SHAKER HEIGHTS TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

SHTA NEWSLETTER No. 6

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Editor, Burton Randall

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:

As President of the SHTA and a career Shaker teacher, I strongly support the contention of our negotiating team that the present salary proposal before us cannot and will not allow us to continue to provide the boys and girls of Shaker Heights with the high quality teaching that has been the real strength of the Shaker School System. Even though I am deeply disappointed on this issue, I am encouraged by the progress made on other vital issues found within our Master Contract proposal. I strongly urge each of our members to take the time to review and analyse carefully each of these issues as they are found within the many articles of our Master Contract proposal (these will soon be made available in detail to each of you). Tentative agreement has been reached concerning many of these most important items and they now await your decision.

Your decision on this matter will have an important impact on the future of the SHTA and thus the future of negotiations in Shaker Heights. I am constantly asked "What will it mean if we accept or reject?" My answer is "we're plunging into uncharted waters."

Let me discuss with you in rambling fashion some things to keep in mind as you prepare to chart your own personal course. If we accept less than what we believe is a reasonable compromise (at the time of this writing the results of our recent poll are unknown to me), does this not set the precedent for our Administration to take a non-bargaining stance in the belief that Shaker Heights teachers have adopted a "We'll buy anything" position?

Would not the easy way out be to accept their offer and then blame the SHTA because "they" didn't negotiate a good contract? Obviously this would be a gigantic "cop out."

However, if we reject their proposal and "if" a compromise cannot be reached, we must be willing to face the realities that a "no contract" situation could present. The Administration would be free to unilaterally determine our wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment. All gains we have made in the past year and a half of negotiations could be in jeopardy.

Of course, our hope is that the Board would continue to talk to us in order to reach an agreement. We have no assurance of this, however.

Another course the Administration could take, if they were of mind to do so, is to employ the old "association busting" technique of "welfare capitalism" That is, to improve our terms and conditions of employment in order to prove to teachers that you don't need representation.

One further thought--the mass media has been constantly referring to the possibility of our non-support for a levy that we judge to be too small to meet the educational needs of our students. I have told them that there are a number of alternatives that we could take, such as

(a) work without a contract next year,
(b) come September or July--take a "no contract, no work" stance
(c) a myriad of other "persuasive" actions too numerous to go into.

These determinations are not mine to make. Any concerted action by the SHTA would come about in a democratic fashion through our executive board, our representative council, and your active participation. Because of this, it is important that your building representatives keep you accurately informed at all times and that they accurately reflect your feelings.

Ultimately you will be faced with a yes or no ballot. It is your responsibility to cast your ballot as you see fit after you review all the information.

Vote! But vote informed!

Sal Fabrizio
President - SHTA

1922 - 1971

The most enduring member of the high school family retired this January after 43 years of service spread over fifty years. Ruth Brazie came to the Shaker schools as secretary to J. W. Main in the Business Office in 1922 and served there until 1932. She returned to Shaker service in 1937 in Testing and Research, spending part time in Ludlow and part in the high school, and began fulltime work in the high school in 1938.

High school teachers will miss Mrs. Brazie's steady helpfulness and complete dependability. Few employees give either such long or such excellent service.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

According to recent comments, the public is led to believe that a teacher surplus exists in Ohio presently and will worsen in the future. No teacher surplus really exists, however. What we actually have is an impractical and unbalanced pupil-teacher, class-size ratio in the state. Teachers in most schools in Ohio have at present a 25 to 45 class size. If enough teachers were hired to create a practical class size of 25 or fewer, there would be no so-called teacher surplus in Ohio. In overly-large classes the students are cheated of a high quality education, and the teachers, also, are cheated by this undue hardship placed upon them. High knowledge transfer is extremely difficult to achieve in overly-large classes.

If one uses the figure of 20 to 25 students per class as a "meter stick" for measurement of class size, one finds that no teacher surplus exists at all. In fact, if one bases his measurement of class on a figure of 20 or fewer students per teacher, which is the ratio that should exist ideally in all but "large group instruction" courses, one finds that we actually have a TEACHER SHORTAGE. If a doctor's patient-load were doubled, we would probably have a so-called doctor surplus. Or if the amount of waste in the city were suddenly doubled and the collectors were to work twice as fast to pick up the discards, we would then have a similar situation.

