

SHTA *news*

No. 7 • 18 April 2011

Message From the President

For this Newsletter I am combining my president's message with the Salary-Tenure report. As you read this, the negotiating team and I are preparing for the membership meeting on Wednesday, April 20th (at 4:15 in the Middle School Auditorium). I encourage you to attend, ask questions, and share your comments. We want to hear from you.

To call this process challenging is an incredible understatement. Senate Bill 5 added issues and anxieties; the proposed budget added more hurdles. What we negotiated is, first and foremost, a three-year contract—the terms of this contract will be in force through December 31, 2013—regardless of S.B. 5. However, that makes it even more imperative to work on the resolution to stop the implementation of this legislation. In December, 2013, we do not want to have it imposed on us.

The contract vote is Wednesday, April 27. If you are not in your home building, be sure you make arrangements with your head building representative for a proxy. The choice is now yours.

We also need to be vocal and vigilant about the proposed budget from the governor and about any other legislation that is proposed for the next four years. Complacency must become activism. Please plan to vote in May on the By-Law change to allow an SHTA Political Action Committee. To quote Benjamin Franklin, "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately."

Along with the hours spent negotiating, I attended the Night for the Red and White, which was extremely well-attended this year. I attended a meeting of the Solon Democratic Club, a rally in Bedford, and both of the Superintendent's "state of the schools" meetings. At the April meeting of the Board of Education, I listened to the Board vote to give continuing contracts to fifteen colleagues. Steve Smith and I will be sending them our congratulations. I also worked on contract (family illness leave) and evaluation issues.

Spring break seems a distant memory, although April seems to be zooming past. With the end of the 2010-2011 school year approaching, I want to thank you again for allowing me to represent you and our Association.

*Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Thomas, president*

Reports from the Executive Board

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This year is quickly coming to a close. I have a very brief report this month. The Night for the Red and White was a great success and we are happy to report that the proceeds will top \$100,000! Thanks in no small part to each of you and your contributions and hard work. I would like to remind you all that SHTA Fellowship recipients to use the money to promote professional development. This fellowship is designed to enhance your professional activities. Please submit receipts to me at Boulevard School.

I would like to thank the Negotiations Team for a job well done. Collective bargaining does indeed work and you all made it work well!

*Respectfully submitted,
Dollye Finney, vice president*

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

I am extremely proud of our membership for our organized efforts to protest and repeal Senate Bill 5. The PAC for Shaker Educators organized a petition kick off on April 14 that was attended by over 200 people. I was honored to be asked to speak at the rally. It was inspiring to listen to state government leaders like Kenny Yuko, Armond Budish, and Nina Turner speak about collective bargaining. It was exciting to see the large crowd and the media coverage. Congratulations to everyone who worked so hard to organize this rally!

As a member of the Negotiations Team, I'd like to share a few reasons why I'll be voting for the tentative agreement on April 27. The agreement provides stability through December 31, 2013. This is a huge positive because there is no guarantee that Senate Bill 5 will be repealed in November. The agreement preserves our current salary schedule, which is a good schedule that helps us attract qualified teachers. It rewards continuing education and values experience. It spells out in clear language paid paternity leave for new fathers. While we will have to start paying 12 % of our health insurance costs on January 1, 2012, we will receive a 1% stipend on January 16, 2012 that will help offset the additional health care costs. Steps will only be frozen for one year. Current employees can still qualify for double jumps twice during their careers here. Another 1 % stipend will be earned on January 16, 2013. These stipends were a compromise that allows the school district to slow down the future growth of the salary schedule, while still giving us a small raise. We are currently going through a difficult time in public education, but this contract will help us climb out of this valley in the future.

I had a phone conference with Sue Garber, Accounting Specialist, to discuss recent concerns related to sick leave and the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). We reviewed district policy to make sure both the Association and the Administration are on the same page. Here's a quick summary that may be helpful:

- 1) Employees may use AESOP to enter Family or Personal Illness days up to 5 days in a row.
- 2) If an employee is out for a 6th day in a row (or more), the employee has to contact a building secretary to enter the absence.

