

A Message from the President of the SHTA

This first letter of the school year should be familiar to those who read my opening letter. In the spirit of sharing with new members and accounting for missing information from the first letter, I am resharing with updated and additional information.

I hope that you have all had wonderful and re-energizing summers. Many of you have taken part in professional development, student support, and continuing education over the summer. I hope that you have also found time to relax, refresh, and enjoy time with your family and friends.

During the past few weeks, many of our officers have toured our schools, met with new teachers, and attended the district Leadership Institute. Should you need to contact me, please send an email (morris_j@shaker.org) or call me at 295-6033. Our contract can be accessed at shtaweb.org. You can follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

At this summer's Executive Board meeting, our officers and Executive Board voted to endorse this coming November's 9.9 mil operating levy. The district has not run an operating levy for 11 years. Without the personnel to operate the schools (teachers, guidance counselors, intervention specialists, administrators, coaches, nurses, school psychologists, librarians, secretaries, paraprofessionals, custodians, bus drivers, security guards, and others), the schools cannot function. Passing the levy makes all these positions possible. So many of our SHTA members are residents and parents in our district as well, and we appreciate the positive impact of this levy's passage on our community. We also voted to donate \$1000 dollars to the levy fund. Our PAC is supporting the levy as well. If you would like to endorse the levy, we encourage you to do so at this [link](#). You can also donate at the site above OR by interoffice mail addressed to SHTA Treasurer Bill Scanlon at SHHS with a check with "levy" in the memo line. You can send your donation through Venmo @Scanlon-SHTA with levy in the description line as well. Thank you for your support of this crucial levy.

UPDATE: SHTA membership, by an overwhelming majority, has also endorsed the passage of this November's upcoming Operating Levy. Thank you to all members for making your voice heard.

Below is Our Association leadership:

Officers

President	John Morris	High School
Vice-President	Darlene Garrison	Middle School
Secretary	Lisa Hardiman	Mercer
Treasurer	Bill Scanlon	High School

Executive Board Members

Professional

Right &

Responsibilities

Evaluation

Membership

Teacher Education

Social

Policy

Legal Aid

Legislative

DEI

Public Relations

Publications

Building Safety/Sick Day Transfer

Special Education

Mike Sears

Lena Paskewitz

Chante Thomas

Wendy Lewis

Selena Boyer

Tim Kalan

James Schmidt

Matt Klodor

Angela Goodrum

Bob Bogнар

Andrew Glasier

Matt Zucca

Tito Vazquez

Middle School

Fernway

Mercer

Mercer

Fernway

Onaway

High School

Middle School

Middle School

Woodbury

High School

Fernway

High School

Representative Council

The 2025-2026 Representative Council Elected Members are (BOLD indicates Head Representative):

Boulevard- **Cathy Grieshop**, Heather Pincoe

Fernway- **Jamie Harden**, Lee Appel

Lomond- **Lauren Meek**, Jackie Abrams, Krystal Allen-Jackson

Mercer- **Eileen Sweeney**, Nicole Cicconetti

Onaway- **Noreen Smythe-Morrow**, Stacey DeYoung

Middle School- **Kevin Thomas**, Lori Billington, Melissa Albrecht, Addison Pretnar, Desmarie Carter

High School- **Jessica O'Brien**, Nick LaPete, Jayce Bailey, Megan Dora, Adam Cohen, Enid Vazquez, Sharita Hill, Joel Rathbone

IC- **Anne Scott**

Ludlow- **Allison Colvin**, Leanne Moses-Kruluts

It has been an eventful beginning of the year. I spoke with Dr. Glasner regularly. I communicated with HR Director Dr. Tiffany Joseph regularly. I updated the SHTA Facebook page with Publications Editor Andrew Glasier. I worked with members with legal concerns with SHTA Lawyer, Brooks Boron. I attended our summer Executive Board meeting at Membership Chair Chante Thomas's house. At the meeting, I voted to endorse the 9.9 mil operating levy alongside SHTA Officers and Executive Board Members. The SHTA Officers and Executive Board also voted to make a \$1000 donation to the Levy Campaign. I discussed PAC Support of the operating levy with PAC Co-chairs Jessica O'Brien and Nick LaPete.

I worked with a member concerning ADA accommodations. I met with new teachers alongside Vice President Darlene Garrison. 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 Superintendent David Glasner, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Felicia Evans, and Superintendent of Buildings and Operations Jeff Grosse. I asked Secretary Lisa Hardiman to send the Representative Council meeting calendar to all Head

Representatives and Woodbury Transition representatives. I asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to send out the opening letter to membership. I met with Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer Dr. Lawrence Burnley along with Vice President Darlene Garrison and leaders from other school bargaining units to discuss the new Bias Incident Reporting protocol. I discussed Intervention Specialist concerns with Special Education Chair Tito Vazquez. I communicated on Pre-K concerns with Head Pre-K Representative Allison Colvin. I met with a member and administration on a grievance issue. I met with Innovative Center members to discuss concerns. I communicated with members concerning multiple building assignments. I communicated with members concerning safety concerns. I asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to send out a grant opportunity shared by Human Resources Specialist Stacy Poole. I worked with IC members on a grievance. I met with our Legal Aide Committee led by Legal Aide Chair James Schmidt and attended by Legal Aide Committee members to consider a request for funding. I attended a speech given by Dr. Amy Acton with SHTA Secretary Lisa Hardiman and SHTA Treasurer Bill Scanlon. SHTA Vice President Darlene Garrison could not attend due to a previous engagement. Officers and Executive Board members voted to send a levy endorsement questionnaire to membership to determine if a full SHTA Membership endorsement of the levy is appropriate. I visited Ludlow to address membership concerns. I will attend the district all collective bargaining unit union meeting Tuesday, September 9th with SHTA Vice President Darlene Garrison.

I look forward to seeing all of you as we begin a new school year. Please don't hesitate to contact me (x6033) or your building representatives if the need arises.

Respectfully Submitted,
John L. Morris

IMPORTANT DATES

Tuesday, **September 16**: B.O.E work session, 5-7 PM

Tuesday, **September 23**: Rosh Hashanah, Schools Closed

Thursday, **October 2**: Yom Kippur, Schools Closed

Monday, **October 6**: SHTA Executive Board Meeting, Fernway

Thursday, **October 9**: B.O.E Meeting

Monday, **October 13**: SHTA Representative Council Meeting, Fernway

- 4:30 to 5:00: Building Reports
- 5:00 to 6:30: SHTA PAC School Board Candidates Forum

SHTA OFFICERS' REPORTS

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The start of this school year felt a bit different for several reasons. The first change was I missed my first beginning of the year convocation in thirty-one years. I had to drop off children at college. So, I started school feeling like I missed something very important. Secondly, I'm an empty-nester and I just don't know how I feel about it. This is definitely going to be a year of change and new beginnings.

