet between people. [Cohorting or podding](#) is recommended to minimize exposure across the school environment.***

The fact that our administration has continued to push for increasing the number of students in our classrooms and changed our instructional model to the point that we cannot fully follow these recommendations is disconcerting and the fact that they have done so knowingly borders on negligence. I urge Dr. Glasner to reconsider this move away from our hybrid models and towards conditions that could contribute to the spread of the virus in our schools. We have been very lucky to avoid any substantive outbreaks. We should not continue to roll the dice with our students' health and safety.

I have asked Andrew Glasier to send out the two-page condensed version of this most current and up to date scientifically based guidance to all of our members as a point of information for our members.

SHTA ST, Peg Rimedio

- No Report
- If you have not had a chance to read my editorial in the February newsletter, please take a moment to do so.

Special Education, Tito Vazquez

- This past month I attended and participated in all SHTA Executive Board meetings.
- I interacted, communicated and collaboratively solved various concerns with the Director of Exceptional Children Elizabeth Kimmel in our monthly virtual meetings, including multiple phone conversations on a weekly basis.
- I provided information and guidance to various SHTA members concerning personnel issues and work options.
- I communicated with SHTA President Dr. John Morris over various district wide Exceptional Children concerns.
- I have communicated with Director of Exceptional Elizabeth Kimmel on multiple fact-finding concerns with SHTA members.
- I represented multiple SHTA members in Fact Finding meetings.

- I participated in a fact-finding meeting with a SHTA member, Lomond administrators George Clark, Tina McCauley, Director of Exceptional Elizabeth Kimmel and K-6 Special Education Supervisor Eileen Sweeney concerning delivery of services, expectations of caseload concerns for exceptional students.
- I attended and participated in two Black Teachers Task Force meetings. One for the Steering Committee and one with Shaker Administration.
- I continue to work collaboratively with SHHS Assistant Principal Ms. Jacquelyn Baker on various issues to improve the functionality and support to the Exceptional Children department at SHHS. Ms. Baker should be commended for the care, effort and support that she provides students, paraprofessionals and intervention specialists in the Exceptional Children Education department at SHHS.
- I would like to bring praise and attention to various educators who go above and beyond to support the Exceptional Students in our district. There are plenty to name, but this month I would like to point out Lomond Elementary Intervention Specialist Amanda Stolarski. Prior to coming to Shaker, Amanda Stolarski was an Intervention Specialist teaching a self-contained classroom for students with significant emotional needs in the Euclid City School district for six years. As Shaker developed the Behavior Focused Classroom to address our students needs at the primary level, Amanda applied and was accepted to lead our new program. Housed at Lomond, the Behavior Focused Classroom currently has eight students ranging from 1st to 4th grade. Amanda is responsible for developing and implementing lesson plans, behavior plans, and a level system that tracks students' academic and behavioral growth. The ultimate goal is to get each student back into their general education setting with the appropriate tools, mindset, and confidence to be successful. Amanda has proven to be the person for this job! Despite our setbacks due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Amanda was able to successfully implement structures that allowed her students to be fully engaged during remote learning. This success has continued as 100% of her students have returned to in-person learning. Some of her students will have already transitioned to general education classes with success. Others will begin within the next few weeks. Amanda has been a sigh of relief for our students and families. Families have made it a point to let our administrative team know how thankful they are for her commitment, open and honest communication, and for fostering the growth of their children. We too are thankful for what she has brought to Shaker in serving our students with special needs.

Sick Day Transfer, James Schmidt

- I clarified the conditions for becoming eligible for the Sick Day Transfer Program for a member.

Building Representative Reports

Boulevard, Angela Anderson

- No Report from Boulevard. Our principal has been great with working through any issues or concerns that we have.

Fernway, Andree Hassell (Victoria Goldfarb-Absent)

- I have surveyed our staff, sent updates following our last representative meeting, and unfortunately, did catch Covid (I have luckily recovered). With that being said, I want to thank my school administrators Jean Reinhold and Chris Hayward for their flexibility, support, and Jean for even personally dropping off groceries. Chris and I have met several times over the last month to discuss ideas to better support our staff, and we are very appreciative for his openness and continued willingness to collaborate.
- I also want to thank Louise Haffke, our school's nurse, for her kind approach, knowledge, and vigilance in supporting me in finding an alternative vaccination time and for her consistent support of our staff. All

of the nurses as well as our custodial staff are doing an incredible job, working tirelessly to keep us as safe as we can be, and we truly appreciate it. Lastly, when I spoke to HR Director Barb Maceyak after receiving my diagnosis, she was supportive, helpful, and also compassionate, and it was truly appreciated. Stay well, everyone.

Lomond, Jill Dipiero

- We met with the administration and surveyed the staff. There are some concerns about spacing in some classrooms when more students return on 3/22. Classrooms with sinks are waiting for a plumbing fix. Mr. Clark has been in frequent communication with reps to address any concerns. Many teacher teams have supported members and their students in the last month. We applaud our colleagues for their professionalism and dedication to students.

Mercer, Nicole Cicconetti

- Concerns regarding issues with speech services. Thank you, Dr. John Morris and Tito Vazquez for getting us some answers. We appreciate the two of you following up for us so teachers had some answers and to provide to parents.
- Continued concern with students showing up to our classrooms early. There are times when students are walking to their rooms as early as 7:59AM. We are seeing this on a daily basis at Mercer.