- 3) If an employee is absent for a 10th day in a row, Sue Garber will contact them about their absence. She has to find out if the employee intends to use FMLA for an extended absence. She also has to ask for doctor's notes because an employee may not use paid sick leave beyond 5 days without documentation.
- 4) However, there is one exception: new parents. New mothers can use 6 weeks of personal illness days (8 weeks for c-section deliveries) from the date the baby is born. Expectant mothers may use personal illness days before the baby is born, but they do need a doctor's note. If the tentative agreement is approved, new fathers can use 10 family illness days without a doctor's note.
- 5) FMLA allows employees to take 12 weeks off work to care for a family member. The law was intended to prevent employers from firing employees who took unpaid days off work to care for their families. Since we have family illness days in our labor contract, we are allowed to use these days as part of FMLA if we want. If a new mother wants to take additional time with her child, she can use sick leave for the first 6 or 8 weeks, and go on unpaid maternity leave for the next 4 to 6 weeks. An employee's family medical leave begins with their first family illness day, not after 6 or 8 weeks.
- 6) Some members have contacted me about using their sick days for 6 or 8 weeks and then starting a 12 week unpaid leave. This is not possible. Use of sick days and FMLA are concurrent. If a member wants a longer unpaid leave, they can apply for a semester or a year-long leave of absence by writing a letter to Lisa Howell, Personnel Administrator.

Some teachers were recently injured while breaking up fights. Putting yourself in harm's way in these situations is a personal decision. We are required to call for help when we see a fight. This could include contacting the office, security, or even dialing 9-1-1. For more detailed information about our rights and responsibilities in this area, please refer to my report in the November, 2010 newsletter. You can find it on <http://shtaweb.org/>. If you are injured while at work, you should contact the school nurse and complete a worker's compensation form. It is not necessary to file a police report, unless you feel such action is warranted. Again, this is a personal decision.

*Respectfully submitted,
Mike Sears, chairperson*

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Investments Committee (made up of Darcel Arrington, Todd Keitlen, Matt Zucca, Dollye Finney and myself) will be meeting this month with Brady Krebs, our Edward Jones advisor to go over our Association investments.

Our accounting costs this year were a little more than predicted. As a result we had to transfer some funds between the line items in the budget to avoid a negative balance in the Accounting line. This was accomplished by a motion and vote during this month's rep council meeting.

I am going to use a paragraph or two here to explain a process crucial to the workings of our Association: the budgeting of our money for next fiscal year (2011-2012). At this month's rep council meeting I presented a preview of next year's budget (which is included in my report here). The yearly budget is based off the member dues we take in during the year. When I

presented it to rep council I explained any differences in the line items between this year and next. I opened the budget to discussion and answered questions your representatives had.

You'll notice that the salaries for our 6 paid positions are left blank. Those amounts must be proposed with a motion and voted on by the whole rep council at next month's meeting. Once those amounts are approved by rep council and placed in the budget, the budget goes on the ballot to be voted on by the general membership. The subsequent voted-on budget gives us general guidelines and limits for our spending throughout the next fiscal year.

I presented this "budget preview" so rep council members would have a month to consider the budget before presenting it officially to the general membership.

Budget Preview

		<i>PROPOSED</i>
<u>Account</u>	<u>2010-2011</u>	<u>2011-12</u>
Accounting	3000.00	3500.00
Compensation for officers, representatives, et al.		
President	9302.00	0.00
Vice President	5581.00	0.00
Secretary	5581.00	0.00
Treasurer	5581.00	0.00
P.R. & R. Chairperson	5581.00	0.00
Editor	4653.00	0.00
Building reps. and alternates	10000.00	10000.00
Conferences and meetings	2500.00	2500.00
Contingency	250.00	250.00
Fellowships and Grants	4000.00	4000.00
Insurance	5000.00	5000.00
Legal	5000.00	5000.00
Negotiations	50000.00	0.00
Executive Board expenses	500.00	500.00
Officers' expenses	500.00	500.00
Payroll taxes	700.00	550.00
Professional Day	200.00	0.00
Publications	1000.00	1000.00
Public Relations	7000.00	7000.00
Social	2500.00	2500.00
STRS(TPO contributions)	9000.00	5100.00
TOTAL	137429.00	47400.00

Jessica O'Brien (Middle School social studies teacher) and I attended a rally at the Statehouse in Columbus over Spring Break to urge the State House not to pass SB5. It was a frustrating but necessary experience.

