

## IMPORTANT DATES

**Tuesday, September 24:** B.O.E Work Session

**Thursday, October 4:** Rosh Hashana, Schools Closed

**Monday, October 7<sup>th</sup>:** SHTA Executive Board Meeting, Fernway

**Tuesday, October 8<sup>th</sup>:** B.O.E. meeting

**Monday, October 14<sup>th</sup>:** SHTA Representative Council Meeting, Fernway

# SHTA *news*

September 16, 2024

ISSUE #1

## Message from the President

After twenty-seven years of teaching, it's still amazing to me how quickly the summer ends and how soon we are back in the thick of teaching each fall. It's a daunting and exciting part of our profession to shift so dramatically from the relatively insular world of planning curriculum and refining our courses to suddenly seeing these efforts brought to life in front of us with our students. It's a dizzying and energizing experience. I hope that the beginning of this year has been successful thus far. I know we are in the midst of the most profound district change in most of our careers. Moving to new buildings, some of them modular, while acclimating to new building leadership and staff has been a Herculean effort made possible by our membership and our indefatigable custodial and transition team. I look forward to hearing the challenges and benefits of these new teaching and learning environment as our year unfolds.

It is also a Negotiations Year. As our contract comes to its conclusion on December 31, 2024, seven of our Negotiations Team members and I will engage in Interest Based Bargaining, with District Administration facilitated by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service out of Independence, Ohio. This Federal Agency has been instrumental in facilitating the last three contracts with the SHTA and the District. I will update you on our progress in the Salary-Tenure column of this newsletter as the process unfolds.

As a side note, the contract remains in full effect throughout the Negotiations process and until we ratify the next contract. That means that any questions related to your contractual workday, compensation, benefits, and teaching environment are all accessible through our contract at [shtaweb.org](http://shtaweb.org). Of course, it's a near daily reference for me, but I encourage members to review it and take questions to building representatives, whenever a contract issue arises. I look forward to building an updated version of this 40-year-old agreement as we head into the next three-year iteration.

This summer and early fall have been especially busy with the transition. I spoke with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner regularly. I communicated with Human Resource Director Dr. Tiffany Joseph regularly. I updated the SHTA Facebook page with Publications Editor Andrew Glasier. I asked High School Representative Aimee Grey to head up our recently approved SHTA Scholarship program. I worked with members with legal concerns with SHTA Lawyer, Susannah Muskovitz. I worked with a member concerning ADA accommodations in the transfer to a new building. I met with new teachers alongside SHTA Officers and Executive Board Members Vice President Darlene Garrison, Secretary Lisa Hardiman, Treasurer Bill Scanlon, Membership Chair Chante Thomas, and Special Education Chair Tito Vazquez. I toured the buildings with SHTA Officers Vice President

Darlene Garrison, Secretary Lisa Hardiman, Personal Rights and Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears, and Building Safety Chair Matt Zucca. We toured with Dr. Glasner, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Felicia Evans, Assistant Superintendent of Buildings and Operations Jeff Grosse, and Director of Buildings and Grounds Sean Brown. I communicated with Secretary Lisa Hardiman and Publications Editor Andrew Glasier concerning communication about our DEI day. I communicated with SHTA Head Reps and Woodbury Transition Reps on Transition Concerns. I communicated with SHTA Head Rep Kevin Thomas and MS/Woodbury Rep Marie O’Leary Stark on heat issues at the MS. I met with Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Felicia Evans, Director of Curriculum John Moore and Elementary and Middle School principals to discuss transition concerns. I asked Secretary Lisa Hardiman to send the Representative Council meeting calendar to all Head Representatives and Woodbury Transition Representatives. I attended a member-requested building meeting at the High School.

As I began my 28<sup>th</sup> year of teaching in Shaker and my 16<sup>th</sup> year as the SHTA President, these two callings continue to inspire and provide deep meaning to my life. I am grateful for both these roles and how they intertwine to help make our professional lives better and our teaching environment, our students’ learning environments, the best that they can be. I am also grateful for my incredible colleagues within the Shaker Heights Teachers’ Association. I cannot imagine teaching and working anywhere else. Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can provide assistance support. That’s what SHTA members do. I look forward to seeing and talking with all of you as this pivotal year unfolds.

*Respectfully submitted,  
John Morris*

The SHTA PAC is on  .  @

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

## VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

For the last thirty years, Woodbury Elementary School was my home away from home. I moved this year to a new place, SMS, and I must admit that it has been a smooth transition and I am starting to adjust. It's so nice to work each day with my Woodbury colleagues and I have enjoyed meeting so many new people. The Shaker Middle School staff has welcomed us with open arms and it is greatly appreciated.

The SHTA Executive Board began the 2024-2025 school year this summer, meeting at the home of Evaluation Committee Chair, Lena Paskewitz. SHTA Officers, Executive Board members and members of Shaker Heights Schools Central office had a chance to see school improvements, repairs, and walked on hallway floors that appeared to be made of glass. Our custodial staff always does an amazing job getting our buildings ready for students and staff. I applaud all involved in this process. A special thank you to our custodians, who make it all possible.

It was so nice attending the New Employee Summer Meeting at Fernway Elementary School. There were new faces and it was a pleasure having the opportunity to mix and mingle with them. SHTA Officers and Executive Board Members shared information about our union and answered all the questions that were asked. Congratulations to all of our new staff members and welcome to Shaker Heights City Schools.

As Vice President, I will attend all PTO Council meetings representing SHTA. This school year, there are four meetings scheduled that will be listed on the district calendar. The first meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 1st, in-person at the Shaker Heights Public Library. The PTO does so much for our schools and students, we ask that all teachers consider making a donation to the PTO. I am looking forward to working with President Christine Reynolds and the PTO Executive Board.

This year, I am a member of the Investments Committee. I will be working with SHTA Treasurer, Bill Scanlon; Membership Chair, Chante Thomas and Middle School Educator, Todd Keitlen.

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

A friendly reminder to all SHTA Fellowship Grant recipients; your receipts for reimbursement are due by Monday, September 30th. Make sure that you email your information and receipts to [garrison\\_d@shaker.org](mailto:garrison_d@shaker.org). It will take approximately 2-3 weeks from the time I receive your documents to receive your reimbursement check. Please don't miss out on this opportunity. The Dr. Rebecca Thomas Fellowship Grant application for the 2024 - 2025 school year will be shared with the membership on Wednesday, October 4th via Google Form.

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

*Respectfully submitted,*  
**Darlene Garrison**

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

Hello and welcome back! My name is Lisa Hardiman and this is my fourth year serving the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association in the role of secretary. I hope that you found awesome ways to enjoy the summer and are refreshed and motivated to face all the excitement and challenges that the 2024-2025 school year is already bringing.

