

# SHTA *news*

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No. 4 • 18 January 2011

## Message From the President

Bill Scherer. Throughout this newsletter you will read reflections on the impact Bill had on individuals and the Association. Bill retired from the Shaker schools in 2005. He was a dominant figure in the Association for more than 25 years serving on many committees and in leadership positions, most notably as president. Bill loved being the SHTA president representing the interests of each member and the needs of the Association. I worked with Bill for nearly 20 years, watching and learning. He allowed me opportunities for leadership. I have established a special committee to plan a memorial fund for Bill—most likely through the Shaker Schools Foundation. You should receive more information soon. Donna Brittain, retired Secretary of the Association, has written about Bill Scherer in an article that follows the Editorial.

This has been a very sad year for our Association. Several other members have passed away, including Cari Flox from the Middle School who passed away at the end of November. Cari was a vocal building representative. She had also served on the Executive Board as the chairperson for Teacher Education. Many of our newer colleagues benefited from her advocacy and expertise.

I am sure you join me in sending our prayers and best wishes to the families of Bill Scherer and Cari Flox—and to their extended families at Woodbury and the Middle School.

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The week before winter break we experienced something highly unusual—two cold/wind/snow days. These were announced in a relatively timely manner, although I did hear from a few members who were inconvenienced since they were already on the road before the announcement came. You should be aware that if you had requested a sick day or personal leave time for either of these two days, you did not get charged for the day. The Personnel Department automatically restores any illness or personal leave days. They also send me a list of the absences that have been restored. As always, you should check the accounting on your pay statement. If you have any questions, contact me (6033) or Mike Sears(4770).

I continue to attend meetings and respond to calls from building representatives and from individual members. It was great to see so many people in attendance at the SHTA Social at Jillian's in November. Thanks to Darlene Garrison, Social Committee chairperson, for arranging this event. Please watch for information about future events, including the Recognition Reception in May. Be sure to read the Salary Tenure Report for an update on negotiations.

Winter break seems a distant memory, along with those 50+ degree days that we enjoyed. I hope that the New Year has begun smoothly for you. As you know, this will be my retirement year. Think about the future of our Association and the role you plan to play—active member, building representative, executive board member, officer? This is a great organization and it has been a privilege to serve as your president.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Rebecca Thomas, president*

## Reports from the Executive Board

### VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I hope that you are off to a positive and productive start to a new year. I also hope that your building representatives have approached you to consider your contribution to the Silent Auction for the Night for the Red and White. These contributions should be submitted before January 24, 2011 and the contribution forms can be found on the Shaker Heights City Schools Web site on the Shaker Schools Foundation Link. The committee continues to support teacher attendance by offering a discounted ticket price of ninety dollars. I hope that you will contribute to the auction, as well as plan to attend this event. The Night for the Red and White continues to provide substantial gifts to The Shaker Heights City Schools and the party is a blast. Thank you again for your generous support and contributions. This year the event is being held at Landerhaven on March 12, 2011 at seven o'clock. Please also see your Building Reps to purchase a chance to win tickets to The Night for the Red.

The SHTA is offering a stay at Kalahari for a family of four in the Silent Auction. Each year our contribution has been a success. If you have any questions about this event please feel free to contact me at 4916.

I continue to represent the Association at monthly PTO Council meetings. It is still not too late to make a contribution to the PTO annual drive.

Dear friends and colleagues please allow me a brief reflection on my friend and our former President -Mr. William J Scherer. He was a remarkable man with a passion for the Shaker Heights City Schools and the professional representation of Shaker teachers. He was an advocate for teacher's rights and an outspoken proponent of collective bargaining. He touched the lives of so many of our colleagues directly and his tireless contributions continue to impact all of us in our very finely tailored contract. He made the presidency seem effortless. His zeal for SHTA inspired and recruited me to get involved with the Association as he first appointed me to the Executive board and ultimately to my current office. His uncompromising commitment to the Association set an example for me and our many late night phone calls kept me motivated to fight for teacher's rights. He was a prince of man with an unmistakable "I'm in charge swagger".

He will be sorely missed by us all, but his works and legacy stand tall in our collective hearts and minds forever.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Dollye Finney, vice president*

## TREASURER'S REPORT

The Investments Committee (made up of Darcel Arrington, Todd Keitlen, Matt Zucca, Dollye Finney and myself) had a meeting in December to go over our Association investments.

The current financial report is attached.