We can look at this problem from another angle. If a doctor renders service to twice the number of patients, his income increases accordingly. If a machinist working on "piece-work" puts out more pieces, he is compensated accordingly. If a worker toils overtime in his shop, he is compensated by "time-and-a-half" or "double-time" pay. But if a teacher's load is doubled, his income remains the same. This is one reason why many teachers work in various school-related activities, such as athletics, dramatics, music, art, etc., to supplement their incomes after working their normal eight-hour day. In many cases these extra-curricular tasks are gratuitously performed or are meagerly compensated for monetarily. One such dramatics teacher figured that he was being paid 7 cents an hour for his extra-curricular school services.

Finally, as one radio announcer so aptly stated, parents are apparently willing to pay more to the man who repairs their plumbing than to the teacher who educates their children. Our priorities certainly need to be examined!

Joseph C. Zimovan
Social Chairman, SHTA

RETIREMENT:

A representative from the State Teachers Retirement System will speak at a special meeting of SHTA on Monday, March 8, at Byron auditorium. The meeting will begin at 3:45 and close at about 5:15. The date has been cleared by the administration, and all members of SHTA are invited to attend. All questions which teachers wrote on the back of their original announcement sheet have been forwarded to the Retirement System office to give the speaker a better idea of what constitute the major interests and concerns of our members. The meeting should prove to be extremely interesting, informative, and helpful, regardless of age or years of service. The hour-and-a-half presentation will include a question-answer period at the end.

Below is a list, not yet complete, of teachers' questions we would like answered at the meeting:

Why can't teachers in Ohio receive Social Security for their teaching in addition to their school retirement plan?

Under what conditions can a veteran receive retirement credit for his military service?

What legislation has been recently passed, or may soon be passed, to benefit the retiring teacher?

What can a young teacher do <u>now</u> which will benefit him later?

Can a teacher receive credit, under present rulings, for his teaching outside the state? Outside the Country? If so, how?

Why does a teacher have to belong to two retirement systems in the same state? (For example: when a teacher works for the school Recreation Department in the summer, he pays money to the Public School Employees System) Why does he not receive anything from this retirement? All they do is take your <u>money</u>.

What about out of state experience? Does it pay to "buy" this time for Ohio retirement?

Is there a chance for a cost of living clause to protect retirement income of those who have retired?

Is anything being dpne about a national retirement system to make it possible for teachers to move to another state and keep their retirement credit?

Can a teacher who, previous to teaching, taught swimming for the System's recreation board buy retirement coverage for those quarters (summers)?

What are the rulings on benefits for those teachers who entered the teaching field later than usual so that they can retire much before they have taught 25 years.

Information regarding the money left in the retirement fund while one is not teaching for several years but does return after these years.

What should be done about withdrawing or leaving money in the fund?

How to compute retirement benefits. Minimum years necessary. Optimum years of service for retirement. Possibility of "buying" additional service credits.

How does this retirement program compare with Social Security benefits and other retirement program benefits?

Is there any chance of requirements for retirement as to age and years being lowered?

If I, at the end of the 1971-72 school year, have 180 days of sick leave to my credit, what legal obstacles are there to my converting it into service credit toward retirement if I at that point quit teaching?

What is the best way to designate retirement beneficiary:

(1) On one's self?
(2) On one's spouse (wife)?
(3) Split between the two?

Why should payments to retirement be involuntarily deducted from salary, yet if principal is withdrawn, no interest can be collected? i.e., why should my money be earning interest for the "system"?

When will we have 30 years full retirement? Auto worker 25 years. etc. Why do we have to work 35 years? I don't think the present set up is fair to teacher or student.

Did the recent loan scandal in any way injure the ability of the State Teacher's Retirement System to meet its responsibilities?

What provision is made in the present system to compensate for the inflationary trends of the present and future?

Is the Teachers' Retirement System receiving full benefit from money invested - interest, etc.?

Why is it so disadvantageous to buy in when coming in from another state?

How about having those teachers who will not be in teaching all their life not have to contribute to the retirement fund or get some of their money more easily.

QUALITY ON THE SHAKER TEACHING STAFF:

The following is a report to the staff on the quality of the Shaker teaching staff. The results are based primarily upon information received from a questionnaire issued to the staff in January, 1971. We feel that the following observations are representative of the entire teaching staff since 66 percent of the teachers responded to that questionnaire. The results indicate what the administration and community should already know, namely that the teaching staff is a group of highly talented individuals.