My monthly responsibilities as secretary include, but are not limited to, scheduling and inviting members to both Representative Council meetings and Executive Board meetings. I take notes and record reports for SHTA representatives, administrators, PTO representatives, officers and executive board members. These reports are an important part of the monthly SHTA newsletter. I am also in charge of the SHTA drawing which takes place in February, the winner of which will get two free tickets to the Night for the Red & White fundraiser. In addition, I serve on the Black Teachers' Task Force Steering Committee. At the end of 2024, our collective bargaining agreement will be expiring. I am a member of the negotiating team and we will start negotiations next month. SHTA is here to support its members in a variety of ways as we strive to educate our children.

During the summer months, as a member of the Black Teachers' Task Force Steering Committee, I participated in several interviews at Boulevard Elementary School. Along with Principal Neal Robinson and Boulevard teachers, we interviewed a very talented group of aspiring educators. These interviews resulted in the hiring of new teachers who will help our school district continue to educate our future citizens. In August, I also had the pleasure of attending, along with other SHTA leaders, the New Teachers' Academy at Fernway School where I enjoyed meeting many more teachers new to our district. We presented information about our Association and answered questions that are relevant to new teachers. Also in August, the SHTA Executive Board convened at the beautiful home of Evaluations Chair, Lena Paskewitz for our first meeting of the year.

In August, I had the opportunity to participate in walkthroughs of several school buildings along with central office administrators and members of the SHTA executive board. It was really nice to see the results of all the hard work of Shaker's custodial staff and other personnel. This work resulted in wonderful improvements and repairs to our buildings. Particularly interesting was the expansion work on Shaker Heights Middle School in preparation for the arrival of sixth graders. The modular units seem fresh and roomy and teachers were excited to teach in those spaces.

I have been involved in numerous conversations with elementary colleagues both in my home building and with others around the district. The schedule as it exists right now, is problematic. Given that teachers now have 30 minutes less of planning time in the morning, and we have required meetings 3-4 times per week during our 50-minute planning period during the school day, there is simply not enough time to prepare to educate students. Many have said that two of these meetings could be combined into one and/or be completed virtually. Given all of the new and old responsibilities that we have been given, with input from teachers, meetings could be restructured so that our time is better utilized and in turn, teaching and learning improves.

I wish everyone a productive year ahead. Please, do not hesitate to talk to your building representatives with any issues or questions you may have. You can always contact me at Mercer at (216) 295-4867 or [Hardiman\\_1@shaker.org](mailto:Hardiman_1@shaker.org).

*Respectively submitted,  
Lisa Hardiman*

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Welcome back to a new school year. This year involves big changes for a lot of our members. All Woodbury teachers entered new spaces which I'm sure gave them a 'new-teacher' feeling. Some Middle School teachers are teaching in trailers, and teachers in many District buildings welcomed former Woodbury teachers into their spaces. It's a lot to take in.

All this change makes me think of the inevitable changes that need to happen in our Association. A number of us members in leadership positions are in the latter parts of our careers. We need to start thinking of who will step into our roles. It could be you. Make a commitment this year to pay close attention to the workings of our Association. Read the newsletters, discuss issues with your building's Head Representative, come to a Representative Council meeting (you don't have to be a Representative to attend). Make this the year you get more involved. YOUR Association could depend on it.

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

In May, the members of our Association approved the 2024-25 budget for our financials. This being a Negotiation year, we may spend more money than we get in dues. That is not abnormal for a Negotiation year. If anyone has any questions about the Association's finances, please give me a call at ext.6296.

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

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

I hope you all have a great year. Let's stick together and show how we Professionals can handle change.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Bill Scanlon*

# *EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS*

## **PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES REPORT**

Welcome to the 2024-25 School Year! I hope everyone had a nice summer, and is off to a great start teaching and learning. My name is Mike Sears and I teach 8<sup>th</sup> grade American History at the Middle School. This is my 26<sup>th</sup> year in the district and my 29<sup>th</sup> year in education. This is my 20<sup>th</sup> year of involvement with SHTA, and my 15<sup>th</sup> year as the chairperson for Professional Rights and Responsibilities. This position is also called Grievance Chair. My extension at school is #4770 and e-mail ([sears\\_m@shaker.org](mailto:sears_m@shaker.org)) is a great way to contact me. I enjoy working with the members and, as we tell our students, “There is no such thing as a stupid question”. My cell phone # is **(216) 571-0447**. It is a good idea to text me first and introduce yourself. I may not answer calls from numbers I do not recognize.

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

The paycheck from September 16<sup>th</sup> should include a step increase if you qualify for one this year. It should also include your daily rate for one day if you attended the DEI training on August 14. Another way to advance on the salary schedule is by reaching continuing education levels like B.A. + 15 or M.A. + 30. The Board approves these changes in November and April.

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

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

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

Personal days are personal. No one needs to know why you are taking a personal day. You do **not** need to fill out a form about a personal day. You may simply enter it on Frontline. However, you are responsible for



keeping track of your own personal days. If you enter a 4<sup>th</sup> or a 5<sup>th</sup> personal day, you will forfeit pay for those absences. You may not use personal days before or after a holiday unless you fill out the personal day request form. Both the building principal and the Human Resources Department must approve the request. Administrators consider each case on an individual basis. If you have a question about this, please contact me.

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

In recent months, I have:

- Spoke to members over the summer about worker's compensation, ADA accommodations, maternity leave, leaving the district after July 10, supplemental contracts, and the DEI training day.
- Attended the new teacher luncheon on August 12 along with several members of the SHTA Executive Board and spoke to the new teachers about SHTA.
- Toured buildings before school started with SHTA President John Morris, Vice President Darlene Garrison, Secretary Lisa Hardiman, Health and Safety Chair Matt Zucca, Assistant Superintendent for Learning and Teaching Felecia Evans, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Operations Jeff Grosse and Superintendent David Glasner. Tours were led by Assistant Director of Buildings and Grounds Sean Brown.
- Worked with Middle School Head Custodian James Dean, Assistant Director of Building and Grounds Sean Brown, and Middle School Principal Eric Forman to make sure the modular units were properly equipped and ready to start the school year. We worked on providing teachers with additional time to set up their classrooms since some materials from Woodbury were not delivered until two days before school started for students.
- Spoke to Middle School Principal Eric Forman about the reduction in building subs and the need for teachers to be willing to cover classes for \$28 (as stated in the collective bargaining agreement). I reiterated the need to pay teachers \$56 to cover a class (as was done temporarily during the pandemic).
- Attended an Executive Board meeting on September 3.
- Attended a Representative Council meeting on September 9.
- Spoke to 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Principal Tom Flood about student athletes being dismissed 30 minutes early for away games that are not supposed to start until 5:00 PM. We also spoke about other unintended consequences of the new Middle School schedule such as students waiting for buses until 3:45 or 3:50 PM and a decrease in the number of substitute teachers picking up jobs at the Middle School (the student day is one hour longer than in 23-24). The Middle School building representatives and I will continue to monitor these situations as we move through the school year.
- Worked with High School Head Building Representative Jessica O'Brien on grievances.

