SHTA news

OCTOBER 15, 2020

ISSUE NO. 2

IMPORTANT DATES

Tuesday, October 27th: B.O.E. Work Session

Monday, November 2nd: SHTA Executive Board meeting.

Tuesday, November 3th: ELECTION DAY

Monday, November 8th: SHTA Representative Council meeting @ Google Meet

Message From the President

I am outraged. Specifically, I am outraged at the district's legal counsel. Unfortunately, this is not a new experience. The district's present legal counsel, unlike the counsels of the past, has made nearly every interaction between the SHTA and the administration unnecessarily difficult. From putting members on extraordinarily long and restrictive extended administrative leaves to recommending draconian punishments for minor teacher behavioral infractions, to extending contract negotiations far beyond the typical time limits and mutually beneficial agreements. Over time, the district's law firm has become more antagonistic and disrespectful to our Association and its members. The disrespect is palpable when we meet with them. I reluctantly accept this. This can be part of the reality of the world organized labor exits within. Frustrations like these typically remain private and can be par for the course for unions. However, we are living in extraordinary times and the advice coming from the district's legal counsel is anything but typical.

The district's legal counsel is recommending that SHTA members cannot work from home as part of their COVID-19 American with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations, and that documented immunocompromised members not be allowed to use their earned sick days to avoid potentially contracting the virus. It is unconscionable. These are members who have documented illnesses that make them more susceptible to COVID-19, with or without masks and plexiglass barriers. These are not minor illnesses. The ADA accommodation requests have come from members anticipating organ transplants and expectant mothers with

compromised immune systems, among other conditions recognized by the federal government as eligible for ADA accommodations. The district, under the advisement of their legal counsel, is only giving immunocompromised members two decisions; either work in the school building with plexiglass and masks and risk contracting COVID-19, or take ***unpaid leave*** from home. Besides being shortsighted during a state and national substitute shortage, it is an inhumane policy decision and far from characteristic of the caring Shaker we have grown to know and love. Personally, I find the policy to be cold, calculated, and immoral.

We disagree with the district's position that, without a virtual academy, there are no opportunities for work-at home accommodations. Our position is that it is far more cost effective to allow adult supervisors to guide a room of students through virtual learning planned and delivered by immunocompromised classroom teachers who can instruct from home utilizing Google Classroom, their web cameras, and Chromebooks. It's much less expensive that finding certified teachers/substitutes to fill the positions vacated by teachers who cannot return. This was a position that the district previously indicated that it held in common with the SHTA, only recently to abruptly change course. Even though we were alarmed and disappointed by this last minute decision, this is a position that the SHTA and administration can disagree upon and collectively bargain through the contractually sanctioned channels of grievance and arbitration.

However, once the district's legal counsel recommends that teachers not be able to use the days that they have rightfully earned to protect and maintain their health, let alone the health of their loved ones (FMLA has been denied as well), we are in for a fight. And it's not one that should be left in the dark. We fund the hiring of substitutes through our negotiated sick days. When we need a substitute, it comes out of the daily rate we can be reimbursed for at the end of our career. We should be allowed to use these resources when need be. And when documented medical conditions, including doctor's recommendations that members remain at home, are not honored we have collectively failed the SHTA members of today and those who will enter our profession in Shaker Heights tomorrow. The stakes are simply too high to remain silent. In fact, silence at this point is complicity. The stakes are literally life and death for our members. We have no choice but to speak up.

My hope is that Dr. Glasner and the Board of Education will reflect on this legal advice and its real-life consequences for our members and realize how unethical this policy is. Without this change in direction and this denial of the claim to the rights we as SHTA members have earned, we will have to take further legal action on the part of our members. This may include a class action grievance, as well as the ***first time*** we have recommended U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) complaints be filed against the district in the history of our Association. These are remedies that we do not want to pursue, but we will. Let's hope it does not get to this point.

Otherwise, it's been an extraordinarily busy month. I attended all the voluntary SHTA building meetings with our Executive Board, PreK-12. I shared all questions with building administrators and district administration. We anticipate answers to be shared with buildings not later than October 14th. I spoke with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner, sometimes multiple times, each week. I communicated with our lawyer Susannah Muskovitz concerning legal and medical concerns. I spoke with HR Director Barb Maceyak about medical issues. I worked with Personal Rights and Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears on a leave issue. I communicated with Special Education Chairperson Tito Vazquez on Special Education issues. I worked with High School Head Representative James Schmidt on a contract issue and grievance. I consulted with Woodbury Head Representative Angela Goodrum on an air quality concern. I worked with Boulevard Head Representative Angela Anderson on an unresolved building issue. I updated the SHTA Facebook Page and Cuyahoga County Educators Summit Facebook Pages. I communicated with members concerning ADA applications and sick days. I met with the other district bargaining unit presidents. I worked on a class action grievance on the lack of notification concerning the COVID-19 diagnosis among Champions employees at Woodbury with PR&R/Grievance Chair Mike Sears. I asked Policy Chairperson Tim Kalan and Publicity Chairperson Bob

Bognar to spearhead meeting with single subject teachers to clarify their safety needs in reopening. I communicated with a member about their COVID-19 diagnosis at Woodbury. I communicated with Assistant Superintendent Dr. Marla Robinson and Director of Student Services Elizabeth Kimmel concerning the COVID-19 diagnosis. I discussed the COVID-19 diagnosis at Woodbury with Dr. Glasner. I met with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Marla Robinson, Chief Operating Officer Jeff Grosse, HR Director Barb Maceyak and other bargaining unit presidents to discuss health and safety issues in reopening. I will also go on a walk-through of our eight buildings with Jeff Grosse and Dr. Robinson, along with Mike Sears and Lisa Hardiman, to observe safety protocols in the buildings. I received the good news that Matt Zucca is returning to work from his medical leave but will remain on leave for the SHTA. Matt will, however, continue to work on SHTA Grant Applications and disbursements. Application should be coming out at the end of this week. Lisa Hardiman, thankfully, will continue to serve as interim Vice President

Working with The Shaker Heights Teachers' Association as President, even during this extremely difficult time, is among the most important elements of my life. I am honored and grateful for the support that I have received by The Executive Board and the support I have seen them give to our fellow members. I am also in awe of the humane and generous efforts of our Representatives, as well as the members of our Association. These are the people who are going to get us through this uncertain time, and I am strengthened by their persistence and faith in our union. If I can be of assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at morris_j@shaker.org or #6720.

Respectfully submitted,
John Morris

The SHTA is on   ***us @***
http://www.facebook.com/pages/Shaker-Heights-Teachers-Association

Reports from the Executive Board

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Fall has fallen! Along with cooler temperatures and vibrant colors, comes the SHTA Fellowship Grant. The Fellowship Grants are designed to promote professional development and can be used to pay for workshops, for payment of dues to professional organizations (except the SHTA), for journals, or professional materials. The winners are chosen in a random drawing. Forms will be shared with all members via email from Matt Zucca. Multiple entries will be disqualified and only members of the SHTA and the SHTA-ST are eligible to participate. Recipients will be awarded $100 each. Winners will be notified by district e-mail and their names published in the November newsletter.

I, along with others on the SHTA Executive Board, have been meeting with all eight of the schools' Association membership. We have been listening and gathering important information, questions, and concerns about reopening our school buildings during this world-wide pandemic. There are many teachers who are really scared to return to school and we have been working to communicate these concerns to administrators.

I also attended two pre-negotiations meetings along with other members of the contract negotiation team.

With Dr. John Morris and Michael Sears, I participated in tours of all school buildings, which were led by building principals.

