

SHTA *news*

No. 2 • 18 October 2010

Message From the President

I love this time of year. Not only the weather and the fall colors, but also being able to focus more on activities and learning as my students know the routine and are settled from the “start of school jitters”. Creating relationships and establishing expectations provide the foundation for successful learning. The professional commitment of each of you is demonstrated in many ways, including the success of our students, the support of the community, and the enduring reputation for excellence that our district enjoys.

For me, the past month has been about change. Many people say they want change but when faced with the reality/impact of changes, they become apprehensive and even resistant. Change involves uncertainty and, in some cases, inexperience. New teachers, new administrators or assignments, new central office workers are among the changes that have provided me with opportunities and challenges.

First, the SHTA leadership team, including Dollye Finney, Bill Scanlon, Matt Zucca, Mike Sears, John Morris, and me, met with our new teaching colleagues and their mentors. It is a pleasure to meet with this group; I know I am looking at the future and that it is in good hands—and not just because of the new teachers. The mentors, for the most part, will also be here for many years. Their willingness to help guide our new colleagues through the first year of teaching in Shaker is important to the educational future of the Shaker schools.

Administrative reassignments at the Middle School and Woodbury and new “special” assignments for a teacher at Woodbury and a teacher at the High School are also part of the changes for this school year. The “teacher on special assignment” is new and will no doubt need adjustments. I was involved in the decision to create these opportunities and I support the rationale behind them. It will be interesting to see how these positions develop.

The area that has taken the most time this month is related to changes at the central Administration building. Several members have experienced problems specifically with paychecks and insurance. There was also a problem with a contract step that resulted in an inaccurate paycheck. Some of these errors were the result of inexperience; others may have occurred because of unclear communications; still others were just human error. Mike Sears, Chairperson of Professional Rights and Responsibilities for the Association and I worked with Bryan Christman, Treasurer for the Board of Education, to correct each error. While the problems were frustrating, I believe every issue was resolved to some degree of satisfaction.

Ultimately, each one of you should be vigilant. Check your paycheck and verify your use of any sick leave or personal time. Remember, your paycheck covers the dates two weeks prior to the date of the check. If you are being paid a supplemental or units, monitor when your additional pay is received and that it is correct. When you submit *any* documentation to a department in the Administration Building, *always keep copies*. It would be wise to send an email to the head of the department and request an acknowledgement when the documents are received. Then, follow up and get a written email verification that the documents meet the necessary criteria for your need. If you do not receive a confirmation within one week of your request, call me (6033) or Mike Sears (4770). The sooner you try to correct any errors, the better.

As President, I am available to assist you, as are the members of the SHTA leadership team. Our names, jobs, and phone numbers are listed for you on the SHTA web site, shtaweb.org. I appreciate the responsibility you have given to me and look forward to assisting you.

*Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Thomas, president*

Reports from the Executive Board

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Happy fall! I hope that your October is off to an outstanding start. It is time again to apply for SHTA Fellowships. I hope that each of you has received an application from your building representatives. These awards are designed to promote professional development and can be use to attend workshops, for payment of dues to professional affiliations (except the SHTA), journals or professional materials. The winners are selected via random drawing. Send to *Dollye Finney, Boulevard School by noon Friday October 29, 2010* .Multiple entries will be disqualified and only members of the Association are eligible for participation. Forty recipients will be chosen and awarded \$100 each. Winners will be notified by school mail and their names published in the November newsletter. If you need an application contact your building representatives or contact me at 4916.

If you have not already done so I would like to encourage each of you to contribute the PTO Council Annual Drive. As you know The Association has forged a close working relationship with the PTO. The PTO annually sponsors teacher grants and participates in a number of teacher sponsored events.

Thank you for your continued support of the Association and feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

*Respectfully submitted,
Dollye Finney, vice president*

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Representative Council at the end of last school year approved the budget we are currently operating under. Our 2010-11 budget is not a balanced budget (with the anticipated expenses equaling the income from dues) because we are currently engaged in the negotiation process with the administration. We have \$50,000 budgeted for negotiations. Look at the included financial report for more details. If anyone has any questions, email me.

Payroll withdrawal for dues (\$20 per pay), for those who chose that option of payment, began with the October 15th paycheck.

