IMPORTANT DATES

Friday, October 21st: Wear your SHTA T-Shirt Day

Friday, November 4th: Wear your SHTA T-Shirt Day

Wednesday, November 9th: SHTA Executive Board Meeting

Monday, November 14th: SHTA Representatives Council Meeting, @ Boulevard

SHTA news

October 17, 2016

ISSUE NO. 2

Message From the President

It's hard to believe that the next time this newsletter comes out we will have elected a new President of the United States. Although we cannot endorse political candidates as an Association due to Our Constitution and By-Laws, it's impossible to emphasize how important it is to vote this election. The future of our country is at stake. The next President could appoint four Supreme Court justices. I strongly encourage each and every one of our members to exercise their right to vote. This may end up being one of the most important elections of our lifetime.

Closer to home, we have seen the fallout of the Ohio State Report cards and our district response, Measuring What Matters. At Monday night's Representative Council Meeting, Dr. Marla Robinson shared her and Dr. Gregory Hutchings thoughts on the report card results and the research that finds that test scores are directly related to the economic status of a district's students. Highlights from a report that Dr. Hutchings provided, from an analysis from Warren Local Schools Superintendent Kyle Newton, included the following findings:

• Not one district with more than 18% poverty received an "A" on Indicators Met. 524 districts have more than 18% poverty; that is 83% of schools in Ohio and none of them received an "A" on any indicator.
• Only two districts received an "A" on Performance Index Score. One has 0% poverty and the other has 9% poverty. One is ranked in the top 16% while the other is in the top 10% for property value.
• None of the 100 poorest schools, by property valuation, received above a "D" or an "F" in Indicators Met.

Similarly, a Fordham Institute analysis of the State Report Card, found the following:
• Because of changes in benchmarks, fewer students in Ohio are deemed "proficient" on state exams than in previous years. In 2015-16, roughly 55 to 65 percent of Ohio pupils met the proficiency bar in the core subjects.
• In turn, school ratings across that state have declined. In urban areas, public schools receive almost universally low ratings on proficiency based metrics: On the state's performance index—a key gauge of student achievement—94 percent of urban schools received D or F ratings in 2015-16.

In a nutshell, the higher the poverty levels in a school district, the lower the letter grade on the State Report Cards. This fact alone invalidates these scores and emphasizes that schools as economically diverse as our own are punished by a reductive report card system. Our own high school English teacher and Member Chris Cotton tackles the issue in the editorial at the end of the newsletter. **It is a must read!**

Even closer to home is the issue of the District Master Plan and the upcoming May Bond Issue that will be voted on by Shaker residents to provide 55 million dollars for a new Middle School and improvements to buildings throughout the district. The SHTA enthusiastically supports this bond issue and the necessary improvements it makes to our buildings, including the replacement of one of the most difficult to maintain and utilize buildings, the Middle School. We have not had a bond issue in Shaker in over 10 years. We are overdue for necessary improvements to our physical plant for the wellbeing of our students, our teachers, our schools district, and our community.

Otherwise, it has been a typically busy month as SHTA President. I attended the Instructional and Administrative Council Meeting, where we were able to agree upon a two-hour window on the November 22nd Professional Day for members to complete Public School Works online modules. I addressed a fan issue at Woodbury, which the help of Keith Wagner and Darlene Bushley. I addressed Diploma Programme concerns at the High School. I addressed 504 coverage and an evaluation issue at the MS along with Principal David Glasner and Addie Tobey, evaluation committee member. I addressed personnel concerns with Darlene Bushley. I continue to discuss testing issues with Dale Whittington. I am working on a continuing contract issue among out-of-state teachers with Matt Zucca and Susannah Muskovitz. I attended the Master Planning meeting. I updated Our Facebook page, along with Andrew Glasier, and The Cuyahoga County Educator Summit page. I continue my weekly conversations with Dr. Hutchings. I discussed 504 concerns with Tim Gesing and Sara Cole who provided clarification, which was shared with Woodbury administration. I helped resolve a contract issue for Support Teacher concerning lunch period with the help of Onaway Principal Eric Forman and Building Representative Paula Klausner. Finally, I interviewed with The Shakerite.