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

*Respectfully submitted,  
Mike Sears, chairperson*

## EVALUATION COMMITTEE

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

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

Please complete your Annual Professional Growth Plan (PGP) in the Ohio Evaluation System (OES) by October 30th. The expectation is for two goals to be created this year. Teachers who have “Self-Directed” Professional Growth Plans or who are participating in the Peer Evaluation Program are not required to work with building administrators to create these plans, nor do they need to be approved by building administrators. Self-Directed goals are created and edited only by the educator. The OES indicates the educator's Professional Growth Plan status at the top of the PGP page. This plan should be discussed and reviewed throughout the year with your evaluator. Also, be sure to review the OES site and forms, as well as check your evaluation cycle and listed evaluator asap.

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

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

The Peer Evaluation Program has well over 120 educators, counselors, and nurses participating across the district. It is exciting that this program continues to thrive as a unique professional learning opportunity. Peer Evaluation participants should be coded in OES. Please double check that you have access to your partner’s evaluation so that any errors can be corrected right away.

As always, the SHTA Evaluation Committee members, Deanna Clemente Milne (MS), Megan Dora (HS), Andrew Glasier (HS), Tim Kalan (ON), Addie Tobey (MS), and I (FN) are here to help answer teacher and evaluator questions and navigate any part of the process with you.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Lena Paskewitz, chairperson*



## **EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Over the summer and this past month, I attended and participated in the New Teacher Academy, the SHTA Executive Board Summer meeting at Evaluation Committee Chair Lena Paskewitz's house. I met in July and this month with the Director of Student Services Dr. Meghan Shelby over special education concerns across the district. I participated in interviews at the Innovative Center for Personalized Learning as a representative of The Black Teachers Task Force for the open English and Math positions. Also, I participated in interviews for the open Intervention Specialist position at Lomond Elementary. I worked with SHTA President Dr. John Morris, over Special Education concerns. I had conversations with Dr. Nicole Patterson, PhD. Director of DEI Professional Learning, concerning equity concerns in education. I discussed and worked on an issue of equity for students at the Innovative Center for Personalized Learning with I.C. Coordinator Mr. Isaiah Wyatt. I provided support to various SHTA members concerning issues including but not limited to job placement, personnel issues and work options. I communicated with Exceptional Children Supervisor K - 6 Erin Dzolic and 7-12 Supervisor Jennifer Currie over scheduling concerns. I have communicated with Shaker Heights High School Exceptional Children Department Chairs Tana Thompson and Keesha Bryant, and Dr. John Morris over a variety of concerns with the move of the I-Lab to a new location of Room 216 in the high school. I continue to work collaboratively with administrators for the benefit of both students and teachers.

**My Duties as SHTA Chair of Student Services:** I meet monthly with the Director of Student Services Dr. Meghan Shelby to remedy various concerns and support the needs of students in the district. I provided support to various SHTA members concerning issues including but not limited to job placement, personnel issues and work options. I worked with Student Services Supervisor K - 6 Erin Dzolic & 7-12 Jennifer Currie over various concerns. I communicate with Shaker Heights High, Middle and Elementary school department chairs and leaders over a variety of concerns at their respected schools. I also work collaboratively with Shaker administrators, principals and assistant principals.

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

## **SOCIAL COMMITTEE**

Welcome back to school! My name is Selena Boyer and I am pleased to be the Social Committee Chairperson for the Association again this year! This is my twenty-first year teaching in Shaker. I have spent all but two of those years as a first grade teacher at Fernway School! I plan social gatherings and happy hour events for the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association. In previous years we have started the year with a Back to School SHTA Happy Hour and celebrated Thanksgiving and the Winter Holidays with festive, social gatherings as well! Every May, it is my pleasure to work with the district to coordinate and cater the Annual District Recognition Reception. This is an important event to celebrate our retirees, newly tenured teachers, and teachers earning fifteen and twenty-five year pins. Our SHTA President, Dr. John Morris, also awards an Association member with the President's Service Award each year. My final responsibility is hosting the Executive Board members for our monthly meetings.

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

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Selena Boyer, Chairperson*

## POLICY COMMITTEE

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

*Respectfully submitted,  
Tim Kalan, Chairperson*

## MEMBERSHIP/ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Welcome back to the 2024-2025 school year! My name is Chante Thomas. This is my tenth year serving as your SHTA Membership/Elections Chair and I am beginning my 30th year of teaching. This is my first year at my new home, Mercer Elementary. If you need me, I can be reached by email at [thomas\\_c@shaker.org](mailto:thomas_c@shaker.org) or my phone extension is #5601.

I am responsible for maintaining our membership directory and monitoring the collection of dues from payroll, or receiving a direct payment from the member. I also coordinate the elections and membership votes.

Members who select payroll deduction shall have ten equal deductions starting with the first pay in October of the current school year. Members who choose to pay by check must do so in full, prior to October 1st of the current school year. Payroll deduction shall automatically continue from year to year unless the member notifies the Association and payroll office in writing, prior to October 1st of the current school year, that he or she wishes to stop payroll deductions.

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

### **The 2024-2025 Representative Council Elected Members are:**

Boulevard- Cathy Grieshop, Heather Pincoe (WO)

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

Fernway- Jamie Harden, Lee Appel (WO)

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

Mercer- Eileen Sweeney

Middle School- Kevin Thomas, Erika Pfeiffer, Melissa Albrecht and Marie O'Leary Stark (WO)

High School - Jessica O'Brien, Jayce Bailey, Cathy Szendrey, Kim Roberts, Adam Cohen, Aimee Grey, Joel Rathbone, Luling "Raina" Li (WO)

IC- Anne Hay

*Respectfully submitted,  
Chante Thomas, Chairperson*

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Welcome back SHTA members. My name is Matt Zucca and I serve as the Building Safety and Sick Day Transfer Committee chair for SHTA. One of my roles is to assist members with concerns in the building related to conditions that create health and safety issues. I will assist building representatives and members communicate their concerns with building and district administrators to resolve issues collaboratively. Another role is to assist members who may find it necessary to enroll in the Sick Day Transfer Pilot Program (SDTPP). In this position I will work collaboratively with the Human Resource Department and the Treasurer's Department transfer sick days from and to SHTA members and monitor days pledged by SHTA members. The guiding document can be found in the contract in Side Letter B. If you need any assistance with these areas, please communicate your concerns with your building representatives as well as me at [zucca\\_m@shaker.org](mailto:zucca_m@shaker.org). In preparation for the 2024-2025 school year, I attended the summer Executive Board meeting and participated in summer building tours. I prepared and shared Building Representative expectations and responsibilities overview for Representative Council.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Matt Zucca, Chairperson*

