

IMPORTANT DATES

**Board of Education Work Session
Tuesday, April 27, 2021**

**Teacher Appreciation Week
Monday, May 3, 2021**

**SHTA Executive Board Meeting -
Virtual
Monday, May 3, 2021**

**SHTA Representative Council
Meeting – Virtual Onaway
Monday, May 10, 2021**

SHTA *news*

April 19, 2021

ISSUE NO. 7

Message From the President

“Go easy on yourself.” These are words that reverberate in my mind as I consider the last year of Pandemic education and living. We have been in a storm so strong that many of us took for granted the daily upheavals that became normal parts of our lives. These upheavals ranged from the profound statistics concerning the numbers of infected and deceased, as well as the seemingly ever-changing schedule, to untested ways of teaching and communicating with students, parents, and colleagues. And now, thankfully, we are on the other side of our second vaccinations and a precarious return to what looks like a new normal including masks, social distance, increasing numbers of students in schools, and limited face-to-face interactions with family and friends. We should be feeling better, but there is still something missing.

Recently, journalists have picked up on this trend among our students. As the father of a sixth grader and a senior I see it as well. Even though our kids are starting to return to in-person learning, they are tentative and unsure. They have hit what is being called the “pandemic wall” (<https://www.news5cleveland.com/rebound/students-hitting-pandemic-wall-struggling-with-school-and-mental-health-despite-restart-of-in-person-learning>). They struggle with deadlines and have a hard time finding the motivation to engage in classes. Attendance is an issue and trepidation about returning to the classroom is real. I see it in my own children and students nearly every day. And, to add to the stress is the discussion of “learning loss” and how to make up for any perceived academic shortcomings during a summer that most parents and educators should be dedicated to exploration and play. Fortunately, voices have emerged featuring this need as well, especially for our most vulnerable students (<https://www.newsweek.com/after-year-pandemic-schooling-lets-focus-student-well-being-not-grades-opinion-1578855>). I would argue that, like the op-ed piece so eloquently states, we emphasize the emotional well being of our students more than we do the academic. When our students feel like they are in a stable world, they will begin to learn as they once did. Granted, it will take the best of what we learned during the pandemic, but if they are not emotionally grounded their academic selves will not thrive. As students of Maslow, we know this to be true. We need to “take it easy” on our students too.

Part of the dangerous self-sacrifice expected of teachers is that we should be impervious to the emotional threats and uncertainties that impact our students. This is a reductive perspective born of a time when teachers were expected to resign when they were married and were to sublimate their humanity to teach. Thankfully, today we know that this type of denial, dishonesty, and self-neglect is damaging to the longevity and potential of great teachers. It is our humanity that makes us effective, and we have been put to the test just as much as anyone else. Are we still facing standardized tests and evaluation? Yes. Are we still inundated with data and metrics? Yes.

Do we have to pretend like everything is normal and this is okay? No, no we do not. That's part of our humanity. To acknowledge this cognitive dissonance is dishonest at worst, self-destructive at best. We will do the work. We will administer the tests. We will participate in the evaluations. But we will value the emotional well-being of our students and ourselves above the disconnect.

By the time you read this column, we will be approximately six weeks from the end of the school year. In that time, look around you and see what you value most, both at home and at school. Look at your partner, your family, your children, and your friends. Look at your students, your colleagues, and your co-workers. These are the people you are living and teaching for and with. The tests, the data, the metrics, the politics, and the punditry are all static. Take care of yourself and them so you can return in the fall a better teacher and a better person. Don't lose sight of that in this start/stop return to normalcy. It wasn't normal before the pandemic and this pandemic has highlighted that fact. Let's prioritize what matters in our lives and professions and return in the fall to begin to make sense of these priorities. I look forward to being a part of these efforts, and I hope you do too.

It has been a typically busy March. I communicated with superintendent Dr. David Glasner weekly. I updated the SHTA and CCES Facebook pages. I worked on an agreement on a six-month extension on the Support Teachers contract. I addressed a security concern at the IC. I worked with Special Education Chair Tito Vázquez on member concerns. As a reminder, if any Special Education concerns arise across the district, please include Tito in your communication. I spoke with Lomond Representative Jill DiPiero about building needs and concerns. I asked Social Chair Selena Boyer and Legal Chair Cathy Grieshop to work on supporting Lomond teachers experiencing a difficult year. I asked Secretary Darlene Garrison to reach out to members with health issues for support. I attended the March Educational Equity and Action Team Meeting. I asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to send out personal day reminder to membership pre-Spring Break. I communicated with Human Resource Director Barb Maceyak about personnel issues. I worked on an Equity Concern with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chairperson Dr. Angela Goodrum. I communicated with Middle School Representatives about building safety concerns. I attended the Calendar Committee meeting facilitation by Chief Academic Officer Dr. Marla Robinson. I spoke with Personal Rights and Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears about member concerns. I worked with SHTA Lawyer Susannah Muskovitz on member legal questions and concerns. I communicated with Elections Chair Chante Thomas about paperless elections this year. Occupational Health and Safety Chair James Schmidt and Past President Becky Thomas will help in the process as well. I attended a follow up Calendar Meeting facilitated by Dr. Robinson to examine community feedback. I met with district leadership alongside Interim Vice President Lisa Hardiman, Secretary Darlene Garrison, Personal Rights and Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears, and Occupational Health and Safety Chair James Schmidt to discuss COVID adjustments. I asked Constitution and By-Laws Chair Tim Kalan to work with Dr. Goodrum on an amendment to the SHTA Constitution and By-Laws memorializing the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Executive Board Committee. I helped a member with a sick day concern.