We lost someone very dear to our Association this month. Bill Scherer was the President of S.H.T.A. when I joined the organization in 1996, and I worked with him on the Executive Board for a number of years before his retirement. He and I didn't always agree, but I always respected him and his dedication to the teachers of the Shaker Heights City School District. He loved working for his colleagues and working to build and strengthen our Association. We all owe him a lot.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Bill Scanlon, Treasurer*

**COMPOSITE BALANCE**

Balance 7/1/10	802,998.46
Receipts 7/1/10 to present	52,459.24
Change in Valuation 7/1/10 to present	<u>61,640.77</u>
	917,098.47
Expenditures 7/1/10 to present	-29,340.17
Expenditures charged to last fiscal year 2009-2010	<u>-6,258.35</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>881,499.95</b>

**BANK AND BROKER RECONCILIATIONS****A. BUCKEYE STATE CREDIT UNION (BSCU) (1/2/11)**

Certificates of deposit		
24 mo. @ 3.0% APY-Matures on 2/02/11	<u>44,388.09</u>	
Total Certificates of deposit		44,388.09
Savings accounts ( 0.50% APY)		101.30
Share draft account (0.25% APY)		21,796.44
Unposted deposits and transfers		<u>0.00</u>
		66,285.83
Less outstanding checks		<u>0.00</u>
<b>TOTAL BSCU</b>		<b>66,285.83</b>

**B. EDWARD JONES (11/26/10)**

Regular Association Account	390,313.04	
Advisory Solutions Account	<u>353,366.07</u>	
		<u>743,679.11</u>

**C. KEY BANK (1/10/11)**

Certificates of deposit		
29 mo. @ 2.15%-Matures on 9/6/11	<u>20,848.60</u>	
Total Certificates of deposit		20,848.60
Business Money Market Account (0.35% APY)		50,849.41
Unposted deposits and transfers		<u>0.00</u>
		71,698.01
Less outstanding checks		<u>-163.00</u>
<b>TOTAL KEY BANK</b>		<b>71,535.01</b>

<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>881,499.95</b>
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## Budgeted Accounts

<u>Account</u>	7/1/10 <u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Debits</u>	<u>Transfers out</u>	<u>Credits</u>	<u>Transfers in</u>	1/13/11 <u>Balance</u>
Accounting	<b>3000.00</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,000.00
Compensation for officers, representatives, et al.						
President	<b>9302.00</b>	4,651.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,651.00
Vice President	<b>5581.00</b>	2,790.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,790.50
Secretary	<b>5581.00</b>	2,790.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,790.50
Treasurer	<b>5581.00</b>	2,790.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,790.50
P.R. & R. Chairperson	<b>5581.00</b>	2,790.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,790.50
Editor	<b>4653.00</b>	2,326.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,326.50
Building reps. and alternates	<b>10000.00</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10,000.00
Conferences and meetings	<b>2500.00</b>	1,108.36	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,391.64
Contingency	<b>250.00</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	250.00
Fellowships and Grants	<b>4000.00</b>	285.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,715.00
Insurance	<b>5000.00</b>	4,375.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	625.00
Legal	<b>5000.00</b>	300.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,700.00
Negotiations	<b>50000.00</b>	1,256.23	0.00	0.00	0.00	48,743.77
Executive Board expenses	<b>500.00</b>	88.93	0.00	0.00	0.00	411.07
Officers' expenses	<b>500.00</b>	75.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	424.79
Payroll taxes	<b>700.00</b>	195.62	0.00	0.00	0.00	504.38
Professional day	<b>200.00</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.00
Publications	<b>1000.00</b>	152.98	0.00	0.00	0.00	847.02
Public Relations	<b>7000.00</b>	415.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,585.00
Social	<b>2500.00</b>	408.81	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,091.19
STRS(TPO contributions)	<b>9000.00</b>	<u>2,539.53</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>6,460.47</u>
TOTAL	<b>137429.00</b>	29,340.17	0.00	0.00	0.00	108,088.83

## PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Since our contract expired on December 31, 2010, some of you may be worried about your rights and responsibilities. Fortunately, when a labor contract expires, both the Administration and the Association work under the rules of the old contract until a new contract is approved. Of course, this also means that both the salary schedule and the percentage we pay for health insurance premiums stay the same.

As we are in the middle of the winter cold and flu season, I'd like to remind you that you may use **Family Illness leave** to care for the following people: "**parent, step-parent, spouse, child, step-child or member of the immediate household**". "An affidavit may be required to support the claim that it is necessary for an employee to be away from his/her assignment due to family illness." Refer to Article 20.01 b. of the contract (pp. 21-22) if you would like more information.