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

As the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coordinator for the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association, it is my goal to support an inclusive environment that embraces, encourages and empowers the voices of our members. I completed my Ph.D. with a focus on African American males in sixth grade at Woodbury Elementary School in May of 2000. The focus groups underscored the covert racism that began for them as early as second grade. This research was the impetus for my desire to educate those who are unknowledgeable of the plight of people of color in our country and particularly in our school district. This year, my focus will be to introduce the history of African Americans, articles and videos, that will continue discussions on implementing equitable classroom practices. This month the book I am sharing is [A Kids Book About Racism by Jelani Memory](#) and a TEDx talk [We Are Not All That Different: Race and Culture Identity](#).

There is no neutral ground on this issue. It is imperative that we take a close look at ourselves and our classrooms to ensure all students feel welcomed, appreciated and respected. Both of the aforementioned address race and cultural identity. It is my hope that my sharing of various articles, videos and books will continue to open the door for frank and candid discussions that will make a difference in your life and those around you.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Angela Goodrum*

## LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Welcome back, everyone! I look forward to taking on this role for this school year and want to thank David Klapholz for his fantastic work from previous years while serving as Legislative Chair. This role will provide SHTA members with the latest information regarding education legislation at both the federal and state levels. Here are some current items that members may want to be aware of:

- **HB 214** - This piece of state legislation requires public schools to adopt policies prohibiting anyone from having to commit to a belief, political movement, or ideology. Proponents from southeast Ohio said schools are becoming too liberal - with acceptance of transgender students, social-emotional learning,

discussions about the impacts of racism in American society, and DEI training. This bill was sent to Gov. DeWine and could take effect at the end of October this year. ([more info here](#))

- **SB 168** - This bill would provide district leaders with the flexibility to address teacher, administration, and additional shortages as needed. This would include allowing an individual to become an educator if they hold at least a master's degree and pass a content-area exam. Additionally, administrators and superintendents would no longer be required to hold a master's degree to receive licensure for their positions. This is currently waiting to be signed by Gov. DeWine after it was voted on in mid-July and could also take effect at the end of October this year. ([more info here](#))
- **SB 104** - Recently passed in the State House of Representatives prior to summer recess, SB 104 was written to address the College Credit Plus Program. However, it was amended to include **HB 183**, which bans transgender students from using the bathroom and locker rooms that match their gender identity. Instead, students must only use the spaces that match their assigned gender at birth. This bill will return to the State Senate after the summer recess to vote on the addition of this amendment. ([more info here](#))
- **HB 8** - Currently in the Senate Education Committee and passed in the House in the summer of 2023, HB 8 would require educators to out a student's sexuality to their parents/guardians and require school districts to inform parents/guardians of about sexuality content within materials ahead of time while offering the option to receive alternative instruction. ([more info here](#))
- **HB 407** - Currently in House Committee, HB 407 aims to hold private schools receiving vouchers to the same standards as public schools when administering state tests and releasing test scores at the same time in the fall. Written with the intention of providing transparency to parents/guardians, the bill would require any private school currently with more than 20% of its students on a voucher to adhere to this policy. ([more info here](#))
- **SBoE Funding** - On August 19th, the State Board of Education received full funding after the Ohio Controlling Board hearing, providing \$4.66 million for the upcoming 2025 fiscal year. Fully funding the State Board means that the Board can support the Resident Educator program, ensure the safety and well-being of students by promptly conducting comprehensive background checks, help address educator recruitment and retention, and ensure timely completion of misconduct investigations so educator rights are protected without increasing licensure fees on teachers. ([more info here](#))

*Respectfully submitted,  
Matthew Klodor, Chairperson*

## **SHTA PAC COMMITTEE**

This year the Political Action Committee (PAC) is headed by Jessica O'Brien, High School Individuals & Societies Teacher, and Eileen Sweeney, Intervention Specialist at Mercer. The PAC met in July to outline the direction and structure of the PAC. This year we have been working on the following items:

- Outlining the positions of candidates on a variety of issues to inform members
- Communicating and engaging with members and the Shaker community

Our goal is to support the political issues and candidates that focus on education policies that make sense for our teachers and students.

With the coming election in November, we strongly encourage our members to check their voter registration status now to ensure access to voting. SHTA members can get more information on the various ways to vote in

the election at their county's Board of Elections. Cuyahoga County's Board of Elections can be accessed using the link below:

<https://boe.cuyahogacounty.gov/voters/get-your-voting-information>  
<https://boe.cuyahogacounty.gov/voters/get-your-voting-information/Index>

All members should make a voting plan and get to the polls!!!

*Respectfully Submitted,*  
*Eileen Sweeney & Jessica O'Brien, Co-Chairpersons*

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

As the Public Relations chair, I am thrilled to welcome back all of our SHTA members. This role comes with an array of responsibilities that I am proud to fulfill. A key aspect of my duties is placing strategic advertisements in a variety of high-profile publications, such as the community focused *Shaker Life* Magazine, the student-run *Shakerite* newspaper, and the High School Yearbook. These placements help to raise awareness of our organization and the incredible work we do to support the Shaker Heights Schools, the teachers and students.

In addition to our promotional efforts, I also oversee making charitable donations to various local organizations that are dedicated to enriching the lives of our Shaker Heights Students. These contributions reflect our association's steadfast commitment to giving back and being a force for positive change. Furthermore, I am tasked with purchasing thoughtful teacher appreciation gifts that are distributed during the annual Teacher Appreciation Week. This is a wonderful way for us to show our gratitude and support for the educators who tirelessly nurture the minds and spirits of our students.

Importantly, as outlined in the SHTA Constitution and By-Laws, I will continue to work diligently at fostering mutual understanding, goodwill, and respect between and among students, staff, the broader community, and school administration. This collaborative, bridge-building approach is fundamental to our mission and values.

Finally, I am pleased to share that we remain dedicated to sourcing American-made, union-printed shirts. In the near future, an exciting new t-shirt order will be made available to our members, allowing everyone to proudly display their membership and solidarity. I am honored to serve in this role and look forward to further elevating the SHTA's positive impact in the Shaker community.