The health and safety of our members is our number one priority. Do not hesitate to reach out to me or other members of the executive board or building representatives with any questions or concerns.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hardiman

TREASURER'S REPORT

At the September 22nd Board of Education meeting David Glasner, our Superintendent, said, *"We are currently in Level 2, or Orange. Earlier in the summer we were at a Level 3, or Red. In a Level 2, the reopening framework suggests that school districts consider ways to possibly expand in-person learning. We have been consistent about this as a district since the summer, when we aligned our own internal decision-making framework to the State Health Advisory Levels. And we said, I believe, as far back as July if not sooner that, if we return to a Level Orange or if we're placed in a Level Orange, that we as a School District will consider ways to possibly expand in-person learning. So, I just want to point out that this decision is consistent both with the reopening framework as well as the guidance that we shared over the summer. The Cuyahoga County Board of Health Reopening Framework provides four different scenarios. You'll see in Scenario Three and Scenario Four: Scenario Four is if we're in Purple - that would mean that we were all online; Scenario Three, if we return to a Level Three or Red, they recommend that the majority of students remain online except for students who may have special needs. We currently fall in Scenario Two. We've been Orange now for more than four weeks. We have a positivity rate under 5%. In this Scenario, the Cuyahoga County Board of Health provides a pathway for students returning in person. The Board of Health recommends the determination of a hybrid model with some students onsite, and* ***you'll see that our plan aligns with that.****"* [Underlining & bold - my emphasis]

There were over 400 community members virtually attending that live Board Meeting, and I'm guessing more community members have watched since that Tuesday evening. Some parents may have even, keeping an eye on the September 29th Online Enrollment Option deadline, watched it looking for guidance on how safe it was to

send their children back to school. The Shaker Heights City Schools Administration told parents their children were going to be kept safe according to the Level Two, Orange guidelines, listed below [directly from the CCBH (Cuyahoga County Board of Health) website]:

Scenario 2

Ohio Public Health Advisory System:
Orange for 4 weeks + Test positivity <5%[2]

No longer meeting Scenario 1

Learning Environment Considerations (Based on CDC Guidance*)

A Hybrid Learning Model can be considered in which **some** students participate in in-person learning while others participate in virtual learning:

- Cohorting into the smallest number of students and staff that is feasible, alternating schedules, and staggered schedules are applied rigorously
- No mixing of groups of students and teachers throughout/across school days
- Students and teachers do not share objects
- Students, teachers, and staff follow all steps to protect themselves and others at all times including proper use of facial coverings, social distancing, and hand hygiene
- Aggressive (meaning between uses) cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched areas based on CDC recommendations
- All of these items should be strictly implemented

Consideration for specific age groups†

Virtual learning may be the best option for Grades 6-12 if the Learning Environment considerations shown above cannot be fully met.

Onsite temperature and symptom screening for students attending in-person[4]

Not recommended.

Contact tracing

The school actively participates in contact tracing with the goal of contacting all cases within 24 hours if possible.[1]

We teachers have been told parts of the reopening plans, some of which violate more than one of the bullet points listed above. The Administration seems to have three choices:

1. Adjust their reopening plans to stringently follow the guideline: “All of these items should be strictly implemented”.
2. Inform the community that, in a district our size, it is not physically possible to get students into the buildings while following the CCBH Scenario Two guidelines. Therefore, virtual learning remains the best option for our students.
3. Inform the community that we originally said we were going to follow these CCBH Scenario Two guidelines but, because of limitations, are not able to meet all these Learning Environment Considerations.

Any other option would not be transparent.

On Tuesday, October 6th the Investments Committee, made up of myself, Chante Thomas, and Todd Keitlen, met with Brady Krebs, our Edward Jones advisor. The Investments Committee meets a minimum of twice a year, once in the Fall and once in the Spring, to review our investments and decide on any changes.
A full financial report will be included in November's newsletter. If anyone has any questions about our Association's finances, please give me a call (216-333-2627).

Just a final note that I can't end without saying: November 3rd is quickly approaching. Please do everything you can to support the candidate you think will be best for our country. I have yard signs up, I have sent postcards to registered voters, I've signed up to volunteer on election day. This election sure feels like the most important decision our country has ever faced. Come November 4th, I don't want to be saying "I wish I would have…"

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Scanlon

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES REPORT

Our professional right to a safe and healthy work environment is at risk as we return to school buildings this week that may place us "in imminent danger of death or serious harm" (see 18.11, p. 20, of our contract).

On September 16, 2020, Dr. Glasner sent us this email message:

Dear Shaker Heights Schools Staff,

Cuyahoga County continues to experience a significant decline in positivity rates and positive cases of COVID-19 and has remained at Level 2 (Orange) for more than four weeks. As a result, we are planning for a phased-in return to in-person and hybrid learning formats for Shaker students beginning at the end of the first quarter, in late October. **This plan matches the recently released Reopening Framework from the Cuyahoga County Board of Health.** A remote learning option will remain available for students who are unable to attend in-person.
Here is a section of the Reopening Framework from the Cuyahoga County Board of Health when the Ohio Public Health Advisory System is at a Level 2 (Orange) for a county:
Learning Environment Considerations (Based on CDC Guidance*)
A Hybrid Learning Model can be considered in which some students participate in in-person learning while others participate in virtual learning:

- **Cohorting into the smallest number of students and staff that is feasible, alternating schedules, and staggered schedules are applied rigorously**
- **No mixing of groups of students and teachers throughout/across school days**
- **Students and teachers do not share objects**
- Students, teachers, and staff follow all steps to protect themselves and others at all times including proper use of facial coverings, social distancing, and hand hygiene
- Aggressive (meaning between uses) cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched areas based on CDC recommendations
- All of these items should be strictly implemented

Virtual learning may be the best option for Grades 6-12 if the Learning Environment considerations shown above cannot be fully met.
Does the reopening plan in your building "match" this framework?

Since July, I worked with John Morris and other members of the Executive Board to help members seek an ADA accommodation to work remotely if they have a medical condition that puts them at greater risk from COVID-19. When the school year started remotely, all these requests were approved. When it was announced that teachers needed to report to work on October 12, all these requests were approved again. Teachers who are most at risk for serious illness and death from COVID-19 have now submitted documentation from doctors, communicated with Human Resources several times, and had private meetings with HR to discuss their accommodations. While they were told that working remotely was a "temporary" accommodation, we all believed that meant "during the pandemic". Last week, these most at risk members of our Association received emails asking them to schedule yet another meeting with HR. John Morris and I believed these meetings were scheduled to discuss the specific work each teacher would be doing remotely. We never would have imagined that these ADA accommodation requests to work remotely that had already been approved twice might now be denied. Unfortunately, they are being denied over and over and over again.

Not only are they being denied, HR is telling members that their only options are to physically return to their schools to work or take an unpaid leave of absence without benefits. There are legal precedents and guidance from both the United States Department of Labor and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission that contradict this guidance. An employer may extend their sick leave policies to allow employees with temporary disabilities to use sick days as a "reasonable accommodation." FMLA should also apply here, allowing employees to keep their benefits for up to 12 weeks (60 working days) if they miss work for a medical reason.

Members have also been told it would be an "undue hardship" for the school district to hire a licensed teacher to physically be present in a classroom while someone else teaches the class remotely. If this is considered a financial hardship, it need not be. A licensed teacher is not required to work in a classroom while another teacher teaches the class remotely. A paraprofessional could fill that role. Without the accommodation to teach remotely, many teachers will choose to take unpaid leaves of absence to protect themselves. The real hardship will be trying to hire enough qualified substitutes to fill these positions.