The SHTA Executive Board began the 2025-2026 school year this summer, meeting at the home of Membership Chair, Chante Thomas. SHTA Officers, Executive Board members and members of Shaker Heights Schools Central office had a chance to see school improvements, repairs, and a brand new football field/track at the High School. 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 Academy at Fernway Elementary School. There were a few new faces and it was a pleasure having the opportunity to mix and mingle with the two new members who joined SHTA. President John Morris and I shared information about our union and answered all the questions that were asked. Congratulations to our new staff members and welcome to Shaker Heights City Schools.

As Vice President, I will attend the PTO Council meetings representing SHTA. This school year, there are three meetings scheduled that will be listed on the district calendar. The first meeting was held on Tuesday, September 2nd in-person at the Shaker Heights Public Library or you could have joined the Google Meet. Unfortunately, I missed the first meeting; it was scheduled on the same day as our Executive Board meeting. PTO does so much for our schools and students, that we ask that all teachers consider making a donation to the PTO. I am looking forward to working with the PTO Council.

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 Night for the Red & White, you are missing a spectacular event. I will be working with the Shaker Schools Foundation representing SHTA. 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 Tuesday, September 30th. Make sure that you email your information and receipts to garrison_d@shaker.org. It will take approximately 2-3 weeks from the time I receive your documents to receive your reimbursement check. Please don't miss out on this opportunity. The Dr. Rebecca L. Thomas Fellowship Grant application for the 2025 - 2026 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 SHTA. I am so proud to be an officer for the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at garrison_d@shaker.org or 216-295-4997.

Respectfully submitted
Darlene Garrison, Vice President

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Welcome back to the 2025-2026 academic year! My name is Lisa Hardiman and this is my fifth year serving the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association in the role of Secretary. I hope that you enjoyed rest and recreation this summer and are motivated to face all the excitement and challenges that the new 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 the minutes 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 receive two free tickets to A Night For the Red & White fundraiser. Also, During the 2024-2025 school year, I served as a member of the negotiating team. From these numerous and challenging meetings, we were able to bring a three-year contract to our members.

In August, the SHTA Executive Board convened at the beautiful home of Membership and Elections Chair, Chante Thomas for our first meeting of the year. Also 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.

I have been involved in a number of conversations this month. Some of these were with members, who although they were told to move classrooms, they have not been paid for their move. I also worked with the Special Education Chair, Tito Vazquez, on an issue involving special education members and their classroom space.

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_l@shaker.org.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hardiman, Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT

Welcome back to the new school year. I hope everyone had a wonderful summer and spent some good quality time with your *home* family. I put it that way because I consider all of us a *work* family. As a union, we keep an eye out for each other. We look out for our younger teachers. We make sure someone new to our building feels welcome. We ask each other how the year's going so far. We share curriculum materials to help ease each other's burden. I am proud to be a member of this family. This is my 30th year as an SHTA member and my 20th year serving as the Treasurer. Thank you for all the collaboration and camaraderie over the years. Let's keep taking care of each other in this crazy and diverse family of ours.

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 2025-26 budget for our financials. 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 all of you, my sisters and brothers, have a great year. Let's make all of our students remember this as their best year yet.

*Respectfully submitted,
Bill Scanlon, Treasurer*

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On Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100063673557291>

And

Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/shtassoc/>

Profit and Loss Shaker Heights Teachers' Association July 1-September 11, 2025		Balance Sheet Shaker Heights Teachers' Association As of September 10, 2025	
Distribution account	Total Income	Distribution account	Total Assets
Investments 0.00		Current Assets	
Change in Value in Edward Jones 45,713.74		Bank Accounts	
Edward Jones-Fees & Charges -1,492.51		Key Bank Checking 3,270.08	
Total for Investments \$44,221.23		Key Bank Savings 8,277.95	
Total for Income \$44,221.23		Total for Bank Accounts \$11,548.03	
Cost of Goods Sold 0.00		Accounts Receivable 0.00	
Gross Profit \$44,221.23		Other Current Assets	
Expenses		Edward Jones 13760-1-1 680,945.65	
Operations 0.00		Edward Jones 13768-1-3 1,259,057.24	
Accounting 125.85		Key Investments 150,000.00	
Compensation 48,702.94		Uncategorized Asset 0.00	
Conferences & Meetings 551.21		Total for Other Current Assets \$2,090,002.89	
Insurance 5,909.00		Total for Current Assets \$2,101,550.92	
Legal 350.00		Fixed Assets 0.00	
Payroll Taxes 706.09		Other Assets 0.00	
Publications 49.00		Total for Assets \$2,101,550.92	
Public Relations 1,000.00		Liabilities and Equity	
STRS (TPO Contribution) 6,818.35		Liabilities	
Total for Operations \$64,212.44		Current Liabilities	
Total for Expenses \$64,212.44		Accounts Payable 0.00	
Net Operating Income -\$19,991.21		Credit Cards 0.00	
Other Income 0.00		Other Current Liabilities 0.00	
Other Expenses 0.00		Total for Current Liabilities \$0.00	
Net Other Income \$0.00		Long-term Liabilities 0.00	
Net Income -\$19,991.21		Total for Liabilities \$0.00	
		Equity	
		Opening Balance Equity 201,324.23	
		Retained Earnings 1,920,217.90	
		Net Income -19,991.21	
		Total for Equity \$2,101,550.92	
		Total for Liabilities and Equity \$2,101,550.92	

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES REPORT

Welcome to the 2025-26 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 8th grade American History at the Middle School. This is my 27th year in the district and my 30th year in education. This is my 21st year of involvement with SHTA, and my 16th 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) 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. Delta Dental of Ohio replaced Anthem as our dental provider on January 1, 2025. 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](#). On the Shaker intranet, members can also access the [Employee Assistance](#) programs, which includes Health Advocate. Health Advocate can help you with insurance claims, billing questions, and to find network providers.