*Respectfully Submitted,*  
*Bob Bognar, Chairperson*

## **LEGAL AID COMMITTEE**

As the chair of the Legal Aid Committee, it is my responsibility to convene the committee to consider requests for legal support from the SHTA as described in our constitution. Last year, the Legal Aid Committee met only one time, which is a positive thing. "No report" is good news in the context of the Legal Aid Committee. It means we have not had any grievances that made it to Step III and needed to go to arbitration for resolution, nor any requests for legal support from members directly connected to their employment with the district. I am hopeful that this year will be equally uneventful and that any grievances are resolved to members' satisfaction before reaching Step III and the need for arbitration, but the Legal Aid Committee is ready to meet to provide support for our members whenever deemed necessary.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*James Schmidt, Chairperson*

## **NEW TEACHER COMMITTEE**

Greetings teachers and welcome to the 2024-2025 school year. My name is Wendy Lewis and I am your New Teacher Education Committee Chairperson. This is my 31st year teaching, all in Shaker! My new position, with the closing of Woodbury, is 5th grade Language and Literature at Mercer, and life is good! My job with SHTA consists of keeping new teachers abreast of important dates and deadlines. Please be sure to read the information in the SHTA Newsletter carefully.

I am sure many of you might have taken classes over the summer. Remember to save your payment receipts and request your transcripts for tuition reimbursement and salary reclassification. The first opportunity to submit receipts and turn in transcripts will be late this fall. Details and deadlines will be forthcoming. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have. My district email is: [lewis\\_g@shaker.org](mailto:lewis_g@shaker.org). I wish everyone a wonderful school year.

*Respectfully Submitted,*  
*Gwendolyn “Wendy” Lewis, Chairperson*

## **PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

Publications is in charge of creating, editing, and seeking submissions for the newsletter. I also often write editorials for the newsletter. I also update our SHTA social media account on Facebook. With the district discontinuing their use of social media outlet X (formerly known as Twitter), we have decided to also discontinue the Association’s use also. We hope to start an SHTA Instagram account soon. I also communicate with membership through our work email for our officers & Executive Board.

If you know of a member NOT receiving the SHTA Newsletter or email communications, please have them email me directly at [glasier\\_a@shaker.org](mailto:glasier_a@shaker.org).

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

*Respectfully Submitted,*  
*Andrew Glasier, Chairperson*

## **SALARY-TENURE COMMITTEE**

I worked with Director of Human Resources Director Tiffany Joseph to update Negotiations Team members on upcoming Interest Based Bargaining Meetings with the Administrative Team.

*Respectfully Submitted,*  
*John Morris, Chairperson*



## MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

*SHTA President, Dr. John Morris* started the September 9, 2024 Representative Council Meeting at 4:30 PM. **The meeting took place at Shaker Heights Middle School.** Dr. Morris introduced *Shaker Heights Middle School Principal, Mr. Eric Forman* to the Representative Council.

*Principal, Mr. Eric Forman* welcomed the SHTA Representative council to Shaker Heights Middle School, the third building he has worked at in four years. He said that the school year has started positively given the many changes. The kids are happy and the families are happy. Staff communication has been really forthcoming. Mr. Forman also noted that we are maxing this building out before we move to the new one.

*SHTA Special Education Chair Tito Vazquez* introduced the new Director of Student Services, Dr. Meghan Shelby to the Representative Council.

*Superintendent, Dr. David Glasner* was present for the SHTA Representative Council Meeting and thanked everyone for their hard work and efforts that resulted in the great start to the school year. He noted that there have been some challenges regarding schedules at the high school. He thanked those who welcomed a new colleague or for being a new colleague this school year. He gave a brief facilities update and noted that we should see construction on Ludlow in the near future and they still expect to open the renovated Ludlow for preschool in the fall of 2025! They are in the process of launching the design for the Middle Years Building, formerly Woodbury. Staff will have opportunities to weigh in on the many decisions that will be made for this project. Following Ludlow and Woodbury, with regards to the elementary schools, renovation will start on Onaway and Lomond first and that will be followed by Mercer and Boulevard. The reasoning for this is the needs at Lomond and Onaway were assessed to be greater than those at the other two schools. Dr. Glasner said he was looking forward to a great year and to reach out to him with any questions or concerns.

**A motion for approval of the MINUTES** from the May 13, 2024 Representative Council meeting was made by Jessica O'Brien and seconded by James Schmidt.

### Administration Report

*Director of Human Resources, Dr. Tiffany Joseph* was present for the SHTA Representative Council Meeting. She shared the following:

OAESA Licensure/Endorsement Program Information. These programs were arranged and made possible by the K-12 Teachers Alliance in cooperation with OAESA. This program offers the following:

- Principal Licensure MA
- Principal Licensure Only
- Teacher Leader MA w/Endorsement
- Teacher Leader Endorsement Only
- Educational Leadership
- Doctorate Non-Licensure
- Principal Licensure Doctorate
- Superintendent Licensure w/Doctorate
- Superintendent Licensure Only
- Teacher Leader Doctorate w/Endorsement

She also shared that ADA Accommodations are delayed longer than anticipated because the district received an abundance of medical requests in the months of August and September. Also, the unusually high volume of requests for Air Conditioning units has put a strain on the electrical systems of some buildings. Due to this fact, each request has to be further evaluated to determine the impact it may have on the buildings.

## **P.T.O. Report**

**PTO President Mrs. Christine Reynolds** was present for the SHTA Representative Council meeting. She introduced herself as the new PTO president and said there was a lot going on at the start of the year.

## **Officers' Reports**

### ***President, John Morris***

- Spoke with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner regularly.
- Communicated with Human Resources Director Dr. Tiffany Joseph regularly.
- Updated SHTA Facebook page with Publications Editor Andrew Glasier.
- I asked High School Representative Aimee Grey to head up our recently approved SHTA Scholarship program.
- Worked with members with legal concerns with SHTA Lawyer, Susannah Muskovitz.
- Worked with a member concerning ADA accommodations in the transfer to a new building.
- Met with new teachers alongside SHTA Officers and Executive Board Members Vice President Darlene Garrison, Secretary Lisa Hardiman, Treasurer Bill Scanlon, Membership Chair Chante Thomas, Teacher Education Chair Wendy Lewis, and Special Education Chair Tito Vazquez.
- Toured the buildings with SHTA Officers Vice President Darlene Garrison, Secretary Lisa Hardiman, Personal Rights and Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears, and Building Safety Chair Matt Zucca. We toured with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Felicia Evans, Assistant Superintendent of Buildings and Operations Jeff Grosse, and Director of Buildings and Grounds Sean Brown.
- Communicated with Secretary Lisa Hardiman and Publications Editor Andrew Glasier concerning communication about DEI day.
- Communicated with SHTA Head Reps and Woodbury Transition Reps on Transition Concerns.
- Communicated with SHTA Head Rep Kevin Thomas and MS/Woodbury Rep Marie O'Leary Stark on heat issues at the MS.
- Met with Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Felicia Evans, Director of Curriculum John Moore an elementary and MS principals to discuss transition concerns.
- Asked Secretary Lisa Hardiman to send the Rep Council meeting calendar to all Head Reps and Woodbury Transition reps.