The Investments Committee (made up of Darcel Arrington, Todd Keitlen, Matt Zucca, Dollye Finney and myself) will be meeting at the end of October with Brady Krebs, our Edward Jones advisor to discuss our investments, and whether any changes need to be made.

I am currently working with our accountants, Edward C. Hawkins & Co., Ltd., to complete the audit of the 2008-09 fiscal year.

Any member of the Association who makes copies for S.H.T.A. business should email me the number of copies made. I keep a running tally in order to pay the District for the paper used.

There has recently (over the past several years) been some discussion of our Association's investments. Each year we work under a budget based on the projected income (dues) for the year. Some years we do not spend all of the money we bring in through dues. That leftover money goes toward our general fund, which has been invested with two things in mind: 1. Protect our investment and 2. Make the sum grow. As you can see on the front page of the financial report we have over \$800,000 in investments and savings. This remarkable sum of money has come from members' dues (which have only increased once) collected since 1980, when our Shaker Heights Teachers' Association became an independent teacher organization, breaking away from the Ohio Education Association. Our general fund, spent thriftily and invested prudently, is a legacy of 30 years worth of teachers' membership and investment in our S.H.T.A.

*Respectfully submitted,
Bill Scanlon, Treasurer*

FINANCIAL REPORT

7/1/10

10/13/10

COMPOSITE BALANCE

Balance 7/1/10	802,998.46
Receipts 7/1/10 to present	6.06
Change in Valuation 7/1/10 to present	<u>44,274.18</u>
	847,278.70
Expenditures 7/1/10 to present	-5,882.44
Expenditures charged to last fiscal year 2009-2010	<u>-2,674.71</u>
TOTAL	838,721.55

BANK AND BROKER RECONCILIATIONS**A. BUCKEYE STATE CREDIT UNION (BSCU)**

Certificates of deposit 10/10/10		
24 mo. @ 3.0% APY-Matures on 2/02/11	44,054.96	
Total Certificates of deposit		44,054.96
Savings accounts (0.50% APY) 10/10/10		101.30
Share draft account (0.25% APY) 10/10/10		21,926.44
Unposted deposits and transfers		<u>0.00</u>
		66,082.70
Less outstanding checks		<u>0.00</u>
TOTAL BSCU		66,082.70

B. EDWARD JONES (9/24/10)

Regular Association Account	383,772.46	
Advisory Solutions Account	<u>347,674.74</u>	
		<u>731,447.20</u>

C. KEY BANK (10/10/10)

Certificates of deposit		
29 mo. @ 2.15%-Matures on 9/6/11	20,724.43	
15 mo. @ 1.90%-Matures on 10/17/10	<u>14,311.64</u>	
Total Certificates of deposit		35,036.07
Business Money Market Account (0.35% APY)		11,633.00
Unposted deposits and transfers		<u>0.00</u>
		46,669.07
Less outstanding checks		<u>-5,477.42</u>
TOTAL KEY BANK		41,191.65

TOTAL		838,721.55
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Budgeted Accounts

	7/1/10					10/13/10
Account	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Debits</u>	<u>Transfers</u> <u>out</u>	<u>Credit</u> <u>s</u>	<u>Transfers</u> <u>in</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Accounting	3000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,000.00
Compensation for officers, representatives, et al.						
President	9302.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9,302.00
Vice President	5581.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,581.00
Secretary	5581.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,581.00
Treasurer	5581.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,581.00
P.R. & R. Chairperson	5581.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,581.00
Editor	4653.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,653.00
Building reps. and alternates	10000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10,000.00
Conferences and meetings	2500.00	556.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,943.25
Contingency	250.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	250.00
Fellowships and Grants	4000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,000.00
		4,375.0				
Insurance	5000.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	625.00
Legal	5000.00	300.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,700.00
Negotiations	50000.00	165.53	0.00	0.00	0.00	49,834.47
Executive Board expenses	500.00	49.95	0.00	0.00	0.00	450.05
Officers' expenses	500.00	75.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	424.79
Payroll taxes	700.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	700.00
Professional day	200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.00
Publications	1000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00
Public Relations	7000.00	360.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,640.00
Social	2500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,500.00
STRS(TPO contributions)	9000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9,000.00
	137429.0	5,882.4				131,546.5
TOTAL	0	4	0.00	0.00	0.00	6