Other districts chose to allow teachers with disabilities to work remotely, and even found ways to make this work well for students. For example, in Hudson there are 3rd grade teachers with disabilities running a virtual academy for all the 3rd graders who chose to learn at home because of the pandemic. This type of model was discussed over the summer, and parents had the option of registering for the Shaker Virtual Academy in July. Suddenly in September, a decision was made to cancel the academy and try a concurrent teaching model. Hover cams were ordered and fingers are crossed that the district's bandwidth can accommodate all of us live streaming from the buildings at once. ***Teachers were not a part of this process.***

It seems likely that students who are learning at home now will have had a better experience than what they will receive beginning October 26. With distancing and mask wearing requirements, students will not be able to engage in the type of learning activities we can normally provide for them when we meet in person. It will be more difficult for students to hear us because of our masks. We will not be able to provide as much attention to our students in the classroom because we will also be responsible for checking in with the students at home. Just as we have entered a routine with online learning from home, students will have that routine disrupted as they adjust to another routine in the coming weeks. We were originally told remote learning would last for one semester, yet here we are bringing students back before the 1st quarter has even ended. At best, the reopening plans are incomplete. At worst, they are irresponsible.

In the past month, I have:

- Assisted members with questions about ADA accommodations requests, FFCRA options, FMLA, maternity leave, working remotely, personal protective equipment, health and safety protocols, guidelines from the Cuyahoga County Board of Health, and plans for substitutes
- Met with Director of Human Resources Barbara Maceyak and Treasurer Bryan Christman about both a personnel matter and FFCRA options
- Attended a Negotiations Committee meeting to plan for upcoming collective bargaining
- Represented a member in a fact-finding meeting with an administrator
- Worked on an informal grievance at the Middle School about schedule changes, Pod champions expectations, and improving communication
- Worked on a grievance regarding timely communications of positive COVID-19 tests on the school district dashboard

Respectfully submitted,
Mike Sears, Chairperson

SPECIAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

This past month I attended and participated in the SHTA Executive Board meeting. I Interacted, communicated and collaboratively solved various concerns with the Director of Exceptional Children Elizabeth Kimmel in our monthly virtual meetings, including multiple phone conversations on a weekly basis. I Provided support to various SHTA members concerning issues including but not limited to COVID-19, job placement, personnel issues and work options. I communicated with SHTA President Dr. John Morris over various district wide Exceptional Children concerns. I have communicated with Director of Exceptional Elizabeth Kimmel on a possible disciplinary issue with SHTA members. I participated in ongoing conversations and meetings with administration concerning problem solving and ensuring the safe early return at Lomond Elementary, Shaker Middle School and Shaker Heights High School. I participated in various meetings with Intervention Specialist and Shaker administration concerning the return to Face to Face Instruction, what that looks like and SHTA member PPE expectations. I provided information concerning options for medical conditions such as ADA alternate job placement, FMLA, and Leave of Absence to various SHTA members. I worked collaboratively with SHHS Assistant Principal Ms. Jacquelyn Baker on various issues to improve the functionality and streamlining various forms and information to make the daily requirements of the Intervention Specialist more efficient and less time consuming. Ms. Baker should be duly noted for her efforts and support to the Exceptional Children department at SHHS. I participated in the interview committee for the new district parent advocate.

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

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Vote. One consequence of the electoral college is that you are one of the relatively small group of voters that could actually influence the presidential election. A vote from an Ohioan is 1000 times more likely to decide this election than a vote from Wyoming or Massachusetts. If you want to affect the legislation that affects schools, then ***vote***.

EdWeek has a nice feature on the Presidential election: you can read the views of both candidates on many issues in education.

The National Education Association has broken down the issues that are especially important to teachers. Their page breaks things down by issues, by candidates, and more.

The American Federation of Teachers is pressing the Occupational Safety and Health Administration(OSHA) to more enforce standards that could protect teachers at work.

ChalkBeat is reporting on the difficulty teachers are having teaching in-person and remote students at the same time.

If you have ideas about where I should get the latest legislative news, please let me know.

Respectfully submitted,
David Klapholz, Chairperson

EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Greetings. Over the last month, I have taken part in numerous meetings across the district to address our current teaching and learning and the plans for moving to in-person instruction. I have also continued work with Barb Maceyak and other evaluation committee members on evaluation concerns and communications.

Principals have been provided with an evaluation slide deck to guide presentations and discussions about evaluation. Please view the slides here. This information and opportunity for discussion should take place as soon as possible. Most of the evaluation process and requirements are consistent with the last few years, but there are some important changes for this year.

- Student Growth Measures (SGM) will not be used towards your final rating. 100% of your rating will be derived from the Performance Rubric based on observations, "walk-throughs", conferencing with your evaluator, and other evidence of your practice that you choose to share.
- We have chosen to eliminate the January Formative document.
- The due date for the Annual Professional Growth Plan was delayed to October 31. ***Please be sure to upload your completed APGP to eTPES by this date!***
- You and your evaluator may choose to use recordings of your teaching for observation purposes. This will be especially important in fully remote teaching spaces and those with a large number of students and/or other adults. Peer evaluators may also have more difficulty scheduling observations due to our lack of planning time during the school day.
- Evaluations this year should be done with consideration of the stressful, complicated, never-before-experienced situation we are in. Teachers should expect and receive a certain amount of "grace" and evaluators should serve as a support and a resource.

All of these items have been discussed and agreed upon by the full Evaluation Committee. Please contact any committee member with any questions or concerns regarding these modifications to the process.

I have also inquired with Barb Maceyak about evaluations for teachers who are not currently in their regular roles, such as preK-4 Single Subject Teachers and Skills Teachers. I would like to make sure that all teachers are evaluated as fairly and reasonably as possible. Please contact any Evaluation Committee member if you feel that this year's change in assignment may make an evaluation challenging.

I am thankful for the level of collaboration that has characterized most of the work of the Evaluation Committee over the last many years. We have worked to modify OTES, create documents, develop processes, and discuss evaluation in the district that both meets state mandates and reflect our goals for growth. I have spent many fruitful hours doing this important work and highly respect the members of the Committee who have engaged in this level of true collaboration and professionalism. I have had many other such experiences of true collaboration over my 21 years in the district, both with other educators and with administrators.

Unfortunately, I have also experienced what I like to call "fauxlaboration". While this word can only be found in the Urban Dictionary, it is a reality we should all be aware of and develop an ability to call-out. As an example, I will share an experience that occurred more than 15 years ago. As a kindergarten teacher, I attended a meeting held by members of administration to review programs to teach early reading skills. What ensued was a pitch for one program. When I asked if this had already been decided, it was reluctantly admitted that yes, we would be buying this program. Many thousands of dollars were spent on teaching materials that were then left in closets to collect dust. The teachers were not actually consulted. The meeting served to look like teachers were included in the decision-making process. This is "fauxlaboration".

This past summer, I spent dozens of hours consulting with other teachers and administrators to develop a plan for teaching and learning in the fall. We all agreed that teachers could not possibly teach students in-person and remotely simultaneously. We all agreed that it would not be safe to have large numbers of students in the same room for 6 plus hours a day during a pandemic where a deadly illness is airborne. We all agreed that there

would be many teachers who we need to protect from this illness by keeping them at home and having them support students who are learning remotely. These seemed to be the foundational understandings from which we worked hour after hour. We had plans for grade levels to have designated virtual teachers. We thought through various hybrid schedules that would limit numbers of students sharing classroom space. We committed to being flexible to allow for high-risk colleagues to be able to work from home.