### **Salary-Tenure Committee**

- Worked with HR Director Tiffany Joseph to update Negotiations Team members on upcoming Interest
- Based Bargaining Meetings with the Administrative Team.

### ***Vice President, Darlene Garrison***

- Attended the Shaker Heights City Schools New Employees Summer Meeting at Fernway.
- Attended the summer SHTA Executive Board Meeting hosted by Evaluation Chair, Lena Paskewitz.
- Participated in the District summer building walkthrough with members of the SHTA Executive Board and members of the Shaker School District Central Office.
- Attended SHTA Executive Board Meeting on Tuesday, September 3rd at Fernway.

- Created a reminder notice and emailed SHTA fellowship recipients a note to turn in their receipts for fellowship reimbursements due by Monday, September 30th.
- Processed and mailed reimbursement checks to SHTA Fellowship Grant recipients.
- Sent Executive Board Member a token of love from SHTA
- Will be attending the first PTO Council meeting for the 2024 - 2025 school year on Tuesday, October 1st.

### ***Secretary, Lisa Hardiman***

- Emailed invitations for SHTA Executive Board and Representative Council meetings. Included in all invitations is the schedule and location of all meetings.
- Attended both Executive Board and Representative Council meetings
- Completed the minutes for SHTA Representative Council meeting
- Attended summer Executive Board meeting at Evaluations Chair Lena Paskewitz's house. It was lovely!
- Attended the New Teacher Academy at Fernway School along with SHTA Officers and Executive Board Members President John Morris, Vice President Darlene Garrison, Treasurer Bill Scanlon, Membership Chair Chante Thomas, Teacher Education Chair Wendy Lewis, and Special Education Chair Tito Vazquez
- Toured various school buildings with SHTA Officers President Dr. John Morris, Vice President Darlene Garrison, Personal Rights and Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears, and Building Safety Chair Matt Zucca. We toured with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Felicia Evans, Assistant Superintendent of Buildings and Operations Jeff Grosse, and Director of Buildings and Grounds Sean Brown.
- As a representative of the Black Teachers' Task Force, participated in two sets of interviews at Boulevard School along with Principal Neal Robinson and Boulevard teachers.
- Attended Mercer's Building Committee meeting along with Principal Roneisha Campbell and Mercer teachers
- Participated in numerous discussions about planning time that has been taken away this year due to a change in the start time of the school day and the number of meetings that are required during our valuable 50-minute planning time. The consensus among many elementary classroom teachers is that although our Collective Bargaining Agreement states that 20 minutes per day or 100 minutes per week is required, this is simply a minimum amount of time. Much more time is need to adequately prepare to teach our students.

### ***Treasurer William Scanlon***

- Paid bills for the Association.
- Distributed Profit and Loss sheets to Representative Council.
- Attended Executive Board meeting at Evaluations Chair Lena Paskewitz' house during the summer.
- Attended the new teacher meeting.
- Met with financial advisor at Edward Jones.

## **Building Representative Reports**

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

- Heather Pincoe represented Cathy Grieshop who was not in attendance at meeting-noted that teachers are with students 95 minutes more per week than last year.
- Woodbury teachers said that there is a lack of planning time.

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

- August 8, 2024 Fernway principal Chris Hayward contacted me concerning the start time for Fernway's PD days. I clarified my interpretation of the contract with SHTA President Dr. John Morris and forwarded the language to Mr. Hayward.
- Spoke on behalf of Lena Paskewitz for OTEs overview with staff
- August 28, 2024, presented with a concern regarding 5th grade schedules and rotation time. The concern was forwarded to John Morris. A follow up meeting with the principal took place. During that meeting Mr. Hayward presented a possible solution. I followed up with the 5th grade lead teacher who is resolving this with the administrator.
- There is a general concern with members regarding meetings (CPT) during planning time. There is a concern about the number of meetings planned to occur and the lack of time available to complete necessary tasks.

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

- Thanks to PTO for brunch during PD days.
- Agree with the mentioned sentiments regarding lack of planning time.

***Mercer-Eileen Sweeney***

- The situation with the lack of planning time impacts us as professionals. We are not prepared to do what is needed.
- Thanks to the administration and PTO for lunch on the PD days.

***Onaway-Noreen Smyth-Morrow, Stacey DeYoung (WO)***

- Many thanks to the Onaway admin, staff, custodians and families for a warm and positive welcome. Classrooms were clean, tables and chairs set up for students, teacher desk chair and filing cabinet all provided. Keys were also provided for locking up personal belongings. People have taken time to explain how Onaway works, and training concerning serious emergencies was well addressed.
- Things that have come up due to transition from Woodbury and introduction of new 5th grade placement:
  - Unclear expectations for Intervention specialists. Trained for co-teaching, but that's not the model in K-4. There was no conversation in order to prepare for this change. The space for working with students is a hallway with preschoolers traveling through. Phonics curriculum has yet to be delivered.
  - Teachers missed important building specific PD to go to training for curriculum. This also occurred for an entire work day the day before teachers had a full day meet and greet with families.
  - Teachers are learning completely new routines and expectations in our buildings.
  - There has been no discussion/approach concerning grading for 5th grade grading procedures.
  - New format for teams and schedules went from 50 minutes to 90 minutes.
  - New curriculum for Math and for Language Arts! There is much to learn.
  - New spaces take time and effort to create. And the lack of instructional materials (Copiers, whiteboards) has been an issue. In addition, there's another completely new instructional tool to learn; the Smartpanel.
  - Colleagues and social/emotional support have been removed for many Woodbury teachers who are now in the elementary buildings.
  - Along with our packing, unpacking, we are also responsible for the 22 hours of Science of Reading training and hours for teaching gifted students.
  - 100 minutes of planning is not adequate. Teachers need more time, and pay commensurate with that time. The schedule we are working with is intense. Orange Schools has @600 minutes/week. Cleveland Heights has @400/week.

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

During the first few weeks of the school year there have been quite a few issues that have arisen, as we expected with all of the transitions to a 6-8 building. I have met with building principals formally once per week and informally nearly every day. Our building reps have also met formally and communicated informally as we each collected concerns from our staff.