It's hard to believe we are nearing the end of the most difficult year of many of our lifetimes. As we come nearer, remember to go easy on all those in your life, especially yourself. We are in this profession for the long haul. I look forward too many more years together with you, my colleagues, learning and teaching together. We are closer to a return to normalcy, but I believe it will be a long journey filled with more unexpected adjustments and reflecting on what is worth keeping from the past and what needs letting go. I look forward to taking this journey with you. It's an honor and a privilege to do so.

***Respectfully submitted,
John Morris***

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Happy Spring! I hope that you all had an enjoyable and restful Spring Break. Hopefully you were able to at least partially recharge for the last two months of the school year. As we continue to plow through these difficult times, most of us are beginning to see the light at the end of this very long, unpredictable tunnel. The amount of vaccinated staff is over 80% and the amount of vaccinated teachers is over 90%. This is fantastic but as you know, it is not yet time to let up. We need to keep our precautions strong and end the school year with everyone virus-free and healthy.

During the last month, I have attended Teacher Advisory meetings. These monthly meetings are facilitated by Superintendent Dr. David Glasner, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Marla Robinson, Executive Director of Communications and Engagement Scott Stephens, and Chief Operating Officer Jeffrey Grosse. There is also teacher representation from each of the eight school buildings. At these meetings, we have the opportunity to not only hear about important decisions, plans, and events in the district, but we share thoughts, questions, and important information from teachers. One clear message from administration is that concurrent teaching will be ending at the conclusion of the 2020-2021 school year. They agree that this method of delivering instruction is not at all sustainable.

I have also been meeting weekly with the Black Teachers' Task Force Steering Committee as well as helping to facilitate the general body meetings. This committee has been working hard to address and repair some of the issues of inequity that have existed in Shaker Heights City Schools since its inception. One of the major goals of this group is to obtain a diverse interview panel for the various job openings throughout the district. This should lead to interviewing and hiring more Black faculty, staff, and administrators which is part of the district's strategic plan. I am proud to say that this goal has been achieved with regards to the interviewing and hiring of a new the Mercer principal. Along with another Black Mercer teacher, we participated along with numerous others, in the various steps of this interview process. This concluded with the naming of Mercer's new principal, Mrs. Roneisha Campbell. This was made possible because of the diligence of the Black Teachers' Task Force members who were closely guided by Executive Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Dr. Jeffrienne Wilder. We really value her knowledge and input. In the 26 years of my career in Shaker, all of them at Mercer, I have never been asked to be a part of an interview team at the building level. I also give much credit to Dr. David Glasner for forming this committee, Dr. Marla Robinson for including us in this process, and Director of Primary Education Dr. Erin Herbruck, for carrying out and helping us through the course of the interviews.

I have attended SHTA leadership check-in meetings with Dr. David Glasner, Dr. Marla Robinson, Jeffrey Grosse, SHTA President Dr. John Morris, SHTA Secretary Darlene Garrison, Occupational Health and Safety Committee Chair James Schmidt, and Professional Rights and Responsibilities Chair Michael Sears. I have also communicated with Dr. John Morris about a staff issue.

Stay safe!

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hardiman

TREASURER'S REPORT

I know for all of us the end of this crazy year is in sight and it can't come soon enough. Let's just keep the care of our students in mind. Let's remember that this has been a really difficult year for them also. Taking care of kids is our life's work so I'm sure you didn't need the reminder, but it's helping me center myself so I thought I'd share.

The Investments Committee (Todd Keitlen, Chante Thomas, and myself) is meeting with our Edward Jones advisor this month to look over the SHTA investments.

Next month's Representative Council meeting (May 10th) is when the Representatives will be discussing the 2021-22 SHTA budget and sending it to the membership for approval. A preliminary budget was distributed to the them at April's meeting to take back to their building members for discussion. If you have any concerns please let your head building Representative know, so it can be communicated at May's Representative Council Meeting. Or you are welcome to email/call me directly (scanlon_w@shaker.org, 216 333-2627).

*Respectfully submitted,
Bill Scanlon*

SHTA Officers, President Dr. John Morris, Interim Vice-President Lisa Hardiman, Secretary Darlene Garrison and Treasurer Bill Scanlon



EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES REPORT

During the past month, I:

- Attended the April SHTA Executive Board meeting and the April SHTA Representative Council meeting.
- Attended leadership meetings about 4th quarter and end of school year activities 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.
- Represented a member during an ADA accommodation interactive process with Human Resources Director Barbara Maceyak.
- Communicated with members about upcoming maternity leaves.
- Assisted a member with questions about Covid-19 leave.
- Spoke to SHTA President John Morris about member concerns at the Middle School.
- Assisted a member with questions about caregiver leave.
- Communicated with a member about FMLA, paternity leave, and health insurance for dependent children.

*Respectfully submitted,
Mike Sears, chairperson*

EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Hello Everyone! I hope you all enjoyed your spring break as much as I did! For the most part, it seems that the evaluation process has been relatively smooth, despite all of the challenges. Thank you to all evaluators and educators who have shown flexibility and care when working through this work this year! Peer Evaluators, please be sure to complete all observations, conferences, and eTPES uploads by the May 1 due date. The final pinning process should take place at the beginning of May. Please refer to the Human Resources page on Shaker.org to access forms and information.