You can understand my shock and confusion when the administration revealed their real plan for the return to in-person teaching and learning. One of my colleagues with whom I toiled for all of those hours referred to the turnaround as "sneaky". I understand that there are times when administration and those with decision making power must make choices that aren't supported by those they affect. That being said, they should be honest and not say these decisions were made collaboratively. I have yet to find a teacher who does not agree with the foundational understandings referred to above. Yet, we will be teaching in-person and remotely simultaneously. Many of us have more than 15 students who will be in our classrooms all day, many with less than 6 feet of social distance. Others are being told to teach several groups of students over the course of a single day. And, saddest of all, there are individuals who have clear health reasons why they should not return to in-person teaching who are facing the choice of exposure or leave without pay or health coverage. Teachers have not "signed off" and are extremely concerned about these items and many others. We have been told that this is the plan and that when we resist and question we are the ones not being collaborative.

I know there is capacity for true collaboration in our district. I know there is a need, for the sake of our students and the future of this district and educational community, for true collaboration. My hope is that there is still a seed of trust that we can grow to support it.

Respectfully submitted,
Lena Paskewitz, Chairperson

PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This month I attended meetings (via Zoom/Google Meets): The Board of Education September work session, the October meeting of the Finance and Audit Committee, and (by the time you receive this Newsletter) the October regular meeting of the Board of Education. I also reviewed past board agendas on Board Docs to gather information for the SHTA Membership Committee as well as the Teacher Education Committee.

I hope my activities provide support for the members and leadership team of the SHTA. Thank you for allowing me to continue to assist you

Respectfully submitted,
Becky Thomas, Chairperson

LEGAL AID COMMITTEE

Legal Aid is here to assist you if you are in need of legal assistance when your rights within the contract are broken. Enacting Legal Aid does not happen often. With the events of the past few weeks, I can't help but wonder how long it will be until the infraction of our rights within the contract are broken and we will need to vote to enact legal aid for an SHTA member.

Beyond our contractual rights, I am disappointed in the inhumane way some of our teachers are being treated. I don't know why it is okay to offer ADA leave and then rescind that leave, adding stress to an already stressed teacher who is trying to do what is best for her/his health and continue on teaching. This is happening to many of our members. I know of other local school districts who are allowing teachers with medical issues to work from home. These districts have found a way by having those teachers work with remote students. They have put a

system into place to accommodate teachers without making them jump through hoops and have to fight for what is right. These districts are trying to do what is best for the teachers along with the students. This is humane, caring and kind. In this stressful time, we all should be striving for high standards of humanity and kindness.

This month, I attended most of the building meetings with the Executive Board. I went to Boulevard to discuss the new nurse's office with Bill Scanlon, Paula Klausner and Janet Meinhard.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cathy Grieshop

POLICY COMMITTEE

As policy chair, my responsibilities relate to our Association's constitution. Every newsletter I highlight a section from our constitution to help our membership understand how we function. Because of the unprecedented challenges facing our members, and our imminent return to buildings, I have decided that this month I am going to depart from the norm in order to highlight a pertinent section of our contractual agreement with the district:

18.11 Occupational Safety and Health Section (b) states: *Before exercising the right to refuse to work under Section 4167.06 of the Revised Code*
because of a condition which the employee, acting in good faith, reasonably believes
presents an imminent danger of death or serious harm to the employee, the Association
and/or the bargaining unit member will immediately notify his/her supervisor of the
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condition. The employee may be temporarily reassigned while the condition is being
investigated and/or corrected.

If anyone feels they are being subjected unreasonably to unsafe working conditions contrary to the guidance of our Cuyahoga County Board of Health, you have the right to inform your supervisor and refuse that particular assignment. Please contact James Schmidt (schmidt_j@shaker.org) with any questions or concerns relating to your responsibilities on our in-person return to buildings.

Respectfully submitted,
Tim Kalan, Chairperson

MEMBERSHIP/ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

If you pay your dues by payroll deduction, SHTA dues will have automatically begun with the first paycheck in October. ($33 per pay x 10 pays = $330) For those of you who like to pay your dues in full by check, thank you for paying your dues so promptly this year.

Membership forms only need to be completed by NEW MEMBERS, or as a current member you wish to CHANGE your form of payment and SIGN UP FOR PAYROLL DEDUCTION. This form can be found at http://www.shtaweb.org/.

The 2020-2021 Representative Council Elected Members are:
Boulevard- **Angela Anderson**, Jennifer Goulden, alt
Onaway- **Paula Klausner**
Fernway- **Victoria Goldfarb**, Andree Hassell (alt)
Lomond- **Donita Al Amin**, Jill DiPiero, Steve Smith

Mercer- **Nicole Ciconetti**, Cathy Richards, alt
Woodbury- **Angela Goodrum**, Stacey DeYoung, Aquita Shephard, Lee Appel (alt)
Middle School- **John Koppitch**, Linda Roth, Erika Pfeiffer (alt)
High School – **James Schmidt**, Brian Berger, Aimee Grey, Jessica O'Brien, Joel Rathbone (alt), Keith Szalay, Tod Torrence, Enid Vazquez
SHTA ST – **Margaret "Peg" Rimedio**

Respectfully submitted,
Chante Thomas-Taylor, Chairperson

NEW TEACHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

New teachers will receive a letter from me with important information concerning our contract. Please take a look at this information. If you have not done so already, please consider joining the Association.

If you have been hired with a teacher contract for the 2020-2021 school year, and were formerly a substitute teacher, paraprofessional, or in some other position in the district, you are eligible to join SHTA. We encourage you to become a member. If you need a form, please contact me or Chante Thomas at your earliest convenience. thomas_c@shaker.org hardiman_l@shaker.org

Please remember that my role with SHTA is not only to assist new teachers and mentors. I am also available to any teachers who are on a non-continuing contract. If there are questions or concerns, I can be reached through my district email (hardiman_l@shaker.org) or by phone at Mercer (216-295-4867).

The Tuition Reimbursement forms are due Tuesday, **December 1, 2020.** Coursework taken for credit and completed during the calendar year of 2020 should be submitted for tuition reimbursement. Make sure the form is submitted by this deadline to the Human Resources department. Receipts and transcripts can be turned in at the same time or later.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hardiman, Chairperson

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

As public relations chairperson, I am currently working on putting together the merit scholarship congratulatory ad for *Shaker Life* magazine.

I've also distributed SHTA, American made and union printed masks to each building for each member. These masks will be distributed to each member along with five fabric filter inserts. I plan on wearing my SHTA mask over my N 95 mask on Fridays.

I attended all eight of the SHTA building meetings. I'm currently working on an editorial that will be posted in this issue of the SHTA newsletter. I also met with single subject K-4 teachers regarding safety.

I want to make three requests to all the members. Please always wear a mask. People are in real danger and it is up to us to keep them safe. If you have any of the symptoms listed on the COVID-19 checklist, notify your building administrator that you have COVID-19 symptoms and go seek medical attention. Demonstrate solidarity by supporting each-other's health. If we all commit to these requests, we may all live to teach another day.

Respectfully Submitted,
Robert Bognar, Chairperson

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Due to COVID-19, I have not been able to perform all of my regular duties for the Association. I will now send well wishes and correspondence to teachers and support teachers who become sick with COVID-19. So far, we have had one teacher become ill with COVID-19 this school year.

Over the last month I met with the SHTA Executive Board and all eight schools to discuss their concerns about in person schooling and attempt to address them so that teachers feel safe and that their voices are heard during this scary pandemic.

Respectfully submitted,
Selena Boyer, Chairperson

SUPPORT TEACHERS COMMITTEE

I worked on a contract issue and communicated with a support teacher who was told she was not approved for a computer because she was a "tutor." She did eventually get it. Just a reminder, Support Teachers are not "tutors." That label disappeared five years ago. If you hear that term, please correct the error.

Skills Teachers are often assigned to substitute in classes that need coverage. Please keep careful records when that happens so that you are appropriately compensated. Mistakes have happened. I keep track on my task list and mark it paid when it is paid.