- The first major issue was the extreme heat in the building which has been as high as 96 degrees in some classrooms. This heat not only caused students to struggle during class but more in some cases has caused health issues including students and staff having passed out as a result.
- The lack of keys and security latches has been an issue. Teachers are not only being inconvenienced by not being able to get access to their classroom, but it causes a major security issue. Teachers are concerned that they will not be able to participate in a lockdown drill without a key and if there were an actual emergency, they may not be able to secure the classroom appropriately. Those in the trailers may have a key but the doors are not equipped with the security latches which makes securing a classroom more difficult.
- The third major issue is with sports and the later school day for middle school. Students and staff members who have an away game are missing the majority of their 8th period classes and already it's causing a major disruption and affecting our students' opportunity to be successful in class. I am currently working with Mr. Summers to gather the data about how much time is being missed.
- Several issues have been resolved including; structuring 7th grade breakfast, Clevertouch training, finding classroom space for traveling teachers, and speaker system issues.
- We are currently working on fixing issues with the availability of copiers, staff usage during lunches and team time, bells for transitions and limiting the number of announcements.

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

- Met with Principal Eric Juli to discuss the beginning of the year and discussed the following:
  - Issue of having a design class in a classroom that did not have the adequate equipment required for the course description
  - Licensure issue of a teacher with a 4-9 license but upperclassmen were scheduled to be in their class.
  - Issues of teachers not having a lunch or planning (has been resolved).
  - Duties for teachers with 5 classes has not been completely assigned (Mr. Juli would like to meet to discuss these)
  - Switched the schedule for the first week to only offer 3 lunches to solve the issue
  - High school counselors were notified that they would be assigned 504 renewals, Mr. Juli said they would not be expected to do the initial evaluation. Counselors were concerned about this being a new responsibility.
- Worked with Assistant Principal Mr. James Dubsky, during Mr. Juli’s absence, to make sure teachers were not in the same classroom during the same class period (this was resolved within the first full week.).
- Met with Director of Curriculum Dr. John Moore with Mr. Juli about the Design class that was not equipped for the room that it was scheduled to be in.
  - Discussed Science Department Chair James Schmidt’s idea that was proposed in May to fix the Design problem. Administration created a different solution and was moving forward with their changes. As of today, 9/9 the issue has not been completely resolved.
  - The changes also affected multiple teachers' classes and other departments.
  - Letters to families were sent out on 9/6 to parents of the classes, 2 different letters were necessary because of the solution and how it impacted students’ schedules.



- Met with a member that was upset about their schedule changing on 8/30. The member also expressed that the administration had said staff would have a choice if they taught 5 or 6 classes, and they are now being told to teach 6. The member will teach the 6th class but is upset that they did not have a choice.
- Met with Mr. Juli 8/30 briefly and he confirmed that he had made the decision to move high school to 3 lunches instead of 4. This would resolve issues of teachers having overlapping classes.
- Teachers are reporting that they are requesting the Yondr Squad in their classrooms and no one is showing up to take students' phones, earbuds, or other items that are not permitted. Mr. Juli is looking into this.
- A member brought a concern that they have no place to securely lock up any of their items because they do not have a classroom and they do not have a department office that they can keep their personal items in. Trying to find a solution, as the teacher does not have their own classroom to put a lockable filing cabinet.
- Lunch confusion has been happening for staff and students. Mr. Juli expressed that Powerschool was not accurate and staff should be following the instructions from his email on which lunch their 5th or 6th period should attend. He further instructed that staff “will be notified when Powerschool is accurate.”
- Informed Mr. Juli of a teacher that had a medical need for coverage during their schedule. Mr. Juli worked with security to create a rotation so that the staff member could have their break.
- Held a meeting of the High School SHTA that was requested by multiple members.
- Met with Dr. Moore and a member to discuss roles, responsibilities and expectations for their position.
- Filed a grievance on behalf of a member on 9/6.
- Worked with a foreign language teacher that was being asked to teach 4 classes in one day and discussed with Mr. Juli that this would not happen and that the teachers' schedules needed to be fixed.

### ***Innovative Center--Anne Scott***

- The IC welcomed 3 new staff members this year. Thank you to Isaiah Wyatt for providing us time at the start of the year to get to know one another and engage in professional development as a team.
- Roughly 1/3 of the Innovative Center for Personalized Learning student body are exceptional children and we do not have an intervention specialist. Our current substitute is not a licensed intervention specialist. We recognize our district and districts around the country are struggling with a shortage of intervention specialists. We also want to acknowledge AP Isaiah Wyatt has been doing what he can to support students and staff during this time.
- IC teachers were struggling to get their planning time. We met with Mr. Wyatt and made a plan that allows teachers to have uninterrupted planning time.
- Also, over the summer there was some restructuring of the Innovative Center Program. The Innovative Center now houses 3 programs; Innovative Center for Personalized Learning (located at the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Building), Raider Academy (located at main campus in the I-Lab), and the Empowerment Program. My reports will be specific to the Innovative Center for Personalized Learning.

## **Executive Board Reports**

### ***Publications—Andrew Glasier***

- Summer #shtaworksalleyearlong contest winner is Jason Walker from the high school.
- Attended summer executive board meeting.
- Updating shtaweb.org.
- Head Fernway Representative Selena Boyer was the Presidential award winner from last school year. Needs a picture to put on website.
- If members know of someone not getting the newsletter, please let me know.
- Ended the X account and looking into opening an Instagram account.
- Tim Kalan is doing an editorial this month.



***Evaluation-Lena Paskewitz (Andrew Glasier)***

- Lena will be out for the semester and Addy Tobey & Andrew Glasier will be taking on her responsibilities.
- Librarians worked this summer to redesign and update their evaluation process. It will be brought to the Evaluation Committee for discussion and a vote.
- Gifted teachers are redesigning their evaluation.
- The evaluation committee will meet and vote on their new evaluation process.

***Teacher Education-Wendy Lewis***

- Welcome back.
- Things have been quiet.
- Will be sending out dates for submitting paperwork.
- Attended summer executive board meeting.
- Attended new teacher academy at Fernway.

***Policy-Tim Kalan***

- Attended summer executive board meeting.
- Writing an editorial about poor leadership.
- Doing OTEs responsibilities.
- Fixing wording in constitution.

***Public Relations-Bob Bognar***

- Attended summer executive board meeting.
- Will be putting a new T-Shirt order next month.

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

- Changing focus this year. Decided to share smaller books-scaling information down so hopefully the response is better. Reevaluating how to connect with the audience.
- This year, my focus will be to introduce the historical history of African Americans, articles and videos that will continue discussions on implementing equitable classroom practices. This month the book I am sharing is "[A Kids Book About Racism by Jelani Memory](#)".