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

The district policy for maternity leave is in the contract. However, new mothers decide how many sick days they want to use and if they want to take any unpaid leave through the Family and Medical Leave Act. If you are pregnant, please contact me right away so we can look at a calendar, and I can assist you in a plan that works best for you and your family. You should be aware that notes from doctors do not always allow additional sick days to care for babies. For example, a note that discusses “failure to thrive” is an acceptable medical reason to use a sick day, but a note that mentions “bonding with the baby” will not be approved because that is not considered a medical condition that allows for a sick day. Sick days may 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 personal day. You do not need to fill out a form about a personal day. You may simply enter it on Frontline. However, you are responsible for keeping track of your own personal days. If you enter a 4th or a 5th personal day, you will forfeit pay for those absences. You may not use personal days before or after a holiday unless you fill out the personal day request form. Both the building principal and the Human Resources Department must approve the request. Administrators consider each case on an individual basis. If you have a question about this, please contact me. If you use more than five sick days in a row, a building secretary will have to enter days six 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 ten sick days in a row, the Human Resources Department will send you a form about Family and Medical Leave. You may choose to continue using sick days with appropriate documentation or you may go on an extended and unpaid leave for family or medical reasons. Please call me if you are in this situation or if you anticipate being out for an extended time.

In recent months, I have:

- Worked on the grievance about Supplemental Contracts being cut or reduced, which led to a couple minor changes after the Supplemental Committee met in July. Unfortunately, most of the cuts (like per diem days for school counselors and building testing coordinators) involved positions created by the administration, and they were not under the review of the Supplemental Committee that was created by an MOU in 2016.
- Went on a building tour with other Executive Board members and administrators from the central office on August 12th
- Answered members' questions about administrator-initiated transfers over the summer
- Attended Supplemental Committee meetings on July 16th and August 28th. Another meeting is scheduled for September 18th.
- Met with the Executive Board on September 2nd and the Representative Council on September 8th.
- Spoke to a member about safety concerns, especially related to the placement of students with special needs.
- Had phone conferences with members about maternity leave, FMLA, and caregiver leave.
- Spoke to high school building representative Jessica O'Brien about foster parent rights and supplemental contracts for clubs and activities.
- Attended a Legal Aid committee meeting on September 5th

The current contract is available on our [web site](#). 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, Dr. Tiffany Joseph. I also work with Andrew Glasier and Addie Tobey to coordinate the Peer Evaluation Program. All members of the committee and I are available to answer your evaluation questions and concerns. I will continue to communicate information about evaluation procedures throughout the year through this newsletter and during SHTA Representative Council Meetings.

All buildings should have staff meetings to review the [Evaluation 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 (OhioES) support. I have also updated the [Evaluation Resource Packet](#) with further explanation of evaluation elements.

Please complete your Annual Professional Growth Plan (PGP) in the Ohio Evaluation System (OhioES) by October 15th. 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 OhioES 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 OhioES 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. Please input these measures as separate entries.
- Familiarize themselves with the OTES Rubric, particularly the references to use of data.
- Conference with their evaluators about their use of data.

The Peer Evaluation Program has well over 100 educators, counselors, and nurses participating across the district. It is exciting that this program continues to thrive as a unique professional learning opportunity. Peer Evaluation participants have been coded in OhioES, unless re-credentialing is still in progress for an evaluator. Please double check that you have access to your partner's evaluation so that any errors can be corrected right away. Peer evaluators conducting full cycle evaluations will receive \$375 and those conducting off-cycle evaluations will receive \$125. I appreciate the continued support and recognition of this program as valuable professional learning work. I truly believe that this work brings us towards alignment with other highly professional fields. Andrew Glasier (High School), Addie Tobey (Woodbury and Middle School) and I (Elementary) will continue to serve as the

Co-coordinators of the program this year. We are happy to assist you in any way we can throughout the process. As always, I am here to help answer teacher and evaluator questions and navigate any part of the process with you, as are all members of the committee.

Respectfully submitted,
Lena Paskewitz, chairperson

SPECIAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Over the past month, I attended the Executive Board meeting. I spoke with the Director of Student Services, Dr. Meghan Shelby, regarding the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year and concerns across the district. I discussed concerns with SHTA President Dr. John Morris. I have worked with Shaker Heights High School Head Rep. Jessica O'Brien regarding various staff concerns. I discussed with multiple union members concerning student placements. I worked with SHTA Vice President Lisa Hardiman to support a member with a classroom location concern. I advised a member who was assaulted and injured on the job, by providing resources to insure emotional support for the member, and fostering a positive transition back into the classroom. I advised the member to request a meeting to express their concerns and needs with their school administrators and be accompanied by a union representative. I met with a member about a student's safety plan not being appropriate or adequate to meet the needs of the student. I have communicated with Shaker Heights High School Principal Mr. Isaiah Wyatt and Associate Principal Liz Massey to solve staff concerns and seek clarification and guidance. I communicate daily with Shaker Heights High School Exceptional Children Department Chairs Tana Thompson and Keesha Woodruff discussing concerns at the high school. I will be communicating with Shaker Middle School Department Chairs to discuss issues or concerns regarding exceptional children department staff. I will be reaching out to district elementary schools to discuss concerns that have or may arise. As always, I humbly support our members, which results in the absolute best interest and benefit of the students we educate.

Respectfully submitted,
Anastacio 'Tito' Vazquez, Jr. M.Ed. 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 The SHTA.

One of my primary roles is to support members with concerns related to health and safety conditions in our buildings. I work with building representatives and members to communicate these concerns with administrators and collaborate on solutions.

I also assist members who may need to participate in the Sick Day Transfer Program (SDTP). In this role, I coordinate with the Human Resources and Treasurer's Departments to facilitate the transfer of sick days and monitor pledged days from members. The guiding document for this program is located in our contract under *Side Letter B*.

If you have questions or need assistance in either of these areas, please reach out to your building representative and me at zucca_m@shaker.org.

Over the summer, I assisted a member enrolled in the Sick Day Transfer Program with payroll concerns and worked with administration and the payroll department to resolve the issue. I attended the summer Executive Board meeting hosted by Chante Thomas, SHTA Membership Chair, on July 31st, and I also participated in building tours with administrators and SHTA Executive Board members on August 12th.

Additionally, I was informed of a water leak at the High School by Jessica O'Brien, High School Head Building Representative. I shared the concerns and room locations with Sean Brown, Assistant Director of Buildings and Grounds, who arranged for remediation. These efforts included deep cleaning, air quality testing, and necessary repairs. A third-party inspection confirmed that *"No adverse indoor air quality issues were identified at the time of assessment."* Finally, I shared Sick Day Transfer Program protocols with Rep. Council.

I look forward to continuing to support our members and ensuring that safety, wellness, and fairness remain at the forefront of our work this year.

Respectfully submitted,
Matt Zucca, 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-second 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 & Lomond Elementary Schools, 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. I try to advocate for our membership as well as our school district at every opportunity, and try to focus on classroom-generated solutions for district-wide problem solving. Any questions concerning our associations internal mechanisms can be directed towards me, as well as any concerning our Evaluation System and the implementation of the OTES 2.0, (or ecological gardening!).