I continue to work closely with Human Resources Director Barb Maceyak and the Teacher 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 credentialed administrative and peer evaluators. Please see this [slide deck](#) for more information. *NOTE: New evaluators must take the full OTES 2.0 new evaluator training, NOT the Bridge Training.*
- The Peer Evaluation Program has 127 participants approved for the 2021-2022 school year! Please see below for more information about this program.
- 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 couple of months and into next school year.

- We will transition to using the new Ohio Evaluation System (OES) and the OTES 2.0 rubric and forms for the 2021-2022 school year.

The Peer Evaluation program began in Shaker Heights eight years ago this spring. The Teacher Evaluation Committee had reconvened a year prior to reimagine evaluation practices in the district, but before we got very far, OTES was dumped in our lap. It became clear that the undertaking would be huge AND that teachers could become credentialed to evaluate. The professional learning that comes with peer observation and collaboration is exemplified in the following insights from participants:

Peer evaluation has given me the opportunity to participate in partnership to engage with a trusted colleague, in a similar position, to identify goals, explore alternatives, and assess outcomes as part of a deliberate improvement process.

I get a lot out of reflecting with my partners. It feels more comfortable working with peer teachers than a supervisor. I think peers also do a great job guiding reflection and offering appropriate tips and ideas for improvement because they are currently in the classroom.

I have found Peer Evaluation to be an extremely worthwhile experience. I have learned different strategies that I may have never tried if I would have just read/heard about it. Seeing new and different techniques used with students who teach in the same grade level is really beneficial for me because it gives me confidence---I know it will work for me!

I find peer evaluation to be valuable professional development. The conversation between my colleague and I is ongoing, challenging, and instructive. I find that the feedback I am given is timely and I am able to act on that feedback so that it impacts my teaching and instruction. I have also found that by observing my colleague, I learn new strategies and ideas that I take back to my own classroom.

Both my partner and I always learn something from one another through the evaluation process each year. It allows us to reach beyond our grade to understand what struggling and accelerated students may be experiencing. We also hold each other accountable for areas in which we desire to grow as educators. It also helps to hone our craft by watching another master teacher in action.

I have found that by participating in Peer Evaluation I am able to further develop as a teacher. It is great to observe other teachers to see what practices they are incorporating into their own classrooms (either in person or remotely). I have taken ideas in classroom management and assessment back to my own classroom and been able to expand my repertoire of teaching tools. I have also grown through critically thinking about the OTES rubric in evaluating the practices of other teachers. It has forced me to reflect upon my own teaching practices - what am I doing and more importantly why am I doing things.

I am grateful to all of the administrators and educators who have supported this program and invested themselves in the process over the years. This work raises the level of professionalism in our field and we can all be proud of this innovative and forward-thinking work.

I continue to be a part of the Teacher's Advisory Committee, facilitated by Superintendent Dr. David Glasner and Chief Academic Officer Dr. Marla Robinson. The open dialogue covered many important topics!

We are all concerned about planning for next year, especially in regards to concurrent teaching. While the district hasn't communicated an official plan, discussions indicate that the concurrent teaching model will not be

employed next school year. I look forward to working with other teachers and administrators to ensure that we can deliver high quality instruction to all of our students without using the concurrent teaching model, regardless of any need for online teaching and learning that may present itself.

Other topics discussed included addressing current events with students, hiring plans for next year, Commencement, and Long-Term Facilities Planning with Jeff Grosse.

I was grateful for the additional opportunity to meet with Dr. Glasner and Dr. Robinson prior to this month's TAC meeting to share ideas for increasing the effectiveness of our TAC meetings. I am encouraged by our discussion and the success of the committee meeting and continue to be committed to genuine collaboration for the benefit of all.

Please contact me if you have questions, concerns, or comments about evaluation and/or OTES training!

*Respectfully submitted,
Lena Paskewitz, chairperson*

SPECIAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

I communicated and collaboratively solved various concerns with the Director of Exceptional Children Elizabeth Kimmel in our monthly virtual meetings. I communicated with SHTA President Dr. John Morris over various district wide Exceptional Children concerns. I provided information and guidance to various SHTA members concerning personnel issues and work options.

I represented multiple SHTA members in Fact Finding Disciplinary Results Meetings with Director of Exceptional Children Elizabeth Kimmel and 7-12 Special Education Supervisor Jennifer Currie.

I attended and participated in various Black Teachers Task Force Meetings, the Bi-Weekly Steering Committee meeting and the monthly General Meeting. I continue to work collaboratively with SHHS Assistant Principal Ms. Jacquelyn Baker and Shaker Heights High School Exceptional Children Department Chair Jessica Wilkes on various issues to improve the functionality and support to the Exceptional Children Department at the high school. I participated in the monthly Exceptional Children Department Meeting and informed high school staff about contract requirements and professional expectations based on our collective bargaining agreement.

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 the district's school psychologists. These individuals work tirelessly to provide us all relative information concerning the students behavioral, educational, emotional, and social concerns and present levels. Many often underestimate the effort and time these professionals have to put into the requirements of their position. Below are some of their daily requirements:

- ETRs (Special Ed Evaluations)
- 504 Evaluations
- Consultation with intervention specialists, teachers, administrators
- Crisis intervention
- Short term counseling/Mental Health Intervention
- Support with Implementing MTSS/RTI

- Some School Psych's run Tier 2 groups
- Individual support (Tier 3) for students as needed/appropriate
- Direct testing (IQ/Achievement/Social Emotional)
- School wide practices to promote learning and support students
- Support with identifying academic/behavior interventions
- They also bound by Professional Ethical Code
- Their overall goal is to help schools improve academic achievement, promote positive behavior and mental health, support diverse learners, create safe/positive school climates, strengthen family school partnerships all while managing heavy caseloads with strict timelines to maintain Special Education Compliance.