Onaway, Paula Klausner

- Worked with a member on a maternity leave question
- Worked with another member on an evaluation matter
- Worked with another member on Salary and Step issue but referred it to Mike Sears.
- Collecting staff opinions regarding the current teaching situation.
- Attended the Teacher Advisory Meeting

Woodbury, Angela Goodrum

- Sat in with a colleague/Special Education to resolve a serious issue and it was resolved.
- Woodbury Principal Ms. Tiffany Joseph does work with SHTA and she takes the time to actually hear us. Things are going well.

Middle School, Erika Pfeiffer and Linda Roth

- SMS continues to roll out more forms/responsibilities to teachers. There are additional committees being implemented, but the general consensus is that these are all for show. Members of committees do not really impact the decision-making process and much of what the committees discuss involves things already decided on by upper admin.
- SMS held an election to fill our open spots for the rest of this year. The vote was held on Friday, 3/5 and resulted in the election of Jackie Abrams, Rob Senior, and Matt Klodor.
- We have been advised that as a little over 100 students return for 4th quarter, there will be no additional shields ordered for desks. This means that we will have students as close as 3 feet or less in some rooms, and without any covering besides masks. Additionally, our new 4th Q schedule will evidently involve a loss of 1 minute of passing time, and 3 minutes of instructional time per class...yet teachers will still have to do the moving around. Our patience is growing VERY thin. This is in addition to the two minutes of class time we already lost.
- Members are very dismayed to see that a potential concurrent instruction system is still on the list of possible plans for fall. The consensus is that if hybrid is to continue to be an option, then the virtual academy MUST be implemented for fall in order to protect instruction.

- I attended a fact-finding meeting for a member, and assisted another member with an issue re: evaluation.

High School, James Schmidt

- I continue to meet weekly with Principal Mr. Eric Juli to address building issues.
- We are beginning to plan for next year and I will continue to provide guidance on the high school schedule as it pertains to our contract.

Old Business

- None to report.

New Business

- None to report

Good of the Order

- Dr. John Morris - Thank you for being a part of SHTA this year during such a difficult time of transition.
- Thank you for supporting our colleague at Lomond

Motion to Adjourn

- Motion made by Cathy Richards and seconded by James Schmidt

March 08th Rep. Council meeting was adjourned at 5:58PM.

April Rep. Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 12th at Lomond Elementary School.

*Respectfully submitted,
Darlene Garrison*

Skills Teachers have stepped up to challenges

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.

On January 22, 2019, after eight months of negotiations which involved mediation and fact finding, the last Support Teacher contract was finally approved by the Board of Education. At that time, Intervention Specialist Support Teachers and English Language Learners Support Teachers were placed on the SHTA salary schedule based upon their respective years of teaching (capped at five) and education level. All Support Teachers were supportive of this victory and felt confident that soon Skills Support Teachers and IC Support Teachers would be afforded the same respect.

After the Fernway fire, teachers at Fernway received stipends for classroom relocation and for meetings and work done over the summer. Support Teachers were not on the list for these payments. When presented with the contract, we were paid for classroom relocation, but not for summer work because we were support teachers. I informed my Principal about what I had done during the summer and also provided that information to SHTA. However, the District said no.

In the Fall of 2019, after much reflection, I decided it was time for me to file a grievance. I saw my job as a Reading Skills Teacher to be the same as the jobs of ELL Teachers. We all assessed students, analyzed data, identified students needing intervention, created schedules and provided intervention. The grievance was filed and denied. The reasons given for denial were that I was not required to write plans or create assessments. I was doing more than was required and was to be paid only for what was required. I found that explanation to be unacceptable. We all know that it is impossible to teach without planning and assessing. Because SHTA was planning to file a future class action grievance, we withdrew the grievance without prejudice, which meant that we could come back to it at a later date.

In the spring of 2020, our class action grievance was filed. The Superintendent agreed that our jobs were identical to Reading Teachers in the District. However, their offer to us was a real shock. They would RIF the entire unit and hire half of us back on the teacher scale. Obviously, we could not vote for that. This response was despicable, underhanded and grossly unfair. I could not believe that Shaker would stoop to that level. It wasn't the Shaker that I have known and loved.

During the summer of 2020, Skills Teachers were called upon to help. More classroom teachers were needed to reduce class sizes. About half of the Skills Teachers were hired for these positions and their positions were not filled. Those of us who were left, worked as Remote Learning Partners and provided targeted support to students within that role. We also wrote all of the Reading Improvement Plans for our buildings and shared them with parents.

Over the Years, Skills Teachers have stepped up to challenges when needed. We have moved into classroom positions, served as Remote Learning Partners, covered classrooms so that classroom teachers could attend meetings, filled in as substitutes and proctored standardized tests. However, our main goal has always been to provide targeted intervention to our most vulnerable students. IC Support Teachers at the high school have the same goal. They are Teachers and Counselors who help students needing personalized learning to succeed and graduate.

Our Strategic Plan emphasizes the need for equity, equality and fairness. We want all of this for our students and we want it for ourselves. We need enough staff to provide consistent intervention and we need respect for the Teachers who provide that intervention. We need the District to show respect for all Teachers. We are ALL Teachers and we all do Teacher work.

Margaret "Peg" Rimedio