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret "Peg" Rimedio, Chairperson

SHTA PAC

I continue to update the PAC FaceBook page with articles pertaining to education and unions. Please share any articles with me which you feel should be posted.

Check out the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers websites to read about the November election and how it will affect teachers and education.

The election is around the corner. Get your vote in early!

Respectfully Submitted,
Cathy Grieshop, Chairperson

HEALTH & OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY COMMITTEE

I continue to monitor the CDC and CCBH websites for guidance and recommendations for schools. I received a copy of the District's HVAC report from Heapy and continue to review it for recommendations. We would like to know if the improvements in filtration for existing systems and the HEPA Room Air purifiers that Mr. Grosse spoke about during the Finance and Audit Committee Meeting on October 8, 2020 will be in place prior to teachers returning to the building?

I have been reading the ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers) guidance on HVAC information for schools, including guidance on nurses' clinics and general HVAC filtration guidelines.

I am hopeful that our administration continues to meet the expectation from our Superintendent's email on September 16th that our return to in person instruction "plan matches the recently released Reopening Framework from the Cuyahoga County Board of Health." The 6 main bullet points from this plan at Level 2 are:

- Cohorting into the smallest number of students and staff that is feasible, alternating schedules, and staggered schedules are applied rigorously
- No mixing of groups of students and teachers throughout/across school days
- Students and teachers do not share objects
- Students, teachers, and staff follow all steps to protect themselves and others at all times including proper use of facial coverings, social distancing, and hand hygiene
- Aggressive (meaning between uses) cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched areas based on CDC recommendations
- All of these items should be strictly implemented

I continue to remind teachers that we have language in our contract designed to protect us from unsafe work conditions. A reminder that Section 18.11 Occupational Safety and Health states:

a. The parties desire to deal with safety and health complaints internally to attempt to correct any alleged problems. Where either the SHTA or any bargaining unit member has a safety or health complaint, the administration must be notified of the complaint. If after three (3) business days, the complaint has not been satisfactorily addressed, a complaint may be filed with the Ohio Department of Industrial Relations under Chapter 4167.

b. Before exercising the right to refuse to work under Section 4167.06 of the Revised Code because of a condition which the employee, acting in good faith, reasonably believes presents an imminent danger of death or serious harm to the employee, the Association and/or the bargaining unit member will immediately notify his/her supervisor of the condition. The employee may be temporarily reassigned while the condition is being investigated and/or corrected.

This means that if your classroom or working conditions present a hazardous or dangerous condition, that you believe, in good faith, will present "imminent danger of death or serious harm to" you, you must notify your supervisor and give them a chance to remedy the situation or reassign you to another workspace.

Respectfully Submitted,
James Schmidt, Chairperson

SALARY TENURE COMMITTEE

We have filed SERB paperwork to initiate negotiations on September 30th.
The negotiations team will meet again this week to prepare.
The district has expressed intent to pursue Interest Based Bargaining (IBB) facilitated by the Federal Conciliation and Mediation Service (FCMS) out of Independence.
SHTA and the district have agreed on a facilitator.
We are waiting to confirm a meeting time this month.

Respectfully Submitted.
Dr. John L. Morris, Chairperson

MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING
October 12, 2020, @ Remote Meet

SHTA President, John Morris started the October 12, 2020 Rep. Council Meeting at 4:30P.M.

Chris Hayward, Principal of Fernway Elementary School welcomed SHTA membership to the Virtual Fernway Meeting. Thank you for joining the entire community and entire world for trying to move forward with educating our children in a really tough situation. Seeing the work that teachers are doing and the positive feedback from families, it is truly phenomenal. Teachers are in the trenches, doing the hard work. Can't thank you enough and welcome to the new school year.

MINUTES from the September 14, 2020 Rep. Council meeting were approved. Motion to approve the minutes made by Jessica O'Brien and seconded by Aimee Grey.

Administration Report
Director of Human Resources, Barbara Maceyak
Six situations that will qualify you for Family's First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)
Contraction of COVID-19:

- If you, yourself contract COVID-19, you have two weeks with Emergency Paid Sick Leave. At 100% of your salary up to $511 a day. If you make more than that per diem, you will be able to supplement that with sick leave.
- If someone in your family or you come in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 and you are directed by a health care provider to quarantine during that time. You are eligible for 100% for the first two weeks or up to $511.
- Local Epidemic you qualify for 100%

Childcare

- The first two weeks you would get ⅔ of your pay or up to $200 and you can supplement with your sick leave. The following 10 weeks because with childcare, you get up to 12 weeks, would be at ⅔ of your pay or up to $200 and you cannot supplement it with your sick leave.

This only goes up to December 31, 2020, it may change but right now this is the date.

P.T.O. Report
Sarah Divakarla

- The new PTO website which is shakerpto.org has membership registration for faculty. Mostly families in it but if you want to register, see the directory and get emails from PTO, you can register as faculty.
- PTO has been working with FACE to get updated Volunteer Protocols. Volunteers will be background checked and used virtually.
- PTO Council will be looking at how we fundraise around the district, how we raise money and allocate money. Faculty staff interested in how money is distributed or raised, please email ptocouncilpres@gmail.com. We are getting a group together to look at that.

Officer's Report
President, John Morris

- I attended all the voluntary SHTA building meetings with our Executive Board, PreK-12.
- I shared all questions with building administrators and district administration. We anticipate answers to be shared with buildings not later than October 14th.
- I spoke with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner, sometimes multiple times, each week.
- I communicated with our lawyer Susannah Muskovitz concerning legal and medical concerns.
- I spoke with HR Director Barb Maceyak about medical issues.
- I worked with Personal Rights and Responsibilities Chair Mike Sears on a leave issue.
- I communicated with Special Education Chair Tito Vazquez on Special Education issues.

- I worked with High School Head Representative James Schmidt on a contract issue and grievance.
- I consulted with Woodbury Head Representative Angela Goodrum on an air quality concern.
- I worked with Boulevard Head Representative Angela Anderson on an unresolved building issue.
- I updated the SHTA Facebook Page and Cuyahoga County Educators Summit Facebook Pages.
- I communicated with members concerning ADA applications and sick days.
- I met with the other district bargaining unit presidents.
- I worked on a class action grievance on the lack of notification concerning the COVID diagnosis among Champions employees at Woodbury with PR&R/Grievance Chair Mike Sears.
- I asked Policy Chair Tim Kalan and Publicity Chair Bob Bognar to spearhead meeting with single subject teachers to clarify their safety needs in reopening.
- I communicated with a member about their COVID diagnosis at Woodbury.
- I communicated with Assistant Superintendent Dr. Marla Robinson and Director of Student Services Elizabeth Kimmel concerning the COVID diagnosis.
- I discussed the COVID diagnosis at Woodbury with Dr. Glasner.
- I met with Superintendent Dr. David Glasner, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Marla Robinson, Chief Operating Officer Jeff Grosse, HR Director Barb Maceyak and other bargaining union presidents to discuss health and safety issues in reopening.
- I will also go on a walk-through of our eight buildings with Jeff Grosse and Dr. Robinson, along with Mike Sears and Lisa Hardiman, to observe safety protocols in the buildings.
- I received the good news that Matt Zucca is returning to work from his medical leave but will remain on leave for the SHTA. Matt will, however, continue to work on SHTA Grant Applications and disbursements. Application should be coming out at the end of this week. Lisa Hardiman, thankfully, will continue to serve as interim Vice President.