If you could take a moment when you see these individuals in your buildings, please take a moment to thank them for the hard work they do that many of us do not directly see.

- Sagar Patel @ SHHS
- Mitch Moio @ SHHS
- Cheri Shapiro @ Woodbury
- LaKesha Buggs-Hall @ Lomond
- Mallory Bendezu @ SMS
- Karen Tushman @ SMS
- Colleen Krawczak @ Mercer/ Woodbury (part time)
- Noreen Smyth-Marrow @ Boulevard/Fernway
- Leanne Moses @ Boulevard/Fernway

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

PAST PRESIDENTS COMMITTEE

An ongoing topic at the meetings of the Board of Education is Forward Together, a joint facility planning initiative with the City of Shaker Heights, the Shaker Heights Public Library, and the Shaker Heights City Schools. The expectation is to identify the capital projects needs of each entity and to coordinate the funding initiatives. There will be regular reports from this initiative.

Regarding funding, the Shaker schools are showing a very positive variance due to the limited use of facilities for much of the school year. There is also new funding from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (anticipated to be approximately \$10 million). There may also be more funding available through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and, perhaps, from the infrastructure plan should it come to fruition. This month, I also assisted Membership and Elections Chairperson Chante Thomas with preparation for election petitions. I continue to attend meetings of the Board of Education and the Finance and Audit Committee to provide information to the Association leadership. I am proud to assist President John Morris and the SHTA.

*Respectfully submitted,
Becky Thomas, chairperson*

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Ohio has added requirements to school law about how to educate student with dyslexia; the new requirements will go into effect in 2022.

The Plain Dealer [reports](#) that 16 and 17-year-old students can get vaccinated at school this spring.

The New York Times [reports](#) that Senator Chuck Shumer (Democrat from New York) added an alarmingly large amount of money for private schools to the [Pandemic Rescue Law](#).

*Respectfully submitted,
David Klapholz, Chairperson*

POLICY COMMITTEE

The last months of the year are busy ones for the SHTA. In particular, there are two important events that happen annually that currently are receiving our attention. First are our elections - don't forget to vote! The second involves the approval of our budget. This responsibility is led by our esteemed SHTA Treasurer Bill Scanlon, who is empowered by **By-Law VIII, section E**. Parts 1,2, and 10 state:

- 1. Shall be the custodian of the property and funds of the Association.*
- 2. Shall receive all money, and shall keep careful record of all money received and disbursed, and shall submit a complete financial report of the same to the editor of the Newsletter for publication prior to the end of the school year. Other reports shall be prepared at such times as may be required by the Executive Board.*
- 10. Shall make available for inspection, to any member of the Association, all books, ledgers, financial records, and financial statements of the Association.*

Look for details of our new budget in the Treasurer's Report!

*Respectfully submitted,
Tim Kalan, Chairperson*

MEMBERSHIP & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

This is an Election year. I have already emailed the by-laws regarding the election of officers and members to the representative council. I want to thank Dr. Becky Thomas and James Schmidt for assisting me with the creation of the virtual protocols used this year.

If you are interested in running for an office of the SHTA, you have until Friday, April 30th to complete the **google form** expressing your intent to run for office and then submit the completed petitions VIA SPREADSHEET (25 signatures) to my attention by 4:00pm.

If you are interested in being included on the building ballot for school representative, please be sure to complete the google form. I will not assume you want your name included on the ballot. Please complete the google form by April 30th.

We will conduct the building elections, SHTA Officer Election and Budget vote virtually on Monday, May 17th. Thank you in advance for your interest in serving and adhering to these time deadlines.

Lastly, 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

- All google forms were attached to the April 5th SHTA Elections email from Andrew Glasier.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Chante Thomas-Taylor*

The PAC of the SHTA COMMITTEE

The Labor movement is fighting back from the attacks on unionization in the United States. The Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act (H.R. 842) is currently in the US Senate. It protects the basic right to join a union by: (1) Empowering workers to exercise their right to organize (2) Holding employers accountable for violating workers' rights (3) Securing free, fair, and safe union elections. [Find the facts here.](#) [Sign the petition to pass the PROAct here.](#)

Other issues and ideas to learn about are:

- The benefits of raising the [minimum wage in Ohio](#).
- Read about and sign the letter to [stop testing during the pandemic](#).
- Hear what [Education Secretary Miguel Cardona](#) thinks what our schools of the future will look like, emphasizing mental health and addressing the digital divide.

Stay healthy, well and in the know!

*Respectfully Submitted,
Cathy Grieshop*

SHTA ST COMMITTEE

I met with the ST negotiating team including Lynette Hart, Theresa Douglas, Dr. John Morris, and Attorney Susanna Muskovitz to discuss plans for negotiations. I later learned from Dr. Morris that the district had granted us a six-month extension which would line us up with the SHTA contract. I contacted the negotiating team and all Support Teachers to let them know that we would be negotiating in the fall.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Margaret "Peg" Rimedio*

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Please plan to join us on Thursday, May 20th for our VIRTUAL Annual District Recognition Reception! We hope this will be the first and only time that we need to have our event on Zoom but due to Covid 19, we are taking all possible safety precautions in an effort to keep everyone safe and healthy. Please stay tuned for viewing details in the coming weeks. We look forward to celebrating our district retirees, newly tenured teachers

and employees that have earned fifteen and twenty-five year pins for their years of service to our district. If you are unable to attend this event at the first presentation a recording will be available at a later date.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Selena Boyer*

OCUPPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

The following is a copy of an email that I sent to Dr. Glasner on March 19th in an effort to address teacher concerns about student spacing in classrooms:

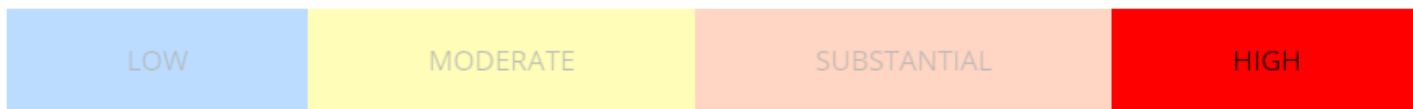
Today, the CDC updated some of their previous guidance regarding physical distancing in K-12 schools. While headlines that you see may read "CDC Changes Guidance to 3 feet in Schools," or something similar, the guidance does not apply to Cuyahoga County yet. We are still a High Transmission Community. It also still recommends 6 feet of physical distancing when students are eating. Please read the following guidance from the CDC website. The emphasis and underlines are mine.

Physical distancing

Core principle for physical distancing: Establish school policies and implement structural interventions to promote physical distance between people.

- Between students in classrooms
 - In elementary schools, students should be at least 3 feet apart.¹
 - In middle schools and high schools, students should be at least 3 feet apart in areas of low, moderate, or substantial community transmission. **In areas of high community transmission, middle and high school students should be 6 feet apart if cohorting is not possible.**^{1,2, 4-6}
- [Note that Cuyahoga County is still in the High Community transmission, per the CDC website](#)

Level of Community Transmission in Cuyahoga County, Ohio



- Maintain 6 feet of distance in the following settings:
 - Between adults (teachers and staff), and between adults and students, at all times in the school building. Several studies have found that transmission between staff is more common than transmission between students and staff, and among students, in schools.¹
 - **When masks cannot be worn, such as when eating.**
 - During activities when increased exhalation occurs, such as singing, shouting, band, or sports and exercise. Move these activities outdoors or to large, well-ventilated space, when possible.
 - In common areas such as school lobbies and auditoriums.

- Use [cohorting](#), and maintain 6 feet of distance between cohorts where possible. Limit contact between cohorts. **In areas of substantial (orange) and high (red) levels of community transmission, schools that use less than 6 feet between students in classrooms, cohorting is recommended, with at least 6 feet maintained between cohorts.**
- Remove nonessential furniture and make other changes to classroom layouts to maximize distance between students.
- Face desks in the same direction, where possible.
- **Eliminate or decrease nonessential in-person interactions among teachers and staff during meetings, lunches, and other situations that could lead to adult-to-adult transmission.**

This new guidance still indicates that here in Cuyahoga County, we should be following the 6 feet guidance at the Secondary level and that all students K-12 should be 6 feet apart when eating.

*Respectfully Submitted,
James Schmidt*

MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

SHTA President, John Morris started the April 12th Rep. Council Meeting at 4:30P.M.
Dr. Morris welcomed SHTA members to our Google Hangout Meeting.

MINUTES from the March 08, 2021 Rep. Council meeting were accepted and approved. Motion made by Cathy Grieshop and Seconded by Jessica O'Brien.

Administration Report

Mr. George Clark, principal of Lomond Elementary

- Thankful that everyone is here healthy and able to support one another.
- Lomond is a special place and holds a special place in our hearts. Thank you for all that you do and enjoy your productive meeting.

Mrs. Barb Maceyak, Human Resource Director was not present to share a report from Central Office

- Message: If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email me - maceyak_b@shaker.org.

P.T.O. Report

No PTO Officer was present to give report

Officers Report

President, John Morris

- Communicated with Dr. Glasner weekly
- Updated Facebook pages
- Agreed to a 6-month extension on the Support Teachers contract.
- Addressed a security concern at the IC.
- Worked with Special Education Chair Tito Vázquez on members concern.
If any Special Education concerns arise across the district, please include Tito in your communications.
- Spoke with Lomond Representative Jill DiPiero about building needs and concerns.
- Asked Social Chair Selena Boyer and Legal Chair Cathy Grieshop to work on supporting Lomond teachers experiencing a difficult year.
- Asked Secretary Darlene Garrison to reach out to members with health issues for support.
- Attended the March Educational Equity and Action Team Meeting.
- Asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to send out personal day reminder to membership pre-Spring Break.
- Communicated with HR Director Barb Maceyak about personnel issues.
- Worked on a Equity Concern with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chairperson Dr. Angela Goodrum.
- Communicated with Middle School Representatives about building safety concern.
- Attended the Calendar Committee meeting facilitation by Chief Academic Officer Dr. Marla Robinson.
- Spoke with Personal Rights and Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears about member concerns.
- Worked with SHTA Lawyer Susannah Muskovitz on members legal questions and concerns.
- Communicated with Elections Chair Chante Thomas about paperless elections this year. Occupational Health and Safety Chair James Schmidt and Past President Becky Thomas will help in the process as well.
- Attended a follow up Calendar Meeting to examine community feedback

- Met with district leadership alongside Interim Vice President Lisa Hardiman, Secretary Darlene Garrison, Personal Rights and Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears, and Occupational Health and Safety Chair James Schmidt to discuss COVID adjustments.
- Asked Constitution and By-Laws Chair Tim Kalan to work with Dr. Goodrum on an amendment to the Constitution and By-Laws memorializing the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Executive Board Committee.
- Helped a member with a sick day concern.