Respectfully submitted,
Tim Kalan, Chairperson

MEMBERSHIP/ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Welcome back to the 2025-2026 school year! My name is Chante Thomas. This is my tenth year serving as your SHTA Membership /Elections Chair and I am beginning year 31 as a classroom teacher. I am located at Mercer Elementary. If you need me I can be reached by email at 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 (10) equal deductions starting with the first pay in October of the current school year. Members who choose to pay by check must do so in full, prior to October 1st of the current school year. Payroll deduction shall automatically continue from year to year unless the member notifies the Association and payroll office in writing, prior to October 1st of the current school year, that he or she wishes to stop payroll deductions. Members who wish to pay by check should be sending the check to my attention before October 1st.

Our membership form can be found on our website at 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 2025-2026 Representative Council Elected Members are:

Boulevard - **Cathy Grieshop**, Heather Pincoe

Onaway - **Noreen Smyth- Morrow**, Stacey DeYoung

Ludlow (Pre-K)- **Alison Colvin**, Leanne Moses-Kruluts

Fernway- **Jamie Harden**, Lee Appel

Lomond- **Lauren Meek**, Jackie Abrams, Krystal Allen Jackson

Mercer- **Eileen Sweeney**, Nicole Ciconetti (alt)

Middle School- **Kevin Thomas**, Lori Billington, Melissa Albrecht, Desmarie Carter, and Addison Pretnar

High School – **Jessica O'Brien**, Nick LaPete, Jayce Bailey, Megan Dora, Adam Cohen, Enid Vazquez, Sharita Hill, Joel Rathbone
IC- **Anne Scott**

Respectfully submitted,
Chante Thomas, Chairperson

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Welcome Back! 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 goal is to share thought provoking, must-read books by African American writers. While we understand that those of the dominant culture have written books about Black and Brown people, we must acknowledge that unless you have walked in the shoes of a person of color, it is difficult to truly understand their journey.

Over the summer, I spent time in South Africa, specifically Dunoon Township. It was an overwhelming and a traumatic experience as a person of color who started from meager beginnings in Ohio. Understanding the day-to-day of people who are marginalized and set apart in their own country, made me reflect on how we (people of color) are enduring some of the very oppressive ideals that permeate our world. As a nation of wealth, we cannot and must not be comfortable with what is happening around us.

Lastly, the book *White Fear* by Roland Martin is the antithesis of *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo. Roland Martin's brings to light the current landscape of those who fear the rise of Black and Brown people. "White Fear" refers to the anxiety, apprehension, or panic that some white people experience due to the changing racial demographics and increasing visibility of people of color in the United States and other Western societies. This fear is often rooted in a perceived loss of power, privilege, or status, or a broader anxiety about a future where white people are a minority. It can manifest in various ways, including the criminalization of Black individuals, the policing of public spaces, and heightened political polarization, as some fear the displacement of a historically white-centric way of life." Here is an excerpt from Martin's book: *For two centuries, the deep-seated fear that many White people feel—of losing power, of losing economic standing, of losing a particular "way of life"—has been the driving force behind American politics and culture. White Fear enabled the rise of Donald Trump. It's behind the recent flood of restrictive voting laws disproportionately impacting people of color. It's why reactions to movements like Black Lives Matter and football players taking a knee have been so negative and so strong.* Whether you agree or disagree, this book makes you reflect on your own values and judgements. I strongly encourage you to take time and read this thought provoking book.

*Respectfully submitted,
Angela Goodrum*

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Welcome back, everyone! I hope everyone had a relaxing and enjoyable summer and that your first few weeks of the new school year are off to a great start.

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:

- **Federal Education Grants & Funding:** The Trump administration is canceling dozens of competitive federal education grants, leaving educators concerned about the fate of their ongoing projects. Over \$1 billion in funding for programs supporting school desegregation, disability services, and higher-education preparation has not been distributed, with the administration citing conflicts with the president's policy priorities for some cancellations. These delays and cancellations have created uncertainty for many grant recipients, who may face layoffs and program cuts if the funding is not restored. ([CLICK HERE](#))
- **Ohio Governor's Race & Education** - Ohio gubernatorial candidate Vivek Ramaswamy laid out his vision for education reform in early August. He is calling for a return to "standards" in public schools, including merit-based pay for teachers and a focus on the "Science of Reading." Ramaswamy also expressed support for school choice, giving parents public funding for private and homeschool options, and wants to incorporate artificial intelligence into the curriculum. ([CLICK HERE](#))
- **Revised Health Education Curriculum Regarding Gender** - The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has ordered dozens of states to remove all references to gender identity from federally funded sex education materials or risk losing federal funding. The directive targets the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) and gives states 60 days to comply. This move is part of the Trump administration's broader effort to erase government recognition of transgender and nonbinary people in curriculum. ([CLICK HERE](#))
- **Public Schools & Vouchers** - Finally, I wanted to include a link to the Wednesday, August 20th, episode of the New York Times podcast, The Daily. This short piece discusses that public schools nationwide are facing declining enrollment as the movement to use public funds for private education through voucher programs grows. The core of the issue is whether taxpayer money should support private schooling, with proponents advocating for parental choice and opponents concerned about draining resources from public schools. ([CLICK HERE](#))

*Respectfully Submitted,
Matt Klodor*

SHTA PAC COMMITTEE

We are pleased to announce that Nick LaPete will be serving alongside returning chair Jessica O'Brien as the co-chairs for the SHTA PAC this year!

Our year is off to a busy start, and we've been hard at work researching legislation, action groups, and other topics we believe will be important to our membership. We're also excited to share that the PAC has voted to support the 9.9 mil levy and will be donating \$150 on behalf of the SHTA PAC in support of this initiative.

Next month, we'll be inviting all of the candidates running for school board to attend the SHTA October meeting. You should have already sent a Google Form where you can submit questions you would like us to ask of the candidates.

Be on the lookout in your buildings for our September newsletter! Each month, we'll provide updates and share quick links to help you take action on issues that matter to you.

As always, if you have concerns or topics you believe we should address, please don't hesitate to reach out. The PAC is only as strong as its membership and service, so PLEASE feel free to join our ranks! We would love to have you!

Respectfully Submitted,
Nick LaPete & Jessica O'Brein, Co-Chairpersons

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

This summer, I reviewed and resolved an issue with our public relations advertisement for SHTA. Due to an error by *Shaker Life*, our summer advertisement was not published. As a result, our 2026 publication bill will be reduced by the cost of that missed issue.