***Special Education-Tito Vazquez***

- Attended and participated in the New Teacher Academy and the SHTA Executive Board Summer meeting at Lena Paskewitz's house.
- Met in July and this month with the Director of Student Services Dr. Meghan Shelby over special education concerns across the district.
- Participated in interviews at The Innovative Center for personalized Learning as a representative of The Black Teachers' Task Force for the open English and Math positions.
- Participated in interviews for the open Intervention Specialist position at Lomond Elementary.
- Worked with SHTA President Dr. John Morris over Special Education concerns.
- Had conversations with Dr. Nicole Patterson, Director of DEI Professional Learning, concerning equity concerns in education.
- Discussed and worked on an issue of equity for students at the Innovative Center for Personalized Learning with I.C. Coordinator Mr. Isaiah Wyatt.
- Provided support to various SHTA members concerning issues including but not limited to job placement, personnel issues and work options.
- Communicated with Exceptional Children Supervisor K-6 Erin Dzolic and 7-12 Supervisor Jennifer Currie over scheduling concerns.

- Communicated with Shaker Heights High School Exceptional Children Department
- Chairs Tana Thompson and Keesha Bryant and Dr. John Morris over a variety of concerns with the move of the I-Lab to a new location of Room 216 in the high school.
- Continue to work collaboratively with administrators for the benefit of both students and teachers.

***Legal Aid-James Schmidt***

- No Report.

***Legislative-Matt Kloder***

- Subscribed/gained access to a number of education blogs, newsletters, and newspapers.
- Compiled a list of proposed Ohio pieces of legislation that would affect educators.
- Highlighted: HB 214, SB 168, SB 104, HB 8, HB 407.
- Update on State Board of Education funding.

***Building Safety and Sick Day Transfer-Matthew Zucca***

- Attended summer Executive Board meeting hosted by Lena Paskewitz.
- participated in building tours with administrators and SHTA Executive Board Members.
- Prepared and shared Building Representative expectations and responsibilities overview.

***Social-Selena Boyer***

- Responsible for hosting executive board meetings.
- Looking forward to a happy hour this fall.

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

- Communicated with several members over the summer related to maternity leave, worker's compensation, ADA accommodations, and the DEI training day.
- I also spoke about the reduced number of building subs, the need to pay teachers more (\$56) for covering a class.
- I helped make sure the modular units were ready for the first day of school for students.

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

- Met this July to discuss the direction of the PAC.
- Purpose is to help members understand what's happening.
- Plans to engage community.
- Trying to get a handle on November election.
- We are making sure we inform you.

**Old Business-None**

**New Business-None**

**Good of the Order-**

- President Dr. John Morris stated that this Association does not work without each and every one of you!

Motion for adjournment was made by James Schmidt and seconded by Bob Bognar  
Meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Hardiman*



**SHTA  
Representative  
Council  
September  
Meeting hosted at  
Shaker Middle  
School**



## *Am I A Fool?*

*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.*

How did we get here? Perhaps it started years ago, as the corporate pillar in former superintendent Dr. Gregory Hutching's heart that created the leadership structure we endure today. The compulsion to align, micromanage, and re-define reality, creating what appears to be solutions from an administrative perspective, but an obstacle to all those who must implement. A leadership team compartmentalized, difficult to communicate with, slow to react, and shielded from accountability. And unfortunately, I may add, shielded from good solutions. For how can one problem-solve effectively when they have been cordoned off from the day-to-day work of our buildings by their very structure?

"Only fools repeat the same things over and over, expecting to obtain different results," so said George Bernard Shaw. I had the privilege last year to work with my colleagues to try to find a better solution to the problems caused by last year's schedule. Perhaps out of desperation, I continue to believe that communicating the plight of the teachers in the district will lead to an amelioration of some of the district's self-inflicted wounds; the constant addition of initiatives, and subtraction of time to complete them; the expectations that never diminish combined with a diminishment of support. It is not hard to see why many of us feel like we are not being set up for success, nor valued as professionals. Unfortunately, the effort we put into trying to create a better work environment during those meetings only succeeded in removing some barriers that were subsequently replaced by new ones. Two steps forward, two steps back.

Take my schedule for instance. The district thought it wise to put all my K-5 sections on three days. This means that from Tuesday through Thursday I have six classes a day, back-to-back, with six different preps a day, and no planning in between. In materials-heavy classes like mine, this type of scheduling inserts a level of complication that is curriculum-stunting, unnecessary, and frankly, not possible to actually do with my usual expectations of quality. How do I clean my sink? How do I store the art? How do I manage my materials? And this does not even speak to the other quotidian duties like answering emails, completing report cards, communicating with parents, hanging art, attending CPTs (we don't have CPTs that fit into the schedule this year). When do these responsibilities get executed in my schedule? Certainly not in the fifteen minutes before & after school that the new schedule provides sans students. On these full days my contact time runs just about up to the contractual 320 minutes. However, the district *has* provided ample planning time on my Mondays and Fridays. Outside of my PreK sections, the core of those days is open for me to provide my enrichment activities and fulfill my other duties...assuming that I am not pulled to sub. And honestly what cynic among us could think of a better reason for a schedule to be set up in this fashion if it wasn't for the purpose of using us teachers as building substitutes? District leadership claims they are making these scheduling decisions for the kids, not the teachers. What a bunch of baloney. They are making these decisions for themselves.

Let us take my kid as an example. He is a freshman at the high school. Intrigued by the engineering program, he enrolled in the Intro to Design elective. Little did we know he would be placed in one of the *unlucky* sections. I found out the second day of school, that in a logic that is becoming all too familiar, my son ended up in an 8<sup>th</sup> period class with an instructor who has never taught the material, on the third floor of the high school with no access to the tools and resources that encompass the entire purpose of the course. I thought to myself "if my son is interested in a CTE pathway, how will he be able to function in coursework that the other students (including the other Intro to Design class during 8<sup>th</sup> period lucky enough to be located in the engineering classroom) are engaged in with full access to the resources and curriculum?" How could this possibly happen in a First-Choice-School-District? How can this happen after the CTE program offered

suggestions for how to handle these sections at the end of last year? How does this happen in a district that claims to care about equity? How can this be fixed? Well, I can tell you it is unclear at this point, because as of this writing, my two-week-old email to administrators for answers has only just been replied to with a form letter from high school principal Eric Juli that talks ambiguously about switching my child's schedule around to fit him into a new schedule. What? That same day, without any communication to me or my wife, they unilaterally switched my kid's classes. Three weeks into school with new teachers and classes. Where is the accountability? Where is the excellence?

What happens when the culture and philosophy of an administration are no longer in accord with the culture and philosophy of its staff and community? The optimist in me continues to believe that because of our shared interest there must be a way forward that accomplishes our common goals. That if we can just hear each other and collaborate in a way that we haven't yet been able to, we can find a path toward mutual support. That we can all move in the same direction and provide not only excellence, but also fulfill the most basic school functions we no longer can take for granted. That we can switch being set-up-to-fail to being supported-for-success. I still want to believe that there are words we can say that will lead to this outcome. Then again, maybe I am a fool.

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