Interim Vice President, Lisa Hardiman

- Attended Teacher Advisory Committee Meeting.
- Attended Black Teacher Task Force - Steering Committee Meeting.
 - Helped facilitate a general body meeting
- Communicated with SHTA President Dr. John Morris concerning a member issue.
- Attended a Leadership Check-in on Covid concerns with members from central office and members from SHTA exec. board.
- Part of interview process for the Mercer principal.

Secretary, Darlene Garrison

- Attended a Leadership Check-in meeting with members from central office and members from SHTA exec. board.
- In contact and assisting SHTA members who are dealing with health issues and need assistance.
- Continuing to take and submit notes on behalf of SHTA.

Treasurer, Bill Scanlon

- Sent an email with the budget information. Next month we will vote on next year's budget.
 - Reps are to share and discuss the budget with members in your building.
- Shared this year's budget and the proposed budget for next year.
- The way the payment for rep. council has been done in the past, cannot be done like this any longer. Payments will be going through payroll.
 - A new expense for us will be paying the STRS and taxes for everyone on rep. council instead of just the officers.
- Communicated with our Edward Jones advisors and we will be having an Investment Committee meeting soon.

Executive Board Reports

Past President, Becky Thomas

- Attended March Finance and Audit Committee meeting.
- Assisted Membership Chairperson Chante Thomas with preparation for election petitions.
- Attended March Board of Education meeting—ongoing dialogue with the City of Shaker Heights and Board of the Public Library to maintain communication about funding and capital project needs. Treasurer Bryan Christman reported on preliminary expectations of approximately \$10 million from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund.
- Will Attend April 13th Board of Education Meeting and April 15th Finance and Audit meetings.

Teacher Education, Lisa Hardiman

- Looking forward to the announcement of newly tenured teachers at tomorrow's meeting. **It might be announced at the May 2021 meeting.**

Support Teachers, Peg Rimedio

- Met with the Support Teachers Negotiating Team to discuss plans for negotiations. Learned later, that the district granted a six-month extension, we will be negotiating in the fall.

Membership/Elections, Chante Thomas

- Sent out a letter describing the process for elections for officers and representatives at each school. Elections are held through the election committee and not at each school.
 - Received 19 responses for building reps and 5 responses for SHTA officers.
 - Petitions are due by April 30th

Policy, Tim Kalan

- I worked with Dr. Goodrum on language to amend our Constitution regarding an equity committee.

Public Relations, Bob Bognar(Absent)

- No Report

Evaluation, Lena Paskewitz

- Continuing to work on preparation for OTES 2.0.
- Happy to report 127 members approved for Peer Evaluation, highest number so far.
- Online option, synchronous session, June 7 & 8 with other shaker people or asynchronous training over a two-week period.
 - Registration through Stars
 - Any questions, contact Lena
- Attended the Teacher Advisory Committee meeting. Tomorrow will be meeting with Dr. Glasner and Dr. Robinson to talk about how the committee can work more effectively.

Legislative, Dave Klapholz

- Ohio has added requirements to school law about how to educate a student with dyslexia; the new requirements will go into effect in 2022.
- The Plain Dealer [reports](#) that 16 and 17-year-old students can get vaccinated at school this spring.
- The New York Times [reports](#) that Senator Chuck Shumer (Democrat from New York) added an alarmingly large amount of money for private schools to the [Pandemic Rescue Law](#).

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
- Editorial: Mike Sears
- Executive Board please have blurb ready Wednesday at midnight. Please add people's full names and title

Social, Selena Brown

- Working on a virtual recognition reception on May 20th.

Legal Aid, Cathy Grieshop

- No Report

SHTA PAC, Cathy Grieshop

- ProUnion Act, thank you Bill and Dave for sending this information. Placed information in the chat so that we can have the information.
- Updating the Facebook Page

Professional Rights and Responsibilities, Mike Sears

- Past month helping people with FMLA and maternity/paternity leave.
- Working with a member about COVID-19 questions.
- Attended executive board meeting and leadership check-in meeting with members from central office and members from SHTA exec. board.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Angela Goodrum

- Met with Woodbury staff regarding members about concerns and clarification on EEOC vs. contractual breach. Able to iron out concerns for them to move forward.
- Talked to Dr. Morris about various items dealing with EEOC and contractual breach. We do have some concerns about harassment in our building, Woodbury.
 - Teacher by teacher - what actually goes through HR and SHTA?
 - Harassment claims have to go through HR. SHTA cannot file a harassment claim for one of our members. (John Morris)
 - EEOC that is a federal law, we can guide members on how to do it but it is not in our views of the association to represent the members through this process. (John Morris)

Occupational Health and Safety, James Schmidt

The following is a copy of an email that I sent to Dr. Glasner on March 19th in an effort to address teacher concerns about student spacing in classrooms:

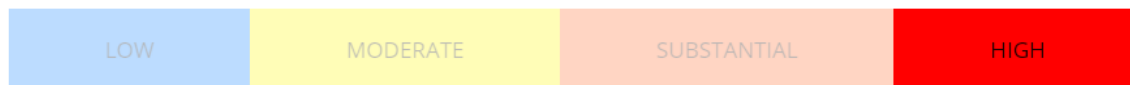
Today, the CDC updated some of their previous guidance regarding physical distancing in K-12 schools. While headlines that you see may read "CDC Changes Guidance to 3 feet in Schools," or something similar, the guidance does not apply to Cuyahoga County yet. We are still a High Transmission Community. It also still recommends 6 feet of physical distancing when students are eating. Please read the following guidance from the CDC website. The emphasis and underlines are mine.