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Both the Personnel and the Payroll Departments are experiencing some challenges both with employees making transitions to new positions and with new communication and technology systems. Review your **September 16th paycheck** carefully. This is the first check for the 2010-11 school year. It should reflect any pay increases due to moving up a step or earning a double jump (newly tenured and five years after tenure) on the salary schedule. If you have any questions or concerns related to your paycheck, please e-mail **both Jennifer Browne, Payroll Supervisor** and **Karen Andrei, Assistant Treasurer** and send me a copy.

We are under contract for 185 school days beginning on the professional day in August and ending with a professional day in June. None of us are required to work in our school buildings during the summer months. Some may choose to work or may have extra duties as department chairs that must be completed during the summer. Others may be working on summer writing projects. However, if you are assigned a new classroom and expected to move your things after school is out, you are not required to do so. There is a provision in the contract (**13.02 letter h.**) that allows for K-6 teachers to be paid \$200 for packing and unpacking materials after an administrator-initiated transfer to a different classroom or building. Also, if you are asked to clean out old textbooks or do other miscellaneous tasks outside of the contract hours, you should talk to your administrator about getting units (**\$65 for 4 hours of work**) for your extra time. If you have questions or problems in situations like these, please contact either your building representative or me for assistance.

Both non-tenured and tenured teachers should have received information from their administrators about evaluations by September 30th. If you did not receive that information, please contact either your building representative or me. You will still be evaluated, but the process may be delayed.

If your teaching license is expiring soon (**2011 or 2012**), it is your responsibility to make sure all your CEU's and/or graduate credits have been approved by our Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC) and are on file with Gena Cerasuolo in the Personnel Department. Make sure all of your records have been transferred to the electronic system that has been in place since August, 2009. It is always a good idea to start working toward your new license as soon as possible since sending documents between Universities, school districts, and the ODE can be a long process.

If you are eligible for re-classification on the salary schedule, please refer to the detailed e-mail from Kim Adams that explains how this process works. Ms. Adams sent this out on October 14.

*Respectfully submitted,
Mike Sears, chairperson*

SALARY TENURE COMMITTEE

On October 14, the negotiating team from the SHTA and the representatives from the Administration met for an organizational meeting and to open articles for discussion. We agreed to begin negotiations using a collaborative model with the understanding that should this model not result in a completed contract, we would return to the traditional negotiations process. Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 2nd.

The specific content for negotiations is confidential; however, I will give updates in Executive Session at the meetings of Representative Council.

*Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Thomas, chairperson*

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

The Common Core Standards

On June 18, 2010, the state of Ohio adopted the Common Core Standards. Launched in 2009 and coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), the Common Core Standards were created by a partnership among state departments of education. The purpose: to establish national standards based on existing state standards and international models of education.

Currently, thirty-five states have adopted the Common Core Standards. The current goal of the NGA Center, CCSSO, and Federal Government is to have these standards fully implemented in a minimum of forty-four states by the 2014-2015 school year. As the program stands, there are K-12 standards in place within the areas of English Language Arts and Mathematics. Standards for Social Studies and Science have been drafted, but were not deemed widely acceptable, and are currently being revised.

Having looked over them, I do not see a drastic difference between our current Ohio standards and those of the Common Core initiative. States like Ohio, Massachusetts, California, and Indiana, with rigorous standards already in place, were initially concerned that the Common Core Standards were less sufficient than their own, while other states feel that what is being asked by the new national standards will require a huge overhaul of existing instruction.

The points that most stand out in the Common Core Standards, per the official website, are as follows:

- *There is great emphasis on application and acquisition of knowledge through high-order skills.
- *The standards (and instruction driven thereby) will be evidence-based.
- *The current and future Common Core Standards are “informed by other top performing countries”
- *There are “College and Career Readiness” anchors in the areas of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening
- *Mathematics standards are less broad, but involve delving deeper into essential topics.

Apart from links, there is not a lot of information about the implementation of the Common Core Standards on the ODE website. You may view the entirety of the drafted standards, as well as a good general overview, on the official website:

www.commoncorestandards.org.