Interim Vice President, Lisa Hardiman

- Communicating with members about the SHTA Fellowship Grant. Matt Zucca will be handling the Fellowship Grant from this point on. He will be handing out information about this year's grant.
- I attended all 8 Executive Board meetings with members in all the buildings.
- I talked to a few members who are concerned with returning to school and obtaining leave through HR.
- I attended a Pre-negotiations meeting.
- I will be doing a walk-through of the buildings tomorrow with John Morris.

Secretary, Darlene Garrison

- Please be sure to place a check showing that you are in attendance for the October Rep. Council meeting and place your initials in the last column
- Attended 8 Executive Board Meetings at each school to gather questions and answers about the reopening of school.
- Attended the Pre-negotiations meeting with the committee
- Continuing to take notes for Rep. Council meetings
- Answered questions for members concerning the start of school on October 26th.

Treasurer, Bill Scanlon

- Attended individual building meetings about reopening
- Meet with Chante Thomas, Todd Keitlen with Edward Jones Advisor Brady Krebs. Talked about Investments.
- Went to Boulevard to see the clinic.
- Paying bills for the Association, keeping an eye on the books and normal treasurer items.

Executive Board Reports

Past President, Becky Thomas

- Attended the Board of Education September Work Session meeting.
- Attended the Finance and Audit meeting.
- Will attend the Board of Education meeting tomorrow - Regular Meeting

Teacher Education, Lisa Hardiman

- Process of gathering information contractual and important dates for new members.
- Communicating with Becky and Chante, thank you for your help. Finding information about new teachers who may or may not be temporary to possibly join SHTA.

Membership/Elections, Chante Thomas

- I attended all reopening meetings
- Attended the investment meeting with Bill Scanlon and Todd Keitlen
- Collecting dues, recording them and passing them on to Bill
- Payroll deduction started on October 01st.
- Send new members my way so that I can share a form with them to join SHTA
- Thank you for looking at the membership rosters and giving me your input.

Policy, Tim Kalan

- No Report

Public Relations, Bob Bognar

- Put together the Merit Scholarship Advertisement in Shaker Life Magazine.
- I have distributed all the masks to give out to our members.
    - In your bag, there should be enough masks for each member along with 5 filters.
    - Any extras, please send back to me at Woodbury.
- Attended all 8 meetings at the different buildings.
- Working on an editorial.
- Met with single-subject teachers at the K-4 buildings.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Angela Goodrum

- Opportunity to participate in a *Jack and Jill* panel discussion for Shaker Heights Teachers' Union and it was awesome.
- It was enlightening to speak with children from Chicago to Brooklyn. There was one of our own in attendance.
- Nice to be able to represent such a great organization such as ours.

Legislative, Dave Klapholz

- ***Vote.*** One consequence of the electoral college is that you are one of the relatively small group of voters that could actually influence the presidential election. A vote from an Ohioan is 1000 times more likely to decide this election than a vote from Wyoming or Massachusetts. If you want to affect the legislation that affects schools, then ***vote***.
- EdWeek has a nice feature on the Presidential election: you can read the views of both candidates on many issues in education.
- The National Education Association has broken down the issues that are especially important to teachers. Their page breaks things down by issues, by candidates, and more.
- The American Federation of Teachers is pressing OSHA (The Occupational Safety and Health Administration) to more enforce standards that could protect teachers at work.
- ChalkBeat is reporting on the difficulty teachers are having teaching in-person and remote students at the same time.

- If you have ideas about where I should get the latest legislative news, please let me know.

Support Teachers, Peg Rimedio

- Worked on a contract issue and communicated with a Support Teacher who was told that she was not approved for a computer. She did get it,
- Reminder that Support Teachers are not tutors. That label disappeared 5 years ago.
- Skills teachers are often asked to sub in classes. Please keep careful records when that happens.

Publications, Andrew Glasier

- Emailed membership multiple times
- Updated email lists
- Updated Facebook & Twitter
- Updated SHTAweb.org
- Have gone to many of buildings meetings
- Editorial from Bob Bognar
- Looking for Pictures of Classrooms out of Cuyahoga County Board of Health violations. Please email to glasier_a@shaker.org & Schmidt_j@shaker.org
- Blurb due October 13th

Social, Selena Brown

- Attended Executive Board sessions at the different schools.
- Trying to support teachers as we enter back into in-person learning.

Legal Aid, Cathy Grieshop

- I attended the executive board meetings with the buildings.
- I met with Bill Scanlon and Paula Klausner to look at the Boulevard Nurse's office.

PAC, Cathy Grieshop

- Updated FB Page

Professional Rights and Responsibilities, Mike Sears

- Helped members with questions about ADA accommodations requests, FFCRA options, maternity leave, working remotely, plans for substitutes, Cuyahoga County Board of Health guidelines, personal protective equipment, and health and safety protocols.

Evaluation, Lena Paskewitz

- All staff should be hearing about OTES in the next couple of weeks from the building administrator or evaluation committee representative. They will talk about what OTES will look like this year.
- We will not have Student Growth Measures this year.
- Staying with 1.0 and Professional Growth Plans should be completed and uploaded to eTPES by the end of October.
- Shout out to Barb Maceyak, she has been collaborative with me and the committee. Thank you, Barb.

Special Education, Tito Vazquez

- Various meetings with Director of Exceptional Children, Elizabeth Kimmel on concerns with Exceptional Students returning for face-to face instruction at Shaker Middle School and Shaker High School.
- Collaborated with Shaker Heights High School assistant principal, concerning efforts to streamline special education forms and information into one site, one folder.
- Communicated with SHTA President, John Morris on district wide concerns dealing with exceptional children.
- Participated in interviews for intervention specialists throughout the district.
- Attended Executive Board Meeting at the High School.
- Participated in meeting with Lomond administration, district administration, SHTA member and Eileen Sweeney about return of students in the behavior unit at Lomond.
- Participated in interviews for new parent advocate.
- Participated in meetings to discuss the increase of current students in schools Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Occupational Health and Safety, James Schmidt

- I continue to monitor the CDC and CCBH websites for guidance and recommendations for schools.
- I received a copy of the District's HVAC report from Heapy and continue to review it for recommendations. We would like to know if the improvements in filtration for existing systems and the HEPA Room Air purifiers that Mr. Grosse spoke about during the Finance and Audit Committee Meeting on 10/8 will be in place prior to teachers returning to the building?
- I have been reading the ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers) guidance on HVAC information for schools, including guidance on nurses' clinics and general HVAC filtration guidelines.
- I am hopeful that our administration continues to meet the expectation from our superintendent's email on September 16th that our return to in person instruction "plan matches the recently released Reopening Framework from the Cuyahoga County Board of Health." The 6 main bullet points from this plan at Level 2 are:
    - Cohorting into the smallest number of students and staff that is feasible, alternating schedules, and staggered schedules are applied rigorously
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    - Students and teachers do not share objects
    - Students, teachers, and staff follow all steps to protect themselves and others at all times including proper use of facial coverings, social distancing, and hand hygiene
    - Aggressive (meaning between uses) cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched areas based on CDC recommendations
    - All of these items should be strictly implemented
- I continue to remind teachers that we have language in our contract designed to protect us from unsafe work conditions. A reminder that Section 18.11 Occupational Safety and Health states:

    a. The parties desire to deal with safety and health complaints internally to attempt to correct any alleged problems. Where either the SHTA or any bargaining unit member has a safety or health complaint, the administration must be notified of the complaint. If after three (3) business days, the complaint has not been satisfactorily addressed, a complaint may be filed with the Ohio Department of Industrial Relations under Chapter 4167.

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This means that if your classroom or working conditions present a hazardous or dangerous condition, that you believe, in good faith, will present "imminent danger of death or serious harm to" you, you must notify your supervisor and give them a chance to remedy the situation or reassign you to another workspace.