Looking ahead, I will be designing and submitting the advertisement for our Merit Scholarship program. In addition, I created a new header for the SHTA Newsletter, developed in collaboration with Andrew Glasier.

I have also begun the preliminary planning process to organize a new SHTA T-shirt sale.

I also attended the Executive Council meeting during the summer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bob Bognar, Chairperson

NEW TEACHER COMMITTEE

Greetings teachers and welcome to the 2025-2026 school year. My name is Wendy Lewis and I am your Teacher Education Committee Chairperson. This is my 32nd year teaching, all in Shaker! Currently, I teach 5th grade Language and Literature at Mercer, and life is good! My job with SHTA consists of keeping teachers abreast of important dates and deadlines such as; salary reclassification, tuition

reimbursement, and tenure deadlines and questions. 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 TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE NOVEMBER 2025 BOARD MEETING.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have. My district email is: lewis_g@shaker.org. I wish everyone a wonderful school year.

Respectfully Submitted,
Gwendolyn "Wendy" Lewis, Chairperson

LEGAL AID COMMITTEE

On Friday September 5th, the members of the Legal Aid Committee met to discuss a request from a member for legal support for an active grievance that may move to Step III. The committee determined that \$5,000 in financial support for legal fees be approved for arbitration of this grievance at Step III. This determination was based on information provided by Dr. Morris and our lawyer Brooks Boron.

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 did not need to meet, 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 all 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

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Publications is in charge of creating, editing, and seeking submissions for the newsletter. I also often write editorials for the newsletter. I updated our SHTA social media account on [Facebook](#). With the help of SHTA Legislative Chair, Matt Klodor, we have opened an [SHTA Instagram](#) account, also. 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. If you wish to write an editorial for the newsletter, please email directly at glasier_a@shaker.org. Our cut off for publication is the Wednesday after the Representative Council Meeting. I hope we may have an editorial from each of our school buildings!

Respectfully Submitted,
Andrew Glasier, Chairperson

MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

SHTA President, Dr. John Morris started the September 8, 2025 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. He mentioned that there are many celebrations as we start the year. It is nice that since this is the second year at the Middle School, that people know where things are in the school. He said the first 15 days have been smooth because of the work of all the staff.

Superintendent, Dr. David Glasner was present for the SHTA Representative Council Meeting. He welcomed and thanked everyone. He mentioned that we are still in the thick of the facilities plan and a lot of moving pieces are at play. He appreciates everyone's work to make these changes possible. Dr. Glasner also said that during the coming days and months he will be holding listening sessions at all the school buildings. He would like to hear from staff and faculty. The first session will be held at the Middle School on Friday of this week.

A motion for approval of the MINUTES from the May 12, 2025 Representative Council meeting was made by Tim Kalan and seconded by Bob Bognar.

Administration Report

Director of Human Resources, Dr. Tiffany Joseph was present for the SHTA Representative Council Meeting. She welcomed everyone back from the summer. She said it was good to see everyone. She shared that Salary reclassification is due to Stacey Poole two weeks before the board meeting. Also that there are a large number of ADA accommodations requests and that they take time. A response is coming. Lastly, she reminded everyone that OTES evaluations are coming up.

P.T.O. Report

PTO President Ms. Christina Gobal was present for the SHTA Representative Council meeting and she introduced herself. She shared that there have been a number of Back To School events in all of the school buildings. These include ice cream socials and lawn events. The PTO is in the process of planning the Raider Run which will take place on October 11th at Shaker Heights High School. The Run will include all buildings and proceeds will split among the PTOs at each school.

Officers' Reports

President, John Morris

- Spoke with superintendent Dr. David Glasner regularly
- Communicated with HR Director Dr. Tiffany Joseph regularly
- Updated SHTA Facebook page with Publications Editor Andrew Glasier
- Worked with members with legal concerns with SHTA Lawyer, Brooks Boron

- Attended summer Exec Bd meeting at Membership Chair Chante Thomas's house
- Endorsed the 9.9 mil operating levy alongside SHTA Officers and Executive Board Members
- SHTA Officers and Executive Board also voted to make a \$1000 donation to the Levy Campaign
- Discussed PAC Support of the levy with PAC Co-chairs Jessica O'Brien and Nick LaPete
- Worked with a member concerning ADA accommodations
- Met with new teachers alongside Vice President Darlene Garrison
- 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 David Glasner, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Felicia Evans, and Superintendent of Buildings and Operations Jeff Grosse
- Asked Secretary Lisa Hardiman to send the Rep Council meeting calendar to all Head Reps and Woodbury Transition reps
- Asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to send out opening letter to membership
- Met with Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer Dr. Lawrence Burnley along with Vice President Darlene Garrison and leaders from other school bargaining units to discuss new Bias Incident Reporting protocol
- Discussed Intervention Specialist concerns with Special Education Chair Tito Vazquez
- Communicated on Pre-K concerns with Head Pre-K Representative Allison Colvin
- Met with a member and administration on grievance issue
- Met with Innovative Center members to discuss concerns
- Communicated with members concerning multiple building assignments
- Communicated with members concerning safety concerns
- Asked Publications Editor Andrew Glasier to send out grant opportunity shared by Human Resources Specialist Stacy Poole
- Worked with IC members on a grievance
- Met with our Legal Aide Committee led by Legal Aide Chair James Schmidt and attended by Legal Aid Committee members to consider a request for funding
- I attended a speech given by Dr. Amy Acton with SHTA Secretary Lisa Hardiman and SHTA Treasurer Bill Scanlon. SHTA Vice President Darlene Garrison could not attend due to a previous engagement.
- Officers and Executive Board members voted to send a levy endorsement questionnaire to membership to determine if a full SHTA Membership endorsement of the levy is appropriate
- I visited Ludlow to address membership concerns with Head Representative Allison Colvin and Alternate Leanne Moses - Kruluts.
- I will attend the district all collective bargaining unit union meeting Tuesday, September 9th with SHTA Vice President Darlene Garrison

Vice President, Darlene Garrison

- Worked with Key Bank and the SHTA Investment Committee members to sign documents for savings
- Attended the summer SHTA Executive Board Meeting hosted by Membership Chair, Chante Thomas on July 31st
- Participated in the District Summer Building Walkthrough with members of the SHTA Executive Board and members of Shaker Heights City Schools Central Office staff on August 12th

- Attended the Shaker Heights City Schools New Employees Summer Academy meeting on August 13th at Fernway
- Attended the Bias Incident Report Planning meeting on August 25th with Dr. Burnley and District Union Executive Board Members
- Attended SHTA Executive Board Meeting on Tuesday, September 2nd at Fernway.
- Created a reminder notice and emailed SHTA Fellowship Grant recipients a note to turn in their receipts for fellowship reimbursements due by Tuesday, September 30th .
- Processed and mailed reimbursement checks to SHTA Fellowship Grant recipients.
- Assisted a member with procedures for renewing their license.
- Worked with members on a personal issue
- Meet with members and administration to discuss payment options for Department Chairs at the Middle School