The **fall evaluation process** should have been completed by **December 17**. Article 14.01 of the contract (pp. 16-17) summarizes evaluation requirements if you have concerns or questions about spring semester observations. The most important thing to remember is to follow the recommendations from your administrator so s/he can document your progress and growth as an educator.

The phrase "**violating the contract**" is sometimes used by members when the contract has not been violated. For example, a teacher on a limited contract is supposed to have a peer observer sit in on their first observation in the fall. The peer observer is often a mentor, and this suggestion is listed in an **evaluation manual** adopted by the district (with SHTA's support) in 2004. Since this manual is not a part of the contract, not following it would not violate the contract.

Perhaps an even better example involves student- teacher ratio. Article 9.01 a. of the contract (p. 8) discusses a "**25/1 student-teacher ratio per building**". At first glance, one might think a class of 26 violates the contract. The key words in the phrase are "**per building**". As long as the total number of students divided by the total number of teachers in a building equals 25 or less, then the contract is being followed.

The Association can only file a grievance when the contract is not being followed.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Mike Sears, chairperson*

## SALARY TENURE COMMITTEE

I want to begin by reminding all of you that we do have a contract. All of the language from our most recent contract is still in effect. In my 20+ years in various leadership positions in the Association it has been common for our contract to be settled after December. We have experienced mediation/fact finding on at least three of the contracts during that time, so our current situation is not unusual.

Both teams met on December 15 and exchanged packages. Our team is Dave Klapholz, John Morris, Darlene Garrison, Mike Sears, me (Chairperson), and Susannah Muskovitz (Attorney). Our observers are Linda Roth and Matt Zucca. The team for the Board of Education is Bryan Christman (Treasurer), Patty Ott (Director of Special Education), Lisa Howell (Personnel Administrator), Ann Spurrier (Assistant Principal, High School), and David Millstone (Attorney). We met again on January 4 and January 12 with two more meetings scheduled this month. Our team has also met several times to formulate strategies and responses.

Historically, the Board of Education team brings many issues to the table while we focus on a few very specific areas of the contract—primarily salary (which was the direction you gave us in the survey). The process is very slow and deliberate as both sides ask questions and explain their rationale. If there are any decisions before the next Newsletter, I will email you directly.

Thank you for your patience and support.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Rebecca Thomas, chairperson*

## TEACHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

I hope your Winter Break was a restful and relaxing time. With the New Year already upon us, I wanted to remind you of some dates that are quickly approaching:

**Evaluation:** Your next formal evaluation will be scheduled before Spring Break. Between January 4<sup>th</sup> and that time, you will have at least two formal classroom observations. Formal observations have to be a minimum of 30 minutes and done by your administrator. Your first observation can occur any time in January, February or early March. The second observation will occur in March, but the two observations need to be at least 15 school days apart.

**Salary Reclassification:** Board action on salary reclassification will be taken two times a year at the regular Board Meetings in November and April. If you have tuition hours, turn them in now. Payment for classes only occurs once a year, but reclassification occurs twice. Remember, your coursework must be completed before you can be considered for reclassification.

**Tenure:** Tenure is granted at the April meeting of the Board of Education. You must have completed all of the necessary coursework by this time. If you are taking classes on semesters, this means that the Fall semester work will apply. Spring semester classes that are not completed until after the April Board Meeting will not apply.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have: 216-295-6385 or [smith\\_st@shaker.org](mailto:smith_st@shaker.org).

*Respectfully submitted,  
Steve Smith, chairperson*

## LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

*Governor Kasich sworn in, now what does this mean for us?*

John Kasich was sworn as Ohio's 69<sup>th</sup> governor on Monday. During his campaign and since his election, we have seen nothing concrete in terms of a plan for Education. Kasich has made remarks about plans for sweeping changes, but has failed to say how he intends to implement those plans. What I have been able to glean from soundbytes in various news sources is the following:

\*Unions: Kasich is no fan of unions. He has vowed to reform the state's collective-bargaining law, and hopes to do away with binding arbitration for police and fire unions. As for the OEA, Kasich is quoted on more than one occasion as saying that teachers' unions would need to take out full-page ads apologizing for what they had said about him before he will bring them to the table.