Just tonight (Thursday, April 14th) I attended the anti-SB5 rally sponsored by the Political Action Committee of Shaker Educators (PACSHED) and I was enthralled with the turnout. Police Officers, Firefighters, Union Workers, RTA Drivers, Activists, Teachers (from Cleveland, East Cleveland, Garfield Hts., Beachwood, Maple Hts., Cleveland Hts., & Shaker), Shaker

Custodians, Shaker Secretaries, and Shaker Bus Drivers all gathered to hear religious leaders, union leaders, and politicians speak about the devastating impact of SB5. The hall was packed full of concerned citizens and their families. Not only did it make me immensely proud of our members who put the whole thing together (who I am not going to mention because I guarantee I will leave people out), but it was so much fun.

Right now the PACSHED members who put the rally together are just what they call themselves – a group of “Shaker Educators.” A proposed by-law change, which will appear on next month’s ballot, will allow the non-Shaker people who attended this rally to know that it was put on by members of our Shaker Heights Teachers' Association. I encourage you to vote for the proposed by-law change and enable S.H.T.A. to associate itself with this necessary political work.

This is an election year for our Association and I have put my name on next month’s ballot in the hope of continuing to be your Treasurer.

*Respectfully submitted,
Bill Scanlon, Treasurer*

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

The passage of Senate Bill 5 earlier this month does not mark the end of the fight against its measures, but has become instead a call to action for those who value their hard earned professional rights. Here is a timeline of the current status of SB5 and its referendum process.

***March 31:** SB 5 was enrolled with the Ohio Secretary of State, and would go into effect 91 days later, were no referendum petitions filed.

***April 4:** 3000 signatures (1000 were required) were submitted to the Secretary of State’s office to begin the referendum process.

***April 14:** Attorney General DeWine must make it known whether the language submitted with the April 4 petitions is an acceptable representation of the desired referendum.

***June 29:** Once the referendum language is approved, opposition has until June 29 (90 days from the initial date of 3/31) to gather and submit 231,149 valid signatures in order to have the repeal placed on the November ballot. The signatures must come from at least 44 of Ohio’s 88 counties.

***July:** Attorney General DeWine announces whether there are enough valid signatures to bring the referendum to the November ballot.

***October:** absentee voting begins

***November 8:** Election day

Good news for the opponents of SB5: according to a recent Wenzel poll, 51% of Ohioans favor a repeal of SB 5, versus 38% who support its adoption. ¹

Bad news for the opponents of SB5: Worried that SB 5 will be repealed by referendum vote, the governor and his supporters are currently working on amending HB 153, the Kasich budget bill, so that it will contain some provisions from SB 5. As of what we currently know, HB 153 would:

- *Supersede any provision in collective bargaining agreements entered into on or after the effective date of the budget.
- *Mandate that districts create separate salary schedules based on types of licensure
- *Determine the pay of each individual teacher within their appropriate schedule on a “merit” basis
- *Result in a denial of State funding for districts that do not comply with the above.²

What is disturbing about HB 153 is that it is a separate entity from SB 5. So far, the current referendum could only result in a repeal of SB 5 as signed by Kasich. If SB 5 provisions are incorporated into other legislation, such as the budget bill, then those provisions survive any referendum, unless they are also repealed in separate referenda.

The more I learn, the more I am beginning to realize, sadly, that educators will be in a constant battle for rights as long as the current administration is at the helm. It will, I fear, be a long road ahead. Please do not become discouraged, and please continue to do your part in trying to preserve your professional rights.