Physical distancing

Core principle for physical distancing: Establish school policies and implement structural interventions to promote physical distance between people.

- Between students in classrooms
 - In elementary schools, students should be at least 3 feet apart.¹
 - In middle schools and high schools, students should be at least 3 feet apart in areas of low, moderate, or substantial community transmission. **In areas of high community transmission, middle and high school students should be 6 feet apart if cohorting is not possible.**^{1,2, 4-6}
- **[Note that Cuyahoga County is still in the High Community transmission, per the CDC website](#)**

Level of Community Transmission in Cuyahoga County, Ohio



- Maintain 6 feet of distance in the following settings:
 - Between adults (teachers and staff), and between adults and students, at all times in the school building. Several studies have found that transmission between staff is more common than transmission between students and staff, and among students, in schools.¹
 - **When masks cannot be worn, such as when eating.**

- During activities when increased exhalation occurs, such as singing, shouting, band, or sports and exercise. Move these activities outdoors or to large, well-ventilated space, when possible.
- In common areas such as school lobbies and auditoriums.
- Use [cohorting](#), and maintain 6 feet of distance between cohorts where possible. Limit contact between cohorts. **In areas of substantial (orange) and high (red) levels of community transmission, schools that use less than 6 feet between students in classrooms, cohorting is recommended, with at least 6 feet maintained between cohorts.**
- Remove nonessential furniture and make other changes to classroom layouts to maximize distance between students.
- Face desks in the same direction, where possible.
- **Eliminate or decrease nonessential in-person interactions among teachers and staff during meetings, lunches, and other situations that could lead to adult-to-adult transmission.**

This new guidance still indicates that here in Cuyahoga County, we should be following the 6 feet guidance at the Secondary level and that all students K-12 should be 6 feet apart when eating.

Special Education, Tito Vazquez

- I communicated and collaboratively solved various concerns with the Director of Exceptional Children Elizabeth Kimmel in our monthly virtual meetings.
- I communicated with SHTA President Dr. John Morris over various district wide Exceptional Children concerns.
- I Provided information and guidance to various SHTA members concerning personnel issues and work options.
- I represented multiple SHTA members in Fact Finding Disciplinary Results Meetings with Director of Exceptional Children Elizabeth Kimmel and 7-12 Special Education Supervisor Jennifer Currie.
- I attended and participated in various Black Teachers Task Force Meetings. The Bi-Weekly Steering Committee meeting and the monthly General Meeting.
- I continue to work collaboratively with SHHS Assistant Principal Ms. Jacquelyn Baker and Shaker Heights High School Exceptional Children Department Chair Jessica Wilkes on various issues to improve the functionality and support to the Exceptional Children department at the high school.
- I participated in the monthly Exceptional Children Department Meeting and informed high school staff about contract requirements and professional expectations based on our collective bargaining agreement.

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 the district's school psychologist. These individuals work tirelessly to provide us all relative information concerning the students behavioral, educational, emotional, and social concerns and present levels. Many often underestimate the effort and time these professionals have to put into the requirements of their position.

Below are some of their daily requirements:

- ETRs (Special Ed Evals)
- 504 Evals
- Consultation with intervention specialists, teachers, administrators
- Crisis intervention
- Short term counseling/Mental Health Intervention
- Support with Implementing MTSS/RTI
- Some School Psych's run Tier 2 groups
- Individual support (Tier 3) for students as needed/appropriate
- Direct testing (IQ/Achievement/Social Emotional)
- School wide practices to promote learning and support students

- Support with identifying academic/behavior interventions
- They also bound by Professional Ethical Code
- Their overall goal is to help schools improve academic achievement, promote positive behavior and mental health, support diverse learners, create safe/positive school climates, strengthen family school partnerships all while managing heavy caseloads with strict timelines to maintain Special Education Compliance.

If you could take a moment when you see these individuals in your buildings, please take a moment to thank them for the hard work they do that many of us do not directly see.

- Sagar Patel @ SHHS
- Mitch Moio @ SHHS
- Cheri Shapiro @ Woodbury
- LaKesha Buggs-Hall @ Lomond
- Mallory Bendezu @ SMS
- Karen Tushman @ SMS
- Colleen Krawczak @ Mercer/ Woodbury (part time)
- Noreen Smyth-Marrow @ Boulevard/Fernway
- Leanne Moses @ Boulevard/Fernway

Sick Day Transfer, James Schmidt

- No Report

Building Representative Reports

Boulevard, Jennifer Goulden(Absent)

- Teachers are concerned that they have not yet received a definitive response from the district as to what they will have to complete on the report cards for the last grading period. Our principal has been responsive in working to find an answer.

Fernway, Andree Hassell

- No report

Lomond, Steve Smith

- Thank you for the support of Lomond teachers and the cookies that were provided,

Mercer, Nicole Cicconetti

- We would like to welcome our new principal, Roniesha Campbell, from Canton City Schools.
- Our voices were heard across the board and it was nice to feel that all parties were involved.
- Thank you so much SHTA for the support of our family.

Onaway, Paula Klausner

- Specialists met with Eric Foreman. The meeting was very productive and they felt good about it.
- What types of fans can be used in the classroom?
 - Still trying to figure this out.
 - Can we use federal money to buy these fans?