As fall begins, please do your best to get out and enjoy this beautiful season in Ohio. On November 8th, make sure you vote. Once again, we will be facing a completely different political world based on the outcome of this election. Exercise your fundamental right as an American citizen and vote! As always, along with your building representatives, I am available to contact at morris_j@shaker.org and at extension #6033. It is an honor to serve as President of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association.

Respectfully submitted,
John Morris

SHTA President John Morris speaks at the October Representatives meeting @ Fernway School.



Reports from the Executive Board

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Happy fall! It is time again to apply for SHTA Fellowships. I am excited to invite the SHTA – ST members to participate in the Grant application process. I hope that each of you has received an application from your building representatives. The Fellowship Grants are designed to promote professional development and can be used to attend workshops, for payment of dues to professional organizations (except the SHTA), journals or professional materials. The recipients are selected via random drawing. Submission must be returned to me by November 4th. Send entries to Matt Zucca, Fernway Elementary. Multiple entries will be disqualified and only members of the Association are eligible for participation. Recipients will be chosen and awarded $100 each. Recipients will be notified by district e-mail and their names published in the November newsletter. If you need an application contact your head-building representative, print the application at the end of the News Letter, or contact me at #4692.

I would like to remind all of you to contribute to the PTO Council Annual Drive. The Association has forged a close working relationship with PTO. The PTO annually supports teachers and students in a number of ways.

I am currently working with *the Night for The Red and White* Committee. The event is scheduled for Saturday, March 4, 2017 at 7:00 pm. The event will be moving to the newly construct Hilton Cleveland Downtown on Lakeside. Hilton Cleveland Downtown is in the heart of Cleveland's vibrant downtown area and connected to the Huntington Convention Center of Cleveland. Request for Silent Auction contributions will be e-mailed to you in the near future. Please consider making a contribution and attending this event. In the past popular silent auction items have included lunch, outings to museums sporting event, pizza parties, tutoring or lessons, and gift certificates. The possibilities are endless so please as you always are, "be creative".

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

Respectfully submitted,
Matthew Zucca

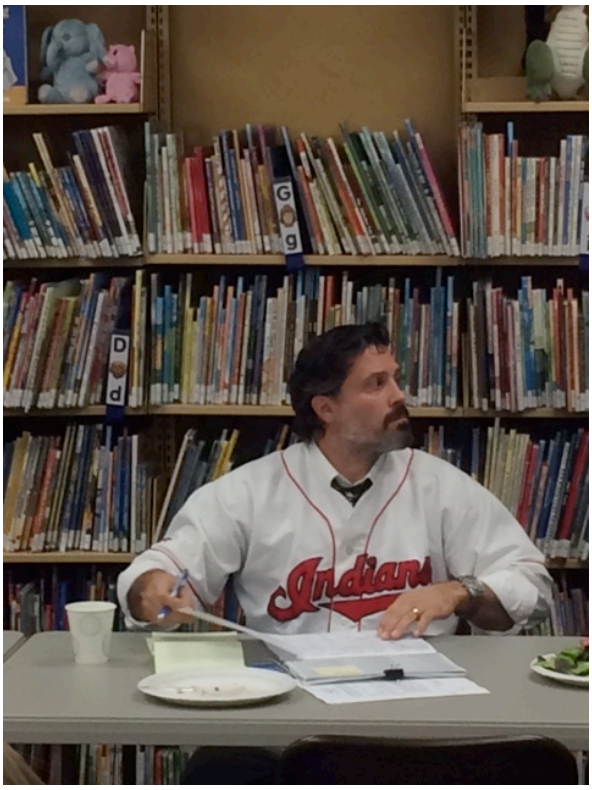
TREASURER'S REPORT

I hope everyone's school year is going well. Mine has gotten off to a great start, but I am consistently amazed at how busy I am. There are constantly more things to get done, and I'm sure everyone at times feels this same kind of stress. But it's hard for me to imagine it comparing to what I witness my friend John Morris go through. The amount of work he has in his role as SHTA President astounds me. And that doesn't count all the behind the scenes work he does for our fellow SHTA members, which no one hears about because of confidentiality. I honestly don't know how he does it. We should all be grateful we have him as our leader.