Salary-Tenure, John Morris

- We have filed SERB paperwork to initiate negotiations on September 30th.
- The district has expressed intent to pursue Interest Based Bargaining (IBB) facilitated by the Federal Conciliation and Mediation Service (FCMS) out of Independence.
- SHTA and the district have agreed on a facilitator.
- We are waiting to confirm a meeting time this month.

Building Representative Reports

Boulevard, Angela Anderson

- Principal has been very helpful in meeting with me to facilitate any concerns before bringing them to the SHTA
- District concern whether they can provide us with a live meeting with regards to safety protocol for staff and teachers. Like the webinar they did today for the concurrent teaching.
- Teachers are overwhelmed with the feeling that they don't have enough time to plan for the reopening of school. Two days is not enough time.

Fernway, Victoria Goldfarb

- Set-up meeting for Fernway and SHTA Executive Board to discuss concerns about the reopening of school.
- I have been in close communication with our building administrator. We have been working collaboratively together solving concerns and issues for Fernway. Principal Chris Hayward has been very supportive and helpful throughout this process.

Lomond, Donita Al Amin

- Principal George Clark has also been very helpful, they have been working tirelessly, he and assistant principal Tina McCauley to try to address concerns brought up by our members.
- We held a meeting regarding member concerns and shared questions & concerns with building administrators.
- Meeting scheduled today for clarification.

Mercer, Nicole Cicconetti

- Set-up meeting for Mercer with Executive Board.
- Met with principal Mr. Florence today to discuss answers to the document from our staff.
- I received the document before the meeting and he asked me to review the document to see if I had any other questions.
- Had questions from members and Mr. Florence was able to clarify those with solid answers for our staff.
- He has been consistent with communication and has open office hours for teachers if they need to discuss anything with him.

Onaway, Paula Klausner

- Helped organize Executive Board meeting with our staff and it was very helpful.
- I have dealt with a few member's issues, HR issues and one issue stating that the masks provided did not fit his head.
- I went with SHTA Treasurer Bill Scanlon to Boulevard to look at the clinic.

- Communication with SHTA OSHA Committee Chairperson James Schmidt about Occupational Health and Safety issues.
- Meeting regularly with nurses to create guidelines for people to feel safer in the schools
- District has not made a nursing clinic that is usable at Onaway.

Woodbury, Angela Goodrum

- Chatting with principal Tiffany Joseph and she is a trooper. There have been a lot of questions about movement and disregard of central office caring enough about their staff. She has been sharing information with administrators and central office.
- She has been addressing major concerns including air flow. She spoke with Mr. Grosse about the windows not opening and they have some form of ventilation like air purifiers. She is still waiting to hear back.
- Meeting with Ms. Joseph tomorrow to go over the questions that were submitted to her.
- Working through the questions: one of the biggest concerns was children eating in the classrooms.
- She is trying to be supportive with the concurrent teaching, she has been open trying to do what she can. I give her kudos because she is handling a lot of concerns and issues.
- Looking into cleaning the building after the positive COVID-19 case.

Middle School, John Koppitch

- Facilitated a building SHTA meeting with members and exec board, collected questions and concerns that John Morris answered.
- Represented a member regarding a class scheduling issue.
- Met with principal Ms. Miata Hunter twice regarding staff concerns about re-opening, proposed a counter plan with only (2) teacher moves.
- Mike Sears and myself met with Ms. Hunter on the possibility of filing a level one grievance about the Friday schedule change.
- Still many questions remain unanswered; location of teachers to work when not in classrooms? Teachers having (7) moves throughout the day. What are the specific protocols when there is a positive case after we are in session?
- Mike Sears and Erika P. represented two members in fact-finding interviews called by Administrator.

High School, James Schmidt

- I continue to meet weekly with principal Mr. Eric Juli to collaboratively resolve issues in the High School.
- I would like to thank Mr. Juli for continuing to advocate for teacher and student safety as we continue to teach remotely and to plan for our hybrid instruction. We know this is not an easy task, and he has shown that he is committed to providing us with a safe environment in which our students can learn and we can teach.
- We held a meeting with our staff and our Executive Board on Thursday 10/8 and provided the Executive Board with as much information as we had available.
- We have a grievance that we are hoping to resolve in the very near future. We had a very productive meeting today and need some guidance and clarification from our K-4 team before we know if we will be able to resolve it.
- I provided him with the Cuyahoga County Board of Health guidelines that our return to in person instruction plan will "match" according to Dr. Glasner's email of September 16th.
- I asked the following questions during our last meeting:
    - Under 18.11(b) of our contract, we are to notify our supervisor if a workplace condition exists that an employee, acting in good faith, reasonably believes presents an imminent danger of death

or serious harm to the employee. How would you like us to notify you that such a condition exists?
    - How should we notify you that the CCBH guidelines are not being followed and a condition exists that an employee, acting in good faith, reasonably believes presents an imminent danger of death or serious harm to the employee. How would you like us to notify you that such a condition exists?
    - If CDC guidance is released that we are not following and a condition exists that an employee, acting in good faith, reasonably believes presents an imminent danger of death or serious harm to the employee. How would you like us to notify you that such a condition exists?
- Mr. Juli said that if it is a condition that we can resolve before students return, we should email him so that he and our maintenance staff can address the issue. It is an emergency, we can text him and he will try to solve it immediately.

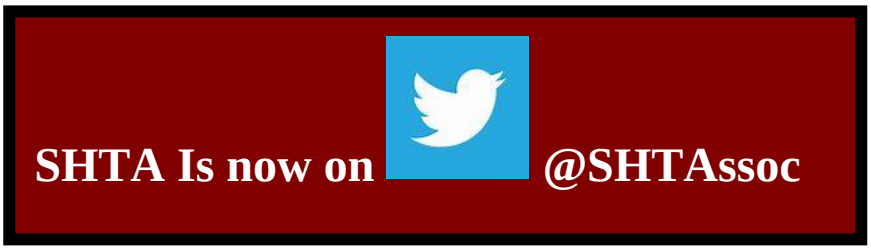
Old Business
- None

New Business
- None

Good of the Order
- None

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Darlene Garrison, seconded by James Schmidt.
Meeting adjourned at 6:10PM

Respectfully submitted,
Darlene Garrison, Secretary



SOLIDARITY

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.

I want to call each member to act with solidarity in our commitment to health and safety. These are unprecedented times and our actions affect everyone in our buildings. We all share the commitment to our students' education, but more than that, we must ensure their safety during this pandemic and after. As of the writing of this editorial, we have received little in the way of concrete information regarding our health and safety. What we have heard has been drawn from other organizations' recommendations. What these recommendations look like in Shaker Heights City schools has yet to be seen. Because of this, it is each individual's duty to protect their own health and thereby protect the health of their students and colleagues. Our working environment is our students' learning environment; we must keep it safe. This must be our first priority.

As much as you may know about your colleagues and your students, you don't know who is most at risk. We have hundreds of members and thousands of students and each of them has a backstory. Some of them have sick family members, who they help care for. Some children are raised and provided for by elderly parents or grandparents. The only way to protect these individuals is to prioritize our own health and our own decorum during these coming days. To educate children without thinking of their safety is to negate their future. A child who grows up without a caregiver is further impoverished. But a child who brings home the disease that aids in the death of their caregiver is forever scarred. We must act with the interests of the weakest of us in every moment of every day.