\*Funding: Kasich is doing away with former Governor Stickland's model-based plan for school reform, including how it was to be funded. He has said repeatedly that he would like to repeal the Ohio state income tax, which would result in a 30% loss in state funding for school districts. Since elected, not much has been said of this income tax repeal, and rumors are that it has died on the vine. At this time, all schools anticipate cuts in State funding under the Kasich administration. In order to overcome the huge \$8 billion deficit without raising taxes, funding for programs across the board are expected to take substantial hits. The question was raised as to whether Ohio will still receive its \$400 million Race to the Top grant from the federal government. Secretary Duncan has given assurance that Ohio's grant is not in jeopardy, as long as the program's criteria are met.

\*Calamity days? State Representative Grendell from Chesterland, is currently working on legislation to return the number of allotted calamity days to five. Strickland, in hopes of preserving instructional time, cut calamity days down to three, and while this was certainly well intentioned, it has raised concerns across communities. While it remains uncertain as to whether the days will be restored in time for the 2010/2011 school year, Governor Kasich has vowed that Ohio schools will once again have five calamity days.

I apologize for the vague nature of my reports regarding Governor Kasich's plans, but there simply is not a lot of concrete information available yet. The state budget must be submitted by June 30, 2011. Certainly, we will know something by then, and I would venture to say that it will be interesting to see how all of this unfolds.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Anna Hruby chairperson*

## PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Welcome back and Happy New Year! An ad was placed in the Dec/January issue of the Shaker Life Magazine acknowledging the National Merit Finalists from the Teachers Association. We also placed an ad with the Shakerite newspaper. In addition, we have received a few requests for donations and I am currently working on reviewing the donations that we will make on behalf of the Association.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Debbie Ashbaugh, chairperson*

## MEMBERSHIP/ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

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

*Respectfully submitted,  
Stacy Elgart, chairperson*

## POLICY COMMITTEE

This month's 'Law-in-the-Limelight' is **Article XI** of our Constitution: Interpretation.

As if we needed even more evidence of the central role that the Representatives play in our Association, here is Article XI: *Interpretation*. We see here that it is not the President, or the Executive Board that resolves ambiguities; that responsibility falls on the Rep Council.

Here is the Article in full:

The power of interpretation of this Constitution and the By-Laws shall be vested in the Representative Council. Any ruling of the Representative Council may be reversed by a majority vote of the membership.

*Respectfully submitted,  
David Klapholz, chairperson*

## SOCIAL COMMITTEE

In November, we had a great time at Jillian's. Members who attended the Fall Happy Hour at Jillian's had opportunities to win our fabulous prizes. We were able to give away mouse pads, flash drives, wine, gift cards and a fellowship. Congratulations to all of the winners!

The SHTA Spring Recognition Reception is scheduled for Thursday, May 26<sup>th</sup> at Shaker Heights High School. You will receive more information about this event soon.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Darlene Garrison, chairperson*

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING  
January 10, 2011

Mercer Elementary School

The President, Becky Thomas, called the meeting to order at 4:29 p.m.

Lindsay Florence, principal of Mercer, welcomed the SHTA representative council.

The minutes of the November meeting were unanimously approved.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT: Lisa Howell stated the fall evaluations have been completed.

PTO REPORT: Karen Slovikovski, PTO Council Co-president, stated that the council was co-sponsoring with Your Teen Magazine an event that will discuss developing a healthy relationship with food.

## OFFICERS' REPORTS:

### PRESIDENT

Becky Thomas stated that she has attended November and Decembers board meetings, and planned to be at the January meeting. She has been working with the negotiating team and the associations' lawyer and has met with the administrations team to work on a new contract. She has worked on teacher placement and licensures issues at the Middle School.

She stated she will be forming a committee to discuss creating a memorial fund in honor of Bill Scherer former Woodbury teacher and SHTA President.

#### VICE-PRESIDENT

Dolley Finney reported that the SHTA's donation to the silent auction for "A Night for the Red and White" is a gift certificate to the *Kalahari Waterpark Resort*. She reminded the members that the PTO council is still accepting donation for their annual fund.

#### SECRETARY

Matt Zucca discussed the SHTA's Annual Red & White Drawing to be held on February 7. Ticket sales are for **SHTA MEMBERS ONLY** and will close on February 3. He stated that this year's prizes in the SHTA's Red and White drawing are three sets of two tickets to the event on March 12. You may win only once. A flyer will be published in the newsletter.

#### TREASURER

Bill Scanlon discussed our current financial report. He stated that the Association's audit is almost complete.

### **EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS**

#### POLICY

Dave Klapholz had no report.

#### TEACHER EDUCATION

Steven Smith will be sending non tenured teachers reminders of the next evaluation.