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 Membership/Elections Chair Chante Thomas' house. It was lovely!
- Toured various school buildings with SHTA Officers President John Morris, Vice President Darlene Garrison, Personal Rights and Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears, and Building Safety Chair Matt Zucca. We toured with Superintendent David Glasner, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Felicia Evans, and Assistant Superintendent of Buildings and Operations Jeff Grosse
- Spoke to members who still have not been paid for classroom moves
- Spoke to a member regarding a possible grievance
- Discussed special education classroom concerns with a member along with Special Education Chair, Tito Vazquez
- Attended speech given by gubernatorial candidate, Amy Acton along with SHTA President, John Morris and Treasurer Bill Scanlon.

Treasurer William Scanlon

- Paid bills
- Distributed Profit and Loss sheets to Representative Council
- Attended Executive Board meeting at Elections Chair, Chante Thomas' house during the summer
- Met with financial advisor at Edward Jones
- Wrote a \$500 check in support of the Raider Run
- Balanced SHTA checkbook

Building Representative Reports

Boulevard-Cathy Grieshop, Heather Pincoe

- The last-minute changes to teaching assignments caused significant frustration and stress among staff.
- We would like to thank the Boulevard PTO for the pizza and salad lunch at the beginning of the year.
- We appreciate Principal Neal Robinson's positivity and encouragement towards our staff.
- The Boulevard Building Committee will begin meeting on September 22, 2025.

Fernway-Jamie Harden, Lee Appel

- The following is the report summarizing developments, challenges, and accomplishments
- Thank you to PTO for support and yummy lunch!
- August 28, 2025 Sent an email encouraging members to participate in the Building Committee
- First meeting scheduled for September 19th.
- First touch base meeting scheduled with Chris Hayward for September 16th (Lee Appel, Jamie Harden)

Lomond-Lauren Meek, Jackie Abrams, Krystal Allen-Jackson

- Thank you to the PTO for providing us with lunch and fun swag during the first days of school! It always helps to feel loved when you're in the thick of things.
- Members are wondering if the district considered how new teachers would be supported when they combined the coach and coordinator roles. At this time we have several teachers who are in new roles or new grade levels AND are not able to get one-on-one coaching or be a part of the new teacher institute.
- Thank you to Principal George Clark for helping navigate the transition of our long term kindergarten sub moving to Onaway, while our literacy specialist stepped up to cover the new vacancy.
- Members would like to know how the district will support the growing class sizes as sections have been eliminated. Students are coming to us with IEPs or other safety concerns and teachers are left with more than 20 students to manage without other adult support for student needs.

Mercer-Eileen Sweeney, Nicole Cicconetti

- The administration provided a welcome back breakfast for the staff on our first day back to the building. It was a great way to start the school year. It was much appreciated! The PTO provided a delicious lunch for the staff on our first Monday back. Thank you also to our PTO for our goody bags for teachers, which included an amazon gift card to purchase some items for our classrooms. We love our PTO. Thank you!!!
- Our custodians worked hard at getting our building ready for our students. Thank you!!!

- I met with principal Ronesha Campbell and Director of Buildings and Grounds David Boyer about a matter one of our teachers was having with preparing her classroom. Mr. Boyer listened and provided an opportunity to have the issue resolved.
- I met with Mrs. Campbell to discuss members' room assignment concerns.
- Some of our members have not received their pay for moving rooms yet.
- Some members have concerns about safety. Specifically, a staff member has been injured by a student.
- Mercer is off to a great school year!

Onaway-Noreen Smyth-Morrow, Stacey DeYoung

- Thank you to the PTO
- Good start to the year except there is one classroom that did not have needed items and does not have them
- Also, there was an unexpected opening of a Kindergarten class. Onaway Principal Dora Bechtel set up this classroom over the weekend. Thank you!

Middle School—Kevin Thomas, Melissa Albrecht, Lori Billington, Addison Pretnar, Desmarie Carter

- I would like to welcome **Addison Pretnar** and **Desmarie Carter** as new middle school building reps. They will be joining myself, **Melissa Albrecht**, and **Lori Billington**.
- Met weekly with building administration; meetings have continued to be positive and productive.
- Spoke with several teachers regarding the change in team leader and department chair stipends. Teachers strongly feel that if remuneration is reduced, roles and responsibilities should be adjusted accordingly — particularly as those responsibilities have increased in recent years.
- Supported a teacher who was injured by a student and required medical care. While administration has taken steps to address the situation, challenges remain as the student continues to struggle in class. This will be an ongoing concern and one that will need additional support.
- Brought forward teacher concerns regarding the fairness of the staggered start for 6th-grade teachers.
- Shared science teachers' requests for additional resources to support their classes.
- Responded to a member experiencing repeated paycheck errors. I raised this issue with SHTA President Dr. **John Morris**, as it appears to be part of a larger, ongoing problem.

High School—Jessica O'Brien, Nick LaPete, Jayce Bailey, Megan Dora, Adam Cohen Enid Vazquez, Sharita Hill, Joel Rathbone

- Met with Principal Isaiah Wyatt about the beginning of the school year and PD days
- Worked with Associate Principal Liz Massey on the high school handbook
- Helped a member with ceiling tiles that had fallen in their room over the summer, those tiles have been fixed.
- Communicated with Head Custodian Tom Murray about leaks in room 154.

- Spoke with Health and Safety Chair Matt Zucca to get room 154, 155, and 156 an air quality check. The check was done and findings said “no adverse air quality issues”
- Spoke with Exceptional Children's chair Tito Vazquez about a member's concerns about contact hours.
- Collaborated with Liz Massey to select teachers for the Superintendents committee.
- Met with a member to discuss the deadline for informing the administration of intent to retire.
- Spoke with Rights and Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears about a foster parent question and also a supplemental question.
- Worked with Mr. Vazquez about on going issues that we are all trying to workout with administration and members
- Spoke with Mr. Wyatt weekly to discuss issues within the building we are currently working on making sure all members receive their 50 minute uninterrupted lunch per the contract.