In the category of awards won by the teachers, a total of forty-one were received. Twenty-three awards were Jennings Scholarships for Master Teachers. Other awards included names of several teachers in various Who's Who publications, while other members gained recognition as Outstanding Teachers for different organizations. It was also significant to note that many of our teachers were cum laude graduates.

Other honors included forty scholarships, representing twenty-four organizations. Grants and fellowships totaled fourteen and nineteen respectively. In the area of institutes, the scholarship of our staff came to the front. There were a total of fifty-two National Science Foundation Institutes and twenty-one N.D.E.A. Institutes making a total of one hundred six institutes awarded to our staff.

The grand total of awards, scholarships, grants, fellowships, and institutes came to be two hundred twenty. Once again it should be mentioned that only sixty-six percent of the teachers responded. One wonders how high the total figure might have been if everyone had responded. Looked at from another way, the equivalent of seven out of every ten teachers responding had won some honor.

The staff illustrated its true professionalism in the number of professional organizations to which it belonged; not counting membership in S.H.T.A., N.E.O.T.A., and N.E.A., the staff listed over one hundred different professional organizations to which they belonged.

In the category of college teaching experience it was gratifying to learn that ninety-four teachers had such teaching experience. This experience represented forty-one different colleges and universities across the United States and Europe.

In the field of income supplements, it was learned that one-hundred forty-nine teachers, or 49%, supplemented their income. Thirty-seven indicated that their spouse helped, while one-hundred twelve breadwinners stated that they HAD to supplement their income with second and third jobs. The breadwinners indicating that they had to supplement their income represented 37% of the responding teaching staff.

(Editor's Note: That very high percentage reveals very clearly that this talented faculty is not being paid by the Shaker schools commensurately to its abilities and achievement.)

Here are some other interesting facts about Shaker teachers. They have an average age of 38.4 years, while more than half of the total are tenure teachers. Fifty-seven percent of the staff hold masters degrees or better. Thiry-six percent of the faculty are receiving the maximum salary for their experience and educational background. The starting salary for a beginning teacher with a Bachelor's degree is only 6700 dollars. (Editor's Note: The U.S. Department of Labor's "lowest budget" providing a living in a style above minimum subsistence levels is $6,567 for the typical four-member family. The figure $6700 for a college graduate certified to teach is shameful and degrading.)

SOME CONCLUSIONS:

The Shaker teaching staff is one of the best trained and talented in the country. Our school system is comparable to the so-called Lighthouse Districts throughout the country. Question: Why can't a district which has such a talented staff sending 94% of its graduates to institutions of higher learning, have a salary scale at least equal to that of other Lighthouse Districts? The fact is, as a previous newsletter has pointed out, our salary scale is not as high as a great many non-Lighthouse Districts. Does this problem exist because our community is not able to pay, or not willing to pay? The time has come for us, the teaching staff, to stop subsidizing our district and stand up and be counted by demanding Lighthouse District salary scales.

Sub-committee to Salary-Tenure Comm.

Larry Maniglia

Larry Svec

Tom Patrick

INTRAMURALS:

An earlier issue quoted minutes of the Superintendent's Secondary School Advisory Council deploring the lack of an intramural athletic program in senior high. The reference was to boys' intramurals. Investigation has elicited fuller information, and some provocative ideas for the provision of a far richer program for boys.

First, below, a report from Miss Dorothy Hill, Girls' Physical Education Department Chairman, on the very thorough and varied program which is in existence. It is fair to say the Miss Hill and her instructors go far beyond necessary duty in the generous giving of their time and energy to the program.

SHAKER HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS' INTRAMURAL PROGRAM:

The sound of the 3:30 bell at Shaker Heights High School is the start of the girls' intramural program. The basic purpose of this popular and varied program is to give the student a chance to:

1.) improve her skill in an activity;
2.) participate in an activity which she is not taking in her physical education class;
3.) further put into use the knowledges and skills she has learned in class;
4.) have fun through participation in recreational activities and sports, conducted under proper supervision and officiating techniques.