#### PUBLIC RELATIONS

Debbie Ashbaugh stated that she was working on donations from the Association to various organizations. We will have an ad in the *Shaker Life Magazine* and *The Shakerite*. She read a thank you letter from the Woodbury Scholars program thanking the Association for our contribution and support.

#### PUBLICATIONS

John Morris said that newsletter submissions are due on Wednesday. Please send them to him at [morris\\_j@shaker.org](mailto:morris_j@shaker.org). The newsletter will be e-mailed on Tuesday.

#### LEGAL AID

Chante Thomas-Taylor had no report.

#### LEGISLATIVE

Anna Hruby was unable to attend the meeting. Her report will appear in the Newsletter.

#### SOCIAL

Darlene Garrison was unable to attend the meeting. Becky Thomas submitted her report. Dr. Thomas thanked Darlene for arranging the social event at Jillian's. Darlene is planning the

recognition reception which will be held on May 26. Darlene asked for suggestions for a spring social event.

#### MEMBERSHIP AND ELECTIONS

Stacy Elgart said we currently have 416 members.

#### SALARY/TENURE

Becky Thomas discussed her report during Executive Session.

#### PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Mike Sears reminded members that extended absence due to sickness will need documentation. He also reminded members to make sure they are keeping their license up to date. If you have questions please call him at x4770.

#### BUILDING REPORTS

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

Fernway praised the work of the custodial staff for their hard work in keeping the grounds clear of snow.

Woodbury expressed concerns about the process of student transfers within the building. There was also a concern with mice in the building.

#### OLD BUSINESS

None.

#### NEW BUSINESS

None.

At 4:55 the representative council went into executive session. It concluded at 5:06

#### FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Mike Sears announced that he and his wife Kristen Roope are expecting the birth of their third child in May. Becky thanked the Mercer Reps for hosting the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

THE NEXT MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2011.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
Matt Zucca, secretary

## Why Merit Pay Won't Work

*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.*

One of the questions that has been on my mind and the minds of many of our colleagues with the election of John Kasich is whether or not the idea of merit pay for teachers will reemerge at the state level. In discussing this issue with colleagues, Linda Roth, social studies teacher from the middle school, shared an extremely insightful article from *Educational Leadership* titled "Merit Pay Misfires." In the article, the author Al Ramirez underlines the central problem with merit pay schemes when he states, "When asked to take on a merit-pay system, teachers typically point to the fact that they have no control over who is assigned to their classes. Every veteran teacher knows that groups of students will vary in their ability and motivation from year to year" (Ramirez, 2011). This same sentiment was also highlighted by our own Paul Springstubb, high school English teacher and Plain Dealer contributor, when he discusses the recent attack on seniority in Cleveland's schools in his November piece entitled "Help Cleveland Students Achieve." It is a pleasure to re-print Paul's article with his and the Cleveland Plain Dealer's permission in this month's newsletter.

On a personal note, I was helped early in my career by both Bill Scherer and Cari Flox. Their consummate professionalism and dedication to the SHTA were motivation for me to become involved. Their departures remind us of how important they were in our Association and our lives. They will be missed but both leave legacies to be emulated by our members both present and future. JM

### "Help Cleveland Students Achieve"

The head of the Cleveland Foundation says he won't feel successful until he achieves what he calls the foundation's "No. 1 priority." Ronn Richard wants to upend the 70-year-old law that protects senior teaching staff when layoffs are required -- the well-known practice of last hired, first fired ("School reformers, with cash in hand," Oct. 29). Richard believes the elimination of this policy is essential to efforts to improve the academic performance of Cleveland School District students.

Richard's argument rests on the assumption that teachers are to blame when children fail to achieve. The power to fire teachers is the current magic bullet touted by politicians -- a typical oversimplification of why students fail to achieve. The truth is far more complex, as many teachers themselves have painfully learned.

I've spent 26 years teaching high school English. I've been privileged to work in one of the rare school districts that are both racially and socioeconomically diverse. In the same school year, I've worked with an entire classroom of high school seniors from relatively wealthy families, then moved to a classroom of seniors from economically stressed families. If I were an effective teacher, Ronn Richard would expect all of my students to progress academically. They didn't. From one class, students left for Harvard, Yale, Princeton and Pomona; more than a few students from my other class failed to learn to write a single, focused, grammatically correct paragraph with any confidence.