*Respectfully submitted,
Anna Hruby chairperson*

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

I am currently working on placing ads on behalf of the Association with various publications such as the Shakerite, the Gristmill and the Shaker Life Magazine. Our ads typically consist of our Association's name, the logo underneath and the phrase "Professionals Dedicated to Educating Shaker's Youth" underneath that.

*Respectfully submitted,
Debbie Ashbaugh, chairperson*

MEMBERSHIP/ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Thank you for your timely payment of membership dues. Payroll deduction (\$20) begins with the October 16th paycheck and continues for 10 pays.

*Respectfully submitted,
Stacy Elgart, chairperson*

POLICY COMMITTEE

This month's 'Law-in-the-Limelight' is Article III of our Constitution: Purposes.

As new issues come up, sometimes I hear a member ask: "What exactly is our job here?" So, I've copied the purposes of our Association below.

ARTICLE III PURPOSES

To share the educational expertise of the membership with the community, School Board and Administration to provide the best education possible for each child.

To accept responsibility for promoting and maintaining the principles of the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession.

To promote and to protect professional welfare of members by achieving professional salary schedules, satisfactory tenure policies, sound retirement systems and such other improvements as will encourage professional growth, high morale and career security.

To encourage teachers to exercise their rights and privileges as citizens and to accept, willingly, leadership in school affairs and in the civic affairs of their community. To promote democratic teacher participation in the formulations of educational policies.

To be an active participant with other educational organizations as designated by the membership in the formation of educational policies.

*Respectfully submitted,
David Klapholz, chairperson*

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Greetings!!!! Please remember to mark your calendars for the **Annual Fall Happy Hour at Jillian's**. We will be giving out prizes, eating, line dancing, socializing,

laughing and toasting to whatever makes you happy! So, Friday, November 19th at 4:15pm plan on hanging out with your fellow colleagues. See you soon at Jillian's in Cleveland Heights.

*Respectfully submitted,
Darlene Garrison, chairperson*

SECRETARY'S REPORT
MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING
October 11, 2010

Fernway Elementary School

The President, Becky Thomas, called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Chris Hayward, principal of Fernway Elementary School, greeted the SHTA Representative Council.

The minutes of the September meeting were unanimously approved.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT: Lisa Howell, Director of Personnel, was unable to attend the meeting. Dr. Paces attended the meeting on her behalf. He thanked all the teachers for their hard work and dedication.

PTO REPORT: Karen Slovikovski, PTO Council Co-president, thanked SHTA members for their donations to support the PTO Council.

OFFICERS' REPORTS:

PRESIDENT

Becky Thomas stated that she has had many meetings with the Negotiating Team. She has been working with the administration to address payroll issues. She advises members to verify that they are receiving the correct salary and that members keep a record of their sick leave and personal days. She attended the September new teacher meeting. She will be meeting with the Negotiating Team and the Administration to work on the new contract.

VICE-PRESIDENT

Dollye Finney distributed the SHTA fellowship applications. This opportunity is provided for SHTA members only. Forty teachers will receive \$100 each to pay for professional development. She attended the September new teacher meeting. She will be attending next month's PTO Council's meeting.

SECRETARY

Matt Zucca recorded attendance.

TREASURER

Bill Scanlon discussed duties of the Treasurer. He discussed the current financial report and the 2010-2011 budget. He plans to meet with the Finance Committee in October. He is working on the final details of the auditing process with the Associations accounts.

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS**PUBLICITY**

Debbie Ashbaugh reported that she is submitting an ad to the Shaker Life magazine acknowledging Shaker's National Merit Scholars.

PUBLICATIONS

John Morris asked that articles for the SHTA Newsletter be submitted to him by email at morris_j@shaker.org. The deadline for submissions to the newsletter is the Wednesday after each representative council meeting. He is looking for members to join the editorial board to review the Association's Newsletter.

SOCIAL

Darlene Garrison is working on the social gathering at *Jillian's* on Friday, November 19th. There will be door prizes awarded at the gathering.

TEACHER EDUCATION

Steve Smith stated that he attended the new teacher meeting in September and provided information on the evaluation process and salary reclassification.