The activities which are offered are organized through seasonal sports and in conjunction with the physical education classes. The basic organization is thus:

FALL	WINTER		SPRING
Tennis	Volleyball	Basketball	Track & Field
Field Hockey		Co-ed Volleyball	Softball
Modern Dance	Modern Dance--		Trampoline
Gymnastics		Fencing	Badminton
Swimming		Tumbling	Tennis
			Swimming

The main team sport in each season (Field Hockey, Volleyball, Basketball, and Softball) are organized three nights per week because of the large participation. The seniors participate on Tuesdays, the sophomores on Wednesdays, and the juniors on Thursdays. Each night, alone, involves approximately fifty to one hundred students, while many others are participating in the other activities offered that night.

Tournaments are set up to play the particular sports. A team is never eliminated, but plays each week, whether it wins or loses. The games are officiated by members of the GLC (Girls' Leaders Club) who are specifically trained in clinics before each sport starts.

Through this type of organization, there are approximately three hundred to four hundred girls participating each week, the number varying somewhat depending upon the activities.

The intramural program lasts until 5 p.m. After 5 o'clock any girl who wishes to participate in the interscholastic program may stay to practice until 6:15 p.m. She must be a member of an intramural team to do this. Interscholastic sports are played in field hockey, volleyball, basketball, tennis, and track and field.

The girls' gymnasium is indeed a busy place. Observers are welcome at any time, and especially spectators for the girls' interscholastic events.

Dorothy Hill

Next, a response by Bob Rice, Boys' Physical Education Department Chairman, to the question why the intramural program for boys has lapsed.

The intramural program as it did exist was mildly successful -- we scheduled football for after school in the fall, basketball on Saturdays during the winter, volleyball in the gym classes during the early second semester (with a school playoff - after school - involving each class champion), softball in the spring after school and on Saturdays.

Why the program was curtailed: our boys' PE staff is entirely involved with interscholastic coaching assignments in the fall, so no one member of our staff is available to supervise; the winter program was supervised by me as an employee of the recreation department - that assignment is no longer available; the volleyball is still being conducted as above mentioned, with one staff member not involved in spring sports coaching supervising the program; the saftball is still conducted as above mentioned with Mr. Oberdorfer (receiving a salary differential)

supervising -- and, as you know Mr. Oberdorfer is not a member of the PE staff.

Certainly a strong program of intramurals is an asset to a productive total school program for students -- and what we now have is insufficient. Problems which must be surmounted in order to make an intramural program function effectively: adult supervision, compensation for supervision, space and time for activities where (and when) it will not conflict with varsity athletics, since a sharing of space must be worked out.

I would be happy to be involved in planning and administering a program of intramurals -- but sometimes the problems we face seem to be insurmountable. I appreciate your concern -- the kids, I believe, would participate and be really interested -- probably kids should be in on the planning also. We are open to all suggestions.

Bob Rice

In meeting with Principal William Greenham and Bob Rice on the subject of boys' intramurals, some practical difficulties and some hopeful things came to light. The available facilities for boys are heavily in use for interscholastic athletic preparation. The present facilities are very limited. The time of boys' physical education instructors is engaged in interscholastics in the hours, directly after school, which would be best for intramurals. Financial support for instructors' time spent in additional coaching and instruction would be needed. On the more hopeful side, administrative interest in supporting an active and varied program appears to be available if the leadership toward its development comes from the teaching staff and from interested students. There is possibility of working more intramurals into the school day. Intramurals in bowling and softball now exist. Saturday use of gym facilities under the Recreation Board is an actuality. The Youth Recreation Board, replacing the Student Union, also can assist in the broadening of a program.

With as strong expression of interest in supporting a vital program as has been made in Superintendent's Advisory Council and by Dr. Greenham, the climate should be hospitable to the major strengthening of the existing program under enthusiastic teacher and student leadership.

SATURDAY WORKSHOPS:

The Elementary teachers have been having a unique opportunity to grow professionally and personally in the area of human relations this fall and winter. Funded by a grant from HEW, the teachers have been meeting on Saturday mornings to explore feelings, attitudes, and techniques which lead to better communication and awareness. Teachers have viewed films, participated in role-playing situations, explored individualized instruction and participated in discussions about teacher-student relations, race relations, school-home relations and relations among human beings of all different sorts.

Two of the most emotionally charged meetings concerned teacher attitudes and feelings about the ramifications of the busing program--the lunch period, buses, special services, etc. It was immediately apparent that elementary teachers were eager to express their ideas and hoped that notice would be taken of their very real feelings.