Over the past several weeks we have interpreted our curriculums and taught them in unprecedented ways. We have reached out to families and helped children bridge the technological gap that resides within our community. We have done amazing work and we should be proud. It hasn't been ideal, but it has been incredible. Now we are being asked to put ourselves and our students at risk, to educate in an environment that is more challenging than the one we find ourselves in now. The level of stress and anxiety people will be feeling in this in-person/online environment is going to be titanic. This anxiety is going to put people more at risk for contracting the virus. Therefore, in everything that we do we must prioritize our health, the health of our colleagues, and the health of our students and families. This means that our instruction, for the first time in Shaker history, is not our priority. I say this with every reservation but I know that it is true. If our colleagues are not there to reach the children next year because of a failure in our protocols of safety, we failed the students. If a child brings home Covid-19 and sickens a relative; that child will endure strain and anxiety no child should have to face. None of us want that responsibility on our conscience. We should not tarnish a young person with such a weighty scar, as having responsibility for sickening a family member. A safer environment exists. We could continue teaching from home and ensure that Shaker schools are not responsible for such terrible outcomes. The district, however, has decided otherwise.

This was to be the year equity was our priority. It is sad to say, but equity has nothing to do with the decision to go back face-to-face during a pandemic. My heart goes out to minority families (Latino and African Americans) who are more susceptible to this virus and its complications. That is not equity. My prayers are with those who are seeking ADA accommodations. Staff members are being denied ADA accommodations and are facing the decision between making a living or die trying. These members are not being permitted to use sick leave, consequently only those who can afford unpaid leave will be able to ensure their safety. That is also not equity.

I think it's egregious that in a year when we have finally been given the opportunity to address the inequality in our community, the administration provides a flagrant action of inequity as the centerpiece of this school year.

When you wear your mask, you do not wear it for yourself, you wear it for everyone else. When you respect all of the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Cuyahoga Board of Health, you are a hero! We must protect our students first, otherwise the education that we provide them is all for not. We may be asked to do incredible things educationally, I know that we will all aspire to provide the highest quality of education possible, but we cannot do that without first prioritizing the health and safety of every teacher, every student and family member.

We are all in this together. While we may teach in separate buildings or in different content areas, we are one big Shaker family. There are members with underlying health concerns who will be forced to teach in person. These individuals requested a safer placement but were denied. Consequently, they must choose between unpaid leave or those who are fortunate to have a substantial sick leave balance, take sick leave until which time it is safe for them to return. Obviously, some of these individuals had no choice other than go to work. We need to keep these individuals safe. They have the highest risk of developing Covid-19 related complications. If the district won't protect them; we must do our best to keep them safe. After all we are family.

Please take great care when choosing to enter the building this year. Teachers often come to work ill. I know that I have done this a great many times. However this year, you could be carrying an unknown killer. Children are often sent to school ill; they too may be bringing an unknown weapon into school. We must be vigilant and take care to make our schools safe. Your absence today could be the action that allows another to continue living. We are not Medical doctors and therefore cannot accurately diagnose Covid-19; I would ask that you err on the side of caution and stay home when you feel ill. We will all get by without you. Please don't risk spreading the virus.

Cuyahoga County has been stable in our Covid-19 cases for a few weeks. This has been in part of school remaining virtual. It has also remained this way because of our actions. I know many of my colleagues have given up many of life's pleasures to keep their families safe. I know there are some individuals who have not been so stringent. We are at the mercy of your choices both in school and in your personal lives. Remember these pleasures are fleeting but bringing the virus to school because of a fleeting pleasure is weakness. Be strong. Demonstrate virtue and strength. We must be models for our students and demonstrate strength and leadership. Otherwise what will they know of these virtues. Weak leadership has led to the immensity of this problem anyway. So often people do what is easy. However, that leads to a sense of entitlement. Please be strong and do what is right.

I'm calling on each of you to support one another. To act with care and safety in everything that you do. If not to protect yourselves then do it to protect your students and your colleagues. This is not something that we can do separately, it is something we must all do, to protect everyone.
We are in this together, regardless of our actions. I ask that you honor the solidarity of the Association and provide the utmost safety and care for each other and your students. I asked this regardless of what we are asked to do by our administration. Health and safety must always come first.

BOB BOGNAR
Woodbury Art Teacher

You Oughta Be in Pictures… or at Least on Video!

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.

The following two paragraphs are from an email I recently sent to parents, guardians, and students.

There is one other aspect of teaching I am striving to bring to this remote teaching/learning environment. I take great pride and expend much effort taking time to build a classroom community which fosters creativity, community, respect, and independent thought. I want my students to know me and I want to know them. I also want them to develop new relationships with each other. Creating this classroom community in the remote teaching/learning environment has been very challenging. In particular, students' decision to mute their video during class has made the creation of a classroom community almost impossible. Imagine trying to build relationships with your peers when you have never seen or heard them? Imagine a teacher trying to engage students without seeing those visual cues that demonstrate understanding?

I believe students' lack of active video has fostered feelings of loneliness and isolation many have experienced during this pandemic. Rather than retreating into ourselves, we must press ourselves to form human interactions; even if those interactions are through digital means - and this is coming from a Devout Introvert!

I take umbrage with our administration's decision to allow students to mute their cameras during instruction. I am not referring to this as "policy". I searched Shaker Heights City Schools Board Policies under *Board Docs* and was unable to find this policy in written form. It is not mentioned in the *Shaker Remote Learning Plan* (08-07-2020).

It is my opinion the administration's rationale for not requiring students to turn on cameras is flawed. As I will demonstrate, the administration's decision has actually created and exacerbated more problems and issues than it solved.

According to the verbal statements from the administration, students are not required to activate their cameras due to a concern for their privacy. (Note the omission of concern for the staff's privacy.) I understand the concern for student's privacy. During our initial transition to remote learning last spring, the concern of privacy was at the top of my list. We, teachers and students, can address privacy concerns via technological and common-sense solutions. First, both Google Meets and Zoom offer a blurred background (GM) or a virtual background (Zoom). We can also teach our students to choose the location they wish to receive remote instruction with their privacy in mind. For example, they may choose a location with a plain wall at their back. Another option is to hang a bed sheet on a wall and sit in front of it. These suggestions are simple, common sense, and accessible to all.

Since the beginning of the 2020-2021 remote school year, I have participated in department, CPT, and building-wide meetings where the issue of student engagement has been a topic of discussion. Teachers are struggling to make connections with their students. Students are not making connections with their teachers and classmates. It is demoralizing and stressful to conduct class without seeing our students or hearing from them. Some might say, "Your students can participate via chat." At face value, this seems like a simple solution; however, the reality is most of us have tried this and stared at the chat board with longing desperation, hoping the student we are speaking to will respond in the chat. Waiting. Nothing. "Tommy, can you hear me?"

The digital realm is often evangelized in utopian terms: bringing the world together, bridging cultural divides, and shrinking physical distances. In an ironic twist of events, the opposite has been happening during the pandemic. Remote learning has exposed and exacerbated feelings of loneliness, isolation, and depression (*NPR* September 10, 2020). Even the *Shaker Remote Learning Plan* acknowledges this fact, "The Shaker Heights City School District is committed to implementing social and emotional strategies for the physical, mental health and well-being of all students." The decision to allow students to mute their cameras during instruction is a detriment to students' social and emotional health, and it has made it nearly impossible for educators to identify students in crisis and identify signs of neglect and abuse (*New York Times*, April 7, 2020).

All teachers join the profession with a shared goal - to make a difference in children's lives. The importance of the teacher-student relationship is paramount in the education of the child. It is those connections students remember long after they have forgotten Avogadro's constant or the quadratic formula. (Apologies to my science and math colleagues.) Teachers I have talked with lament their inability to connect with their students and observe levels of student engagement. If only there were a way to have a dramatic, positive impact upon the remote learning experience; a way to improve the quality and effectiveness of this experience for all. There is a way. The solution is simple and right in front of us. Say it with me. "Students. Turn. On. Your. Cameras."

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