In one class, we vigorously debated Benjamin Whorf and linguistic relativity or the Singer solution to world poverty; in my very next class, I was time and again so frustrated -- painful to admit, sometimes exploding in anger -- that I was at a complete loss as to how to proceed, a frustration intensified by having put the best of many years' experience into my lesson plans.

Krista Calvin, a third-grade teacher with national certification, told a similar story about the varying academic performance she experienced in "I've Worked at Schools on Both Sides Now: Rich and Poor" (Teacher Magazine, August 2010). Her classroom of students from families of "doctors, dentists and engineers" achieved the highest test scores in the district; but for the previous 12 years, her classroom of students from highly stressed military families -- with one or both parents deployed -- "performed poorly on state tests." She was the same teacher from one district to the next. Was she suddenly a high-performing teacher after 12 years as an underperforming teacher? Nonsense.

Perhaps it is an ugly truth, a sad truth, but it is a truth: A family's relative wealth and stability very often play a significant role in the academic success or failure of a child.

And so here is one teacher's suggestion for Ronn Richard and the powerful institution which he is privileged to lead. Stay out of politics. Instead, in a city of highly stressed, impoverished neighborhoods, concentrate on improving the lives of the children and families of the Cleveland School District. Make this "the No. 1 priority" of the Cleveland Foundation.

It shouldn't be difficult to expand support for families; the nourishment we're talking about is obvious. And that well-nourished child, that child who has known playgrounds and plays, museums and medical care, who has grown up with a little library of books and some lessons on a musical instrument, who has helped grow vegetables, cleaned up a vacant lot, dreamed of going to Mars -- with some confidence, I would say that that child is very likely to succeed in school.

In short, the Cleveland Foundation could be far more richly partnered with the Cleveland public schools and the critical work of raising the achievement of our children. But that job is in Cleveland's neighborhoods, not in Columbus. PS

## William J. Scherer

He was a veteran, a father, grandfather, teacher, and union leader. No matter where he went, from the U.S. Navy to the Shaker Heights City School District to his cozy retirement home, Bill Scherer was a man of character.

William Scherer was born on August 27 and was raised in Kent, Ohio. He was a graduate of Theodore Roosevelt High School. He studied at Kent State University and after receiving his master's degree in education, continued to study in the area of school administration. He worked as a teacher in the Stow City Schools from September, 1972 through June, 1975. He taught in Shaker from September, 1975 through June, 2005. He served in the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association for over twenty-five years. He was the longest standing president of the union.

Many remember Bill as their teacher. They have recounted stories of his impact on their lives as readers, writers, and life long learners attributing their academic successes to his strong influence. Some even think of him as a legend. Several of his former students requested that THEIR children be members of his classes at Woodbury School.

To many he was a colleague and mentor. He taught at Fernway, Lomond, Mercer, Moreland, and Woodbury. During his tenure he set the standard for knowing and honoring the Agreement between educators and administrators in the District.

Some of us knew him as a trusted confidant. He went to bat for his fellow teachers time and time again. "Don't mess with Bill!" they used to say. His was a voice to be reckoned with.

Mr. Scherer spent a significant portion of his career at Moreland School which closed in 1987. He cherished his time there. Bill said, "For those that walked the halls of Moreland School it was a life changing experience. Mr. B – [Kenneth Buchanan] the absolute best principal I ever worked for. The students were the best people I ever taught. The teachers were the best, most dedicated people. Moreland will always remain the best."

Bill retired to Mount Pleasant, South Carolina where he lived out his final days. He once referred to himself as "someone that used to whip up some fabulous dinners." Yes, we remember that gourmet cook side to our old friend as well.

We all have so many memories associated with the life of William Scherer. His guidance, perspective, kindness, and infectious smile will live on as his legacy.

Donna Brittain

**Important Dates**

<b>Monday, January 17</b>	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—No School
<b>Friday, January 21</b>	Professional/Clerical Day for Grades 7-12
<b>Monday, February 7</b>	SHTA Executive Board at Woodbury
<b>Tuesday, February 8</b>	Board of Education Meeting at Boulevard
<b>Monday, February 14</b>	SHTA Representative Council at High School
<b>Friday, February 18 through Monday, February 21</b>	Presidents' Weekend—No School
<b>Friday, March 4</b>	Professional/Clerical Day for Grades K-6
<b>Monday, March 7</b>	SHTA Executive Board at Woodbury
<b>Tuesday, March 8</b>	Board of Education Meeting at Onaway
<b>Saturday, March 12</b>	A Night for the Red and White at Landerhaven
<b>Monday, March 14</b>	SHTA Representative Council at Middle School