By now, you will have most likely read the outline of the proposed contract. Admittedly, an initial reading is a bit disheartening, particularly when this proposal is held against contracts of years past. The fact of the matter is that the negotiating team has worked to their fullest capabilities for months, and that given the overall economy, forthcoming cuts in State funding, and looming legislative measures, this is simply the best they could secure for us. **Please consider that what is offered in the proposal is far better than anything that could be legislated by SB 5 or HB 153, and will stand for the duration of the contract, regardless of whether either measure becomes law.** My hope is that we can ride out the proverbial storm until 2013 under the current proposal, and that hopefully, 2014 will bring much recovered economic and political climates.

1. <http://www.progressohio.org/>
2. <http://www.dispatch.com/>

*Respectfully submitted,
Anna Hruby chairperson*

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

I hope everyone had a relaxing spring break. Teacher appreciation gifts have come in and will be distributed by the building representatives to all of our members the first week in May. An advertisement was also placed in the April/May issue of the Shaker Life magazine.

*Respectfully submitted,
Debbie Ashbaugh, chairperson*

MEMBERSHIP/ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Petitions for 2011-2013 office are now available. They must be filed with me, at the middle school, no later than 4pm Friday, April 29th. If you are interested in serving as a representative for your building for the 2011-2012 school year, please submit your name to your

head rep by Friday, May 6th. Any member on tenure, who has been an active member for the three years immediately preceding the election, is eligible to be a building representative.

The ratification vote for the tentative agreement will be on Wednesday, April 27th. We will elect officers and building representatives and vote on the proposed budget and change to the by-laws on Monday, May 23rd.

*Respectfully submitted,
Stacy Elgart, chairperson*

POLICY COMMITTEE

This month's 'Law-in-the-Limelight' is **By-Law II C**: Election of Building Representatives. Here is part of the Article: "Before the end of the current school year and not earlier than the 2nd of May, each building shall elect its representative(s)."

Perhaps lost in the hubbub of electing a new president is another important decision: electing our Building Representatives. Often this is not so much an election as it is a search for people who are willing to serve the teachers in their buildings and their Association. Please consider running for "Building Rep." This modest commitment is pivotal to the workings of our Association. Rather than thinking of the SHTA as something that some other people are running, you'll see that the SHTA is really just *us*, using our best judgment to cope with our issues. There are 8 meetings per year, and each comes with a stipend and a light meal.

*Respectfully submitted,
David Klapholz, chairperson*

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

On Friday, May 6th at 4:30, please join the SHTA for a Spring Happy Hour. We will socialize, bowl, eat and relax. I am asking all building head reps to find volunteers to donate treats to eat for this event. Please be on the lookout for sign-up sheets. Attached to the newsletter, please read the flyer providing more details about the event and the location.

On Thursday, May 26th at 3:45, the SHTA will sponsor the annual Spring Recognition Reception at the high school. Please join us as we congratulate and honor our colleagues. You will be receiving more information about this event soon.

*Respectfully submitted,
Darlene Garrison, chairperson*

LOCAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you to everyone who has been using the IPDP Management Suite to enter professional development activities. We strongly believe the new paperless system improves the method of submitting activities. The LPDC reads each and every activity that is submitted and sends an email letting the individual know whether his or her activity received Continuing Education Units or not. Often times, when units are not awarded, it is simply a matter of attaching a log or certificate of attendance, making sure a transcript has been sent to personnel,

or writing specific benefits received from the activity. Our email allows the individual an opportunity to correct the situation and still receive units for the activity.

In order to maintain the integrity of the system, the LPDC will be cleaning out inactive activity requests in January and June of each year, starting June 1, 2011.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns regarding your license renewal, feel free to contact your LPDC representative listed below!

School	LPDC Representative	Email
Boulevard	Dorothy Grim	Grim_d@shaker.org
Fernway/Onaway	Penny Flynn	Flynn_p@shaker.org
Lomond/Mercer	Neal Robinson	Robinson_n@shaker.org
Woodbury	Eileen Sweeney	Sweeney_e@shaker.org
Middle School	Elizabeth Strickler	Strickler_e@shaker.org
High School	John O'Verko	O'Verko_j@shaker.org
High School	Robin Taylor	Taylor_r@shaker.org

*Respectfully submitted,
Your LPDC*

SECRETARY'S REPORT

MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

April 11, 2011
Lomond School

The President, Rebecca Thomas, called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

Sue Alig, principal of Lomond, welcomed the SHTA representative council.