Woodbury, Angela Goodrum

- No Report

Middle School, Erika Pfeiffer

- We requested a meeting between building reps and full building administration to discuss concerns around the topic of safety and security. We were accommodated that same afternoon, and Erin Herbruck was brought in as District representation.
- Following this meeting, building administration reached out and communicated with both staff and students re: safety and security. Meetings were held with academic teams and with full staff.

High School, James Schmidt

- I continue to meet weekly with Mr. Juli to work with him to help resolve issues at the High School.
- There is an issue that we thought had been resolved, but it apparently was not. Department Chairs are still waiting for their pay for work performed over last summer on the schedule.
- We would like to thank our building administration for working hard to move classrooms and arrange desks so that the appropriate 6 feet of physical distancing between student desks is being followed in nearly all of our classrooms.

Old Business

- None

New Business

- None

Good of the Order

- Thank you, Darlene Garrison, Cathay Grieshop and Selena Boyer for reaching out to members during this difficult time period.

Motion for Adjournment

- Motion made by Joel Rathbone and Seconded by Lee Appel.

April 12th Rep. Council meeting was adjourned at 5:30PM.

**May Rep. Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 10th,
location Onaway School, Google Meet.**

***Respectfully submitted,
Darlene Garrison***

District Should Consider Blended Learning Options

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.

We have all learned a lot about teaching and learning this past year. One of the biggest surprises for me has been how well some students have navigated the remote learning model. When the school year started on September 1, I wondered how I would get to know my students in a Google Meet. After a few days, it was clear that I would get to know them through their work. There was definitely something refreshing about quietly reading student responses on assignments without the typical distractions of a day at the middle school. Students who still haven't returned to school told me they also find learning at home refreshing because there are fewer distractions and they can work at their own pace to complete their work.

As we posted every assignment on Google Classroom, delivered materials to students' homes (textbooks, notebooks, hotspots, Chromebooks), created video tutorials using Screencastify, facilitated live Nearpod and Pear Deck presentations, experimented with the Go Live! feature on EdPuzzle, and posted activities on pdfs. for students to complete with Kami, I began to think that education would be changed forever by the Covid-19 pandemic.

In February, 2020, I had about twenty students miss a week of school with the flu. I started thinking about how much better it would have been for them if I would have had a fully operational online classroom up and running at that time. I also started thinking about all the students over the years who have been suspended or assigned to in school suspension. I thought about all the requests for copies of missing work from principals, the youth center, and parents. I thought about students with chronic health conditions, school anxiety, and other mental health challenges. I thought about students who have been bullied. I wondered if these students might learn better and achieve more by doing school at home, at least part of the time.

The leaders of the Jordan School District near Salt Lake City, Utah also think education has changed forever. They decided to open three virtual academies for the 2021-22 school year. Here is a link to an article about their decision and reactions from students and parents:

<https://www.sltrib.com/news/education/2021/03/12/this-utah-school-district/>. Findlay, Ohio has had a blended learning center for more than ten years. It started out K-12, but is now just for students in grades 6-12. Students who are able to successfully meet curriculum goals remotely still are required to come to the center 5 hours a week to check in and review material with teachers. If students start to struggle at home, they are required to spend more time at the learning center. Due to the flexible scheduling, teachers have more time to assess student learning and provide meaningful feedback to students enrolled in the center. For more information on the Findlay Learning Center, check out their website <https://fcs.org/findlay-learning-center/>.

It seems reasonable to expect some students won't physically return to school for the 2021-22 school year for a variety of reasons. Most teachers haven't found the concurrent model to be very effective. I've been fortunate to have a student teacher during this time. She often works with students at home (she is at home), while I focus on the students in the classroom. I know that many K-4 classroom teachers have had help this year from remote learning partners. Perhaps this is a model that could work again next year. District leaders have also mentioned expanding the programs at the IC to possibly include opportunities for Middle School and Woodbury students.

Why not explore the possibility of a virtual academy? We need to think bigger, be more innovative, and be more flexible to meet the needs of our students and families. The Cleveland Heights-University Heights School District implemented an all online option for families in the fall of 2020. They partner with Lincoln Learning for

grades K-5 and with Edgenuity for grades 6-12. District teachers facilitate student learning using the online platforms. Here is a link with more information for parents:
<https://sites.google.com/chuh.org/chuhohioonline/ch-uh-ohio-online-home?authuser=0>. It is not clear that this option will still be available in 2021-22, but it seems likely.

We talked about a virtual academy throughout the summer, but never fully embraced it. At the Middle School, our original plan was for alternating synchronous and asynchronous weeks. However, once we realized we could use webcams, we switched to the concurrent model. We also had asynchronous Fridays briefly, but that was quickly changed. I think we might be too attached to old ideas that direct instruction and time on task are the best ways to measure teaching and learning. This is especially surprising given both our status as an IB district and our aspirational goals of excellence, equity, and exploration.

Maybe there are discussions about the future of remote learning and virtual academies happening this month inside the administration building. If the plan for the summer Jumpstart program is a preview for the fall, then we can expect a return to the status quo. Four weeks of in person activities for the same four hours every day sums up the schedule. Last summer, there were layers of online activities. I facilitated a summer reading book club on Google Meets and I spoke with Jumpstart administrators about how great it was to run a book club and not be in a hot Middle School classroom. It was also convenient for the students to join the discussion from their homes. I was told that we will definitely take the best remote learning practices from this pandemic and continue to use them. Will we? If we don't, others will and our district will be left behind.

Mike Sears
8th Grade American History Teacher
Shaker Heights Middle School

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