SALARY/TENURE

Becky Thomas stated that the negotiation team has met with their financial consultant and will be meeting with the administration on October 14th.

LEGAL AID

Chante Thomas-Taylor was un-able to attend the meeting.

MEMBERSHIP AND ELECTIONS

Stacy Elgart distributed membership rosters to building representatives. Payroll deduction begins with the October 16 paycheck and continues for 10 pays.

POLICY

Dave Klapholz had no report.

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Mike Sears attended the new teachers meeting in September. He has been working with Bryan Christman on resolving payroll issues. He also stressed the importance of members verifying their salary information. He reminded members to make sure they turn in all appropriate documentation for salary reclassification prior to the November Board meeting.

BUILDING REPORTS

The following reps asked questions, expressed concerns, or made statements on behalf of the membership in their buildings:

Fernway liked the way Tour Your Schools was conducted at the school.

Boulevard had a concern about the new report card being updated and having access to it.

Mercer had a question about the notification process for the evaluation process for tenured teachers.

Shaker Middle School has concerns about the number of interruptions from announcements. They would like to have a better system of notification when teacher room assignments are changed over the summer. They would like to have the process to handle technology concerns clarified. There is also a concern about proper and adequate installation of new technology so that it can be utilized.

The High School is pleased that lost planning time due to IB training is being addressed. They had a concern about the delay in payment from supplemental contracts.

OLD BUSINE

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Dr. Thomas thanked the Fernway members for hosting our meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2010 AT BOULEVARD SCHOOL.

Respectfully submitted,
Matt Zucca, secretary

If I Knew Then What I Know Now...

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.

After school one day this week, a student came in for conferences and asked me about my experiences as a teacher. How long had I been teaching? Had I always wanted to be a teacher? What kind of education had I had? I talked with the student and related my positive and challenging experiences as well as the fact that I love my job and where I teach. The lingering question that remained after our conversation and one that, thankfully, he didn't ask was "would you recommend teaching as a career?" More personally, I considered, "would I recommend my profession to my own children?"

The answer to this question is difficult to navigate. I was raised as the child of two social workers who during the Reagan 80's urged me to steer away from the career in corporate law I had dreamed of and encouraged me to consider a career that would help others more profoundly. Their influence, along with an amazing 10th grade English teacher who inspired me both with his teaching and his professionalism, led me to the career of teaching. But in today's environment where teachers are alternately celebrated as unsung heroes or vilified as calculating automatons, I'm not sure that I would have made the same decision today as I did then.

The truth that I have discovered is that the vast majority of teachers are dedicated professionals and have a nearly missionary mindset about helping others. We are, in general, idealists who believe we can change the world one child at a time. We teach knowing that we will never be as celebrated or as well compensated as our comparably educated colleagues in medicine and law. We didn't get into teaching because of the salary and the summers off, as some would believe. But it's harder than ever now that we are under attack from the media and politicians for being too well-paid, too well organized, too well-insured with too many benefits for a career that a majority of Americans have neither the desire nor the training to effectively perform. As I've said in a previous editorial, in times of economic prosperity we are seen as professionals who have settled for doing too much for too little pay and, in times of an economic downturn, we are vilified as overpaid bureaucrats who are milking the system for all its worth. The cycle from unsung hero to calculating automaton is complete.

So to be honest, I probably would enter the profession again today. I'm that much of an idealist or maybe that much of a glutton for punishment. What can I say? My influences were strong and I still believe I can make a difference. However, when it comes to recommending the career to my students and my own children, I don't know how much longer I will be able to recommend the same path that I have chosen to take. And what does that say about the future of teaching? JM

Important Dates

Monday, November 1	SHTA Executive Board—Woodbury
Tuesday, November 2	Professional Day/Election Day—No Classes
Monday, November 8	SHTA Representative Council—Boulevard
Friday, November 12	Conference Day, No Classes K-12
Monday, November 15	Conference Day, No Classes, K-8
Tuesday, November 16	Board of Education Meeting—Woodbury
Friday, November 19	SHTA Social at Jillian's 4:15 to...
Tuesday, November 23	Thanksgiving Recess begins at 4 p.m.
Monday, November 29	Return from Thanksgiving Recess