The minutes of the March meeting were approved.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT: Lisa Howell reported that she is working on tenure evaluations and end of the year reports.

PTO REPORT: Karen Slovikovski, PTO Council Co-president, stated that the council is making their leadership transitions for next year.

OFFICERS' REPORTS:

PRESIDENT

Dr. Thomas reported that she attended the Night for the Red and White. She attended many meetings regarding SB5 including ones in Solon and Bedford. She has been working on teacher leave issues and teacher evaluation issues. She has been meeting with the Negotiating Team members to work on contract negotiations. She reported she would be attending the Administration Breakfast Meeting with Shaker community leaders.

VICE-PRESIDENT

Dollye Finney reported that the turn out for The Night for the Red and White was very good. She thanked all those who attended. She reminded members to turn in receipts for their SHTA fellowship awards.

SECRETARY

Matt Zucca took attendance for the meeting.

TREASURER

Bill Scanlon discussed the current financial report. He discussed the proposed budget for next year.

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS**PUBLICITY**

Debbie Ashbaugh reported that she has purchased the SHTA's gifts for Teacher Appreciation Week. The gifts will be given to the head building reps. in April.

PUBLICATIONS

John Morris reminded members of the Wednesday midnight newsletter deadline. Submissions should be made to him at morris_j@shaker.org. He announced that the Newsletter is now paperless with all copies sent by e-mail and previous Newsletters archived on SHTAWEBSITE.ORG. He encouraged everyone to attend the April 14th rally.

SALARY/TENURE

Dr. Thomas reported that the Negotiation Team met last Friday with the Federal Mediator and the Board's negotiating team. She stated that the team would be meeting with the Board's team again following the Representative Council Meeting.

SOCIAL

Darlene Garrison encouraged members to attend the Bowling Extravaganza on May 6. She stated that the District Employee Recognition Reception will be held at the Shaker Heights High School Cafeteria on Thursday, May 26.

TEACHER EDUCATION

Steve Smith has sent congratulatory letters to the newly tenured teachers.

LEGAL AID

Chante Thomas-Taylor had no report.

LEGISLATIVE

Anna Hruby stated she will be reporting on how the Governor's budget will try to mirror Senate Bill 5.

POLICY

Dave Klapholz had no report.

MEMBERSHIP AND ELECTIONS

Stacy Elgart stated that the association will hold its election on Monday, May 23. The Members will be voting on Officers, the 2011-2012 budget, a By-Law amendment, and building Reps. She reminded candidates for Officers must return their completed petitions no later than Friday, April 29th, by 4p.m.

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Mike Sears stated he was working on a paternity **leave** issue with one of the members. He also discussed the Family Medical Leave act and how certain events are triggered with the Personnel department.

BUILDING REPORTS

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

Lomond Rep. stated that there was a situation at the school that required the staff and administration to review safety procedures. They are still working on the issue. Dee Arrington wanted to thank everyone who helped with the meeting refreshments.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Motions were made to move funds to the Accounting budget by Brian Berger. The motions were as follows:

I move that \$1000 be transferred from Legal to Accounting.

I move that \$250 be transferred from Contingency to Accounting.

I move that \$200 be transferred from Professional Day to Accounting.

I move that \$250 be transferred from Publications to Accounting.

The motions were seconded and were followed by a discussion. After the discussion Becky Thomas made a motion to change the amount to transfer from Legal to Accounting to \$1100. The motion was seconded and was followed by a discussion. The motions were unanimously approved.

At 5:27 the representative council went into executive session. It concluded at 5:45 p.m.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Becky Thomas thanked Lomond staff members for hosting our meeting. She recognized and thanked Darcel Arrington, Building Rep. for Lomond, for her many years of service to the Association.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY, MAY 9, 2011 AT ONAWAY SCHOOL.