Innovative Center--Anne Scott

- The IC team would like to thank IC Assistant Principal Katie Slifkin for providing the team donuts at the start of the year.
- On 8/26, I requested a monthly meeting with high school principal Isaiah Wyatt to discuss union issues. Katie Slifkin then contacted me stating I would be meeting with her rather than Mr. Wyatt.
- I met with Katie Slifkin numerous times to discuss concerns.
- The IC team met with John Morris to discuss concerns.
- In the first month of school we had a handful of unannounced outside people in our space:
 - On 8/29, there was an unidentified adult (maybe a city worker) doing work in various areas of the IC for almost 3 hours.
 - On 9/3, a man who works for the city came into the space and went into the supply closet and then left after a few minutes.
 - On 9/4, two city workers were in the space doing maintenance for roughly two hours.
- IC staff have, again, brought up the challenge of any one being able to come down the elevator with Ms. Slifkin. Ms. Slifkin said she spoke to Vic Ferrell. At this time anyone can still come down the elevator.
- The back emergency exit stairs were covered in plant life. IC staff informed Ms. Slifkin. IC staff also informed John Morris. This has since been resolved. We were told by Ms. Slifkin that our exit will be regularly maintained.
- The elevator was down for two days. Teachers had to assist a student (their belongings, and wheelchair as well) get in and out of our space using the stairs. This is a safety concern for both staff and students who require the use of the elevator. This also raises the question of what we do in an emergency and there is no elevator. IC staff has posed this question to Ms. Slifkin; she shared that we should just throw the student over our shoulder and carry them out and/or the student has a paraprofessional so they can carry the student out.
- IC teachers have been working with students, counselors, and administration since day one knowing that we have had incomplete, incorrect, or simply missing schedules for the past 9 semesters.

We wanted to support in getting completed/correct schedules. The IC team asked Ms. Slifkin for a cut off date for students (barring some exceptions) to be added to rosters for Q1. It was determined that it would be 9/5. On 9/8, students are still being added to IC rosters.

- IC teachers are scheduled with students each period of the day. When this was raised in relation to lunch/planning time, teachers were told by Ms. Slifkin to pick when we want our planning and lunch periods and to let her know what was decided. Due to missing/changing schedules, teachers are unable to pick times that will have the least negative impact due to this. IC teachers have not had lunch or planning yet this year.
- Given SB29, the curriculum used for IC students has been blocked. Each day we are running into more and more roadblocks. We are not talking about one resource we use for one lesson, we are talking about entire courses. We have repeatedly asked for support, updates, timelines, options etc. On 9/5, IC teachers met with Ms. Slifkin and John Moore to discuss this issue. Due to how much instructional time that has passed, transitioning to the program Edmentum was the only option. Teachers requested that administration communicate this transition with students and families. We are unsure if this information has been shared at this time. We are now waiting for Edmentum training and access. Students are going on 3 weeks of lost instructional time, especially in science and I&S. There are mixed feelings about needing to use Edmentum, and the IC staff looks forward to continuous meetings about the impact this will have on the IC model and where we go from here.
 - On 9/8, I followed up with Ms. Slifkin and Curriculum Director Dr. John Moore for a timeline on when we can expect to have Edmentum up and running for both staff and students. I received a response from Ms. Slifkin said that courses are being built, I have access, and Ms. Slifkin deferred to John Moore about another teacher getting access. As of 9/8, we are still in a waiting game as to when students may get started.
- After the tragic event in which the high school community lost another student, no communication was shared with IC staff and students about what support will look like at the IC specifically. If staff or students needed/wanted support from any of the resources that were brought into the district in the few days following, they needed to travel to the main campus.
- On 9/5, I supported a member in submitting a grievance.
- The IC team understands the financial challenges our school district and countless others are facing—and we feel it is important to reiterate, without a dedicated full-time, onsite leader, the core values and innovative practices that define the IC are at risk. The IC operates as a school, and you would never remove the principal from a school.

Ludlow-Allison Colvin, Leanne Moses-Kruluts

- Thanks to Principal Caroff for providing lunch during Professional Days
- We do not have a PTO
- Staff had extensive training, Occraa training, State mandated training and signage, and had all parent/family orientations, and family meet and greets.
- [Amy Brodsky](#) gave extensive PD for IB. We got so much accomplished.
- Jocelyn Dietz gave training refreshers for Heggerty, foundations, Phonics in Motion,

- Mr. Caroff had us working from the library most days and one day at Lomond (Thanks Mr. Clark)...so we could have copier access.
- We were in Ludlow today for the very first time EVER
- It was a very ACTIVE construction sight with construction workers everywhere inside and outside. They are still digging around the building, and fixing inside pretty extensively.
- It was a hazardous work environment and air quality (Staff complaining of migraines, and coughing, eye irritation) Staff needed to wear KN95 masks to function just for the short time we were there 9:30-11:30
- The building was not fit for occupancy for staff to report to work.
- The staff was told on Friday that Ludlow received “temporary” occupancy and could report to work at Ludlow on Monday.
- DUST was EVERYWHERE!!! The environment was not safe.
- The water was not drinkable
- The air quality was not breathable
- All construction workers working inside and outside the building had on hard hats and they were not given hard hats.
- THICK dust on EVERYTHING...not cleaned...our things in storage were delivered and subject to getting construction dust on them. We could not unpack, or set up...not suitable for potential exposure to the hazardous dust and materials.
- Cords were everywhere, open outlets, exposed/eroded brick/holes, etc.
- Health, safety and welfare of staff was at risk.
- Emergency exits/evacuation limited-not all doors are accessible/stairwells not accessible for evacuation
- Mr. Caroff recognized the unsafe conditions and relocated us to Shaker’s Main library for the rest of the day.
- Met with John Morris today at Ludlow to discuss the work conditions.
- SHTA members are considering filing a grievance because of the health and safety hazards that they are being exposed to at Ludlow

Executive Board Reports

Publications—Andrew Glasier

- Went to summer meeting at Chante’s
- Redesign of newsletter coming
- Need to update SHTAweb.org with meeting dates & Rep council
- Updated SHTA facebook page
- Created SHTA Instagram account with Matt Klodor
- Updated email list serv
- Sent out emails for Dr. John Morris
- Editorial: Matt Klodor

Evaluation-Lena Paskewitz

- Spent time updating evaluation slides an old packet
- Had two meetings this year already in which we worked on the Peer Evaluation program

Teacher Education-Wendy Lewis

- Attended summer executive board meeting at Chante Thomas' house
- Answered a tenure question

Membership/Elections-Chante Thomas

- My job is to take care of membership
- If a member is looking for a forms, they can be found at SHTAWeb.org
- Payroll deduction for dues starts October 1st