Consequently, a meeting was organized in which the discussion group leaders (from the Saturday meeting) with Joe Szwaja and the elementary school principals with Miss McFarland and Dr. Lawson met to explore the ideas and feelings of the teachers. It was not always easy to reach the point of honest, open communication but the participants tried hard and felt that a valuable first step had been achieved. The group met for three hours one morning and then had enough agenda for another two-hour meeting.

Following these meetings, the discussion group leaders met with the elementary teachers to report on the meeting with administrators. Again open, honest communication was difficult but, again, first steps are not always easy.

What has been accomplished? First, it seems that both teachers and administrators are beginning to appreciate the tremendous need for communication, information, and shared responsibility if programs are to succeed and the school atmosphere to be harmonious and healthy. At least one school has had a faculty session which sought consensus and understanding on some of the issues. Second, teachers feel a real need for help with problem children, those who are problems in behavior and problems in learning. Finally, both teachers and administrators are finding that communication and understanding do not come automatically, that effort is required on both sides.

We hope that these meetings are the beginning of increased co-operation and communication in the future.

Barbara Fox
Boulevard

TEACHERS EVALUATE PRINCIPALS:

Evaluation is a two-way street. The Aurora, Colorado, Education Association has negotiated the following agreement with the board of education:

1. "Teachers must evaluate their principal and their appropriate consultant or coordinator once annually, between February 1 and 15.
2. Teachers will use the same form used by those who evaluate principals, consultant and coordinators.
3. Evaluations must be signed by teachers and the original give to the person evaluated. Teachers are encouraged to retain copies of evaluations."

In the view of your President and Editor, this practice would be a valuable aid in Shaker Heights toward improvement in mutual respect and responsibility between teachers and administrators.

HUMAN RELATIONS:

A Representative at a recent Representative Council meeting spoke of subtle pressures that many elementary school teachers are fearful of resisting -- for example, the recruitment of "volunteers" for the lunchroom program. She felt there was not enough dialogue at the elementary level and principals don't really know what teachers are thinking or feeling. The President offered to talk with Joe Szwaja, the coordinator, to see whether some method of real expression (by individuals rather than by building) can't be worked out. Minutes of the January 7 Representative Council meeting report that Human Relations director Joe Szwaja feels that progress in being made in communications between teachers and administrators at the elementary schools.

If such subtle pressures do exist - if a volunteer is not a volunteer, but an overworked person pressured into doing additional work through fear, there is need of progress. It must also be said that teachers, to be fully professional and to enjoy the conditions of a profession, must not be mice. It is possible to fear pressure where none is - and also to resist it when it exists and needs resisting. SHTA can help in that, but only when a member who feels injured takes the first step and asks for help. Truly professional relations between teachers and administration, and therefore good conditions for learning, exist not when teachers are fearfully silent under pressures they resent, nor in a hubbub of protest, but when teachers and administrators tell each other the truth, directly and fearlessly. The old politician's philosophy - "Don't rock the boat", "Wash dirty linen in private,""Sweep the dust under the rug," "Keep the lid on" - not only tends to express itself in outmoded banalities; it is outmoded. It is time for teachers individually as well as collectively to stand strong and unafraid and give to this glorious profession the vital leadership it has not yet received from any segment.

NOMINATED FOR NATIONAL HONORS:

The Association has nominated the School Board for the 1970-71 Association of Classroom Teachers-Thom McAn National School Board Award for <u>active leadership</u> in racial relations.

The awards program, now in its sixth consecutive year, is designed to provide a means for professional educators to recognize their local school boards for outstanding achievements and contributions to their respective educational system, on a regional and national level.

Co-sponsors of the program are the Association of Classroom Teachers of the National Education Association and Thom McAn Shoe Company of Worcester, Massachusetts, the retail divison of Melville Shoe Corporation. Thom McAn underwrites the cost of the program but does not participate in the selection of the awards.

A national awards panel chaired by R. P. Merridew, executive secretary of Kiwanis International, and composed of other distinguished professional and lay people annually selects the recipients of the awards. There are 15 national and regional awards totalling $8,000 and 30 additional area awards.

Semi-finalists will be selected in February, with the final award winners to be announced in May.