Respectfully submitted,
Matt Zucca, secretary

“We can’t go back and we won’t go back.”

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.

Below is the full text of a speech I gave part of at Thursday’s SB5 Referendum Rally:

Good evening. My name is John Llewellyn Morris and I am a proud Shaker Heights teacher and member of a union family, both here in Shaker Heights and in my hometown, Canton, Ohio. My great grandfather, Llewellyn Morris, was beaten, hospitalized and ultimately blacklisted for being a union organizer in Canton’s steel factories during the 1920’s. My mother, Bonnie Morris, worked for social services in Stark County and, after collective bargaining was legislated for public employees in 1983, organized under the Steelworkers banner and bargained for the first contract for Stark County’s Department of Health and Human Services while serving as vice-president of the union. My father, Llewellyn Morris, worked as an organizer under AFSCME in 1986 in Wayne County for their Department of Health and Human Services and also negotiated their first contract as union president. My mentor teacher, Alan Rubinstein, was the president of the Canton Teachers’ Union and was arrested in 1977 for a peaceful strike, during the era when strikes were illegal. I have seen the pictures of peaceful teacher protestors being loaded up on school buses and taken to jail. Thirty-five years later, SB5 proposes the same restriction on workers’ rights by making striking illegal. We can’t let this happen again.

I am an English teacher and I teach the turn-of-the-century novel *Ragtime*, by Ohio-educated author E.L. Doctorow, about a time when 1% of the population controlled 90% of the nation’s wealth. Today that 1% controls 34% of that wealth and, if it is up to the proponents of SB5, that number will once again near 90%. We can’t let this happen again.

That is why we have to fight for ourselves as teachers and with our union brothers and sisters, in both the public and private sectors, for their rights to collectively bargain for better lives and a voice at the Statehouse and Capitol Hill. As Paul Krugman, Nobel Prize winning economist notes, "You don’t have to love unions; you don’t have to believe that their policy positions are always right, to recognize that they’re among the few influential players in our

political system representing the interests of middle- and working-class Americans, as opposed to the wealthy." We won't let our voices be silenced. We can't let this happen again.

I still have vivid memories of watching television and seeing Lech Walesa speaking to Soladarnosc during the 1981 general elections. My mom had me sit down and watch because these were "my people." Now I realize that she was not only speaking about our shared Polish ancestry but the idea that we held a common belief in the rights of working people. That's why we have to get this referendum on the ballot in November, drive SB5 into the garbage heap of history and continue to fight against anti-worker legislation during these next four years. To quote another great leader in our midst, State Senator Nina Turner, "we can't go back and we won't go back". Thank You. JM

Important Dates

Wednesday, April 20	SHTA Membership Meeting on the Tentative Agreement—Middle School Auditorium—4:15 p.m.
Friday, April 22	Good Friday No School
Wednesday, April 27	Vote on the Tentative Agreement
MAY 2 to MAY 6	TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK
Monday, May 2	SHTA Executive Board at Woodbury
Friday, May 6	SHTA Social--Bowling At Maple Heights Lanes.
Monday, May 9	SHTA Representative Council at Onaway
Tuesday, May 10	Board of Education Meeting at Admin.Bldg.
Monday, May 23	SHTA Elections—Officers, Representatives, Budget, and By-Law

[The election to office shall be determined by secret ballot on Monday during the last full week of May. By-Laws, page 5]

Mark your calendars—May 26, 2011

District Recognition Reception at the High School Cafeteria 3:45 p.m.

Monday, May 30	Memorial Day No School
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It's Back By Popular Demand!!!

Hope you can "SPARE" the time to "STRIKE" up
some fun at the

SHTA Spring Happy Hour.

Friday, May 06th

4:30 P.M.

Maple Heights Lanes

15809 Libby Road

Maple Heights, Ohio

Located between Lee Road and Broadway Avenue

There will be snacks and drinks before you "SPLIT"! So,
don't "STRIKE-OUT", see you there!!!!