Policy-Tim Kalan

- Answered evaluation questions
- Helped autism unit get up to speed

Public Relations-Bob Bognar

Resolved issue with summer *Shaker Life* advertisement

- Summer ad was not published due to an error
- 2026 publication bill will be reduced by the cost of the missed issue
- Attended the Executive Council meeting during the summer
- Upcoming:
 - Designing and submitting the Merit Scholarship advertisement
 - Created a new header for the SHTA Newsletter with guidance from Andrew Glazier
- Began preliminary planning for a new SHTA T-shirt sale

Special Education-Tito Vazquez

- Attended the executive board meeting
- Spoke with the Director of Student Services, Dr. Meghan Shelby, regarding the beginning of the 2025/2026 school year and concerns across the district
- Discussed concerns with SHTA President Dr. John Morris.
- worked with Shaker Heights High School Head Rep. Jessica O'Brien regarding various staff concerns. I
- Discussed with multiple union members concerning student placements.
- Worked with SHTA Vice President Lisa Hardiman to support a member with a classroom location concern.
- Advised a member who was assaulted and injured on the job, by providing resources to insure emotional support for the member, and fostering a positive transition back into the classroom. I advised the member to request a meeting to express their concerns and needs with their school administrators and be accompanied by a union representative.
- I met with a member about a student's safety plan not being appropriate or adequate to meet the needs of the student.
- Communicated with Shaker Heights High School Principal Mr. Isaiah Wyatt and Associate Principal Liz Massey to problem solve staff concerns and seek clarification and guidance
- Communicate daily with Shaker Heights High School Exceptional Children Department Chairs Tana Thompson and Keesha Woodruff discussing concerns at the high school
- Will be communicating with Shaker Middle School Department Chairs to discuss issues or concerns regarding exceptional children department staff

- Will be reaching out to district elementary schools to discuss concerns that have or may arise
- As always, I humbly support our members, which results in the absolute best interest and benefit of the students we educate.

Legal Aid-James Schmidt

- On Friday September 5th, the members of the Legal Aid Committee met to discuss a request from a member for legal support for an active grievance that may move to Step III. The committee determined that \$5,000 in financial support for legal fees be approved for arbitration of this grievance at Step III. This determination was based on information provided by Dr. Morris and our lawyer Brooks Boron.

Legislative-Matt Kloder

- **Federal Updates:** The administration has canceled over \$1 billion in education grants and is requiring states to remove gender identity references from federally funded health curricula.
- **State Politics:** Ohio gubernatorial candidate Vivek Ramaswamy is campaigning on education reforms including merit-based teacher pay and expanding school choice.
- **National Trend:** The growing use of public funds for private school vouchers is contributing to a nationwide decline in public school enrollment.

Building Safety and Sick Day Transfer-Matthew Zucca

- Assisted a member enrolled in the Sick Day Transfer program with a payroll check concerns
- Worked with administration and payroll department to rectify payment concerns
- Attended summer Executive Board meeting hosted by Chante Thomas, SHTA Membership Chair, on July 31st.
- Participated in building tours with administrators and SHTA Executive Board Members on 12th.
- Was informed of water leak at the High School in several buildings by Jessica O'Brien, High School Head Building Representative. Shared concerns and locations of rooms with Sean Brown, Assistant Director of Buildings and Grounds. Mr. Brown arranged for remediations to be conducted in the rooms which included but were not limited to: deep cleaning and air quality testing, as well as repairs. A third party inspection was completed that found "No adverse indoor air quality issues were identified at the time of assessment".
- Shared Sick Day Transfer protocols with Rep. Council

Social-Selena Boyer

- Hosted Executive Board meeting
- Working on Fall Happy Hour, if anyone has suggestions please email me

Professional Rights and Responsibilities-Mike Sears

- Worked on the grievance about Supplemental Contracts being cut or reduced
- Went on a building tour with other Executive Board members and administrators from the central office on August 12th

- Answered members' questions about administrator-initiated transfers over the summer
- Attended supplemental committee meetings on July 16th and August 28th. Another meeting is scheduled for September 18th
- Met with the Executive Board on September 2nd
- Spoke to a member about safety concerns, especially related to the placement of students with special needs
- Had phone conferences with members about maternity leave, FMLA, and caregiver leave
- Spoke to high school building representative Jessica O'Brien about foster parent rights and supplemental contracts for clubs and activities
- Attended a Legal Aid committee meeting on September 5th

PAC (at-large)- Jessica O'Brien, Nick LaPete

- Thank you for having me
- Working on monthly flier so people can get involved in PAC, if interested talk to Nick or Jessica
- Organizing and hosting the School Board Candidate Forum in October-please encourage members to submit questions. They may include building or choose not to

Old Business-None

New Business-None

Good of the Order-

- John Morris thanked the Middle School representatives for the phenomenal spread
- John Morris thanked all the new members

Motion for adjournment was made by Nick LaPete and seconded by Lee Appel.
Meeting adjourned at 6:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa M. Hardiman,
SHTA Secretary

Invest in What Works: Protect the Team Leader Role at SMS

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.

A strong school is built on strong relationships. Our district's "teaming model" at Shaker Middle School, which creates small learning communities within the building, is designed to foster exactly that. At the heart of this successful model is the Team Leader, a role whose foundational importance is now being dangerously undermined.

Recently, the middle school's Team Leaders were informed that the supplemental pay for this important role would be reduced by half compared to last year, even though the responsibilities remain the same. While this news is disappointing and feels at odds with the value of the work we do each day to support students and families, we also recognize the efforts of our building administration, who successfully advocated to reinstate this role and other supplemental positions after they were initially slated for elimination by upper administration in May.

Team Leaders are the central hub for our team's operations, communication, and culture. We are the primary point of contact for parents, writing weekly newsletters, coordinating conferences, and building the trust necessary for students to thrive. We lead our teaching teams in analyzing student data to proactively address academic and personal challenges. We collaborate with deans and counselors on support plans for our most vulnerable students, while also managing the complex logistics of everything from field trips to state testing. We are the glue that holds our student communities together.

We understand that budget cuts are a difficult reality, affecting many positions. We recognize that even our valued Department Chairs have seen a reduction in their supplemental pay. However, the decision to slash the Team Leader supplemental so much more substantially reveals a deep misunderstanding of the role's impact. While Department Chairs provide crucial leadership for a specific subject, Team Leaders manage the holistic, daily experience of a cohort of students across all their classes. To treat this frontline work as significantly less valuable than other leadership positions is to weaken the very foundation of our student support system.

We urge our district's leadership to reconsider this disproportionate cut. To invest in our students, you must first invest in the leaders who support them most directly. Please consider restoring our compensation to a level that truly reflects our essential contribution.

Matt Klodor
Individual & Societies Teacher, Shaker Middle School