On Monday, October 3rd I met with a financial advisor from Key Bank to discuss our Key assets investment strategy. On Friday, October 21st the Investments Committee (made up of myself, Matt Zucca, Chante Thomas-Taylor, and Todd Keitlen) will be meeting with that same financial advisor from Key Bank, and separately 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 (ext6296).

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Scanlon



SHTA Vice President Matt Zucca at the October SHTA Representatives Council Meeting @ Fernway School.



SHTA Treasurer Bill Scanlon at the October SHTA Representatives Council Meeting @ Fernway School.

The Class of 2018 is actively raising money for a memorial statue in honor of Robin Snyder. For those who would like to donate, please visit the gofundme site: https://www.gofundme.com/2ahbb56s

Please feel free to pass on this information to others. Donations can be made anonymously.

Thanks.

The Class of 2018

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES REPORT

During the past month, I have helped members with maternity leave, professional growth plans, lunch breaks, and 504 meetings. The Insurance Committee will meet on October 17. Look for any news from this committee in the November newsletter. The committee to evaluate supplemental contracts for clubs and activities still has not yet met.

Respectfully submitted,
Mike Sears, Chairperson

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

The Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT) has an invaluable resource to monitor laws enacted by State Representatives and Senators that directly impact the important work we do to advocate for our students. To keep members informed about pending legislation that will change how we do our work to meet the varied needs of children, OFT has created legislative reports that track the current status of bills as they move through the Statehouse.

http://www.hannah.com/Report_Custom.aspx?sid=6Xo2YrORsfQ%3d&rid=JgjnHytXW8E%3d

Senator Joe Schiavoni (D-Boardman) released a statement after the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) found in their final review that the Electronic Classroom Of Tomorrow (ECOT) exaggerated student attendance by nearly 60%. This finding could potentially mean ECOT owes upwards of $60 million in funding back to the state. He has requested the State Board of Education and State Superintendent of Public Education explore hiring an independent auditor to examine the records of ECOT.

Finally, early voting has begun. Guides for early voting by mail and in person can be found on your Board of Elections (see attached link for Cuyahoga County: http://www.boe.cuyahogacounty.us/). It is important to keep abreast of your voting registration and news of the elections. It is interesting to know that the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association and the Cleveland Teachers Union have all endorsed Hillary Clinton whereas the Cleveland Police Patrolmen's Association has endorsed Donald Trump. Follow the link to learn about national union endorsements for this election cycle. http://workerfreedom.org/unions-and-2016-campaign Below you will find the endorsements of many national newspapers.

Newspaper Endorsements 2016:

Newspaper	2012 Endorsement	2016 Endorsement
New York Times	Obama	Clinton
Los Angeles Times	Obama	Clinton
New York Daily News	Romney	Clinton
Washington Post	Obama	Clinton
Chicago Tribune	Obama	Johnson

Arizona Republic	Romney	Clinton
Dallas Morning News	Romney	Clinton
San Francisco Chronicle	Obama	Clinton
San Diego Union-Tribune	Romney	Clinton
Sacramento Bee	Obama	Clinton
Baltimore Sun	Obama	Clinton
South Florida Sun-Sentinel	Romney	Clinton
Cincinnati Enquirer	Romney	Clinton
Detroit News	Romney	Johnson
Richmond Times-Dispatch	Romney	Johnson
Akron Beacon Journal	Obama	Clinton
Chicago Sun-Times	None	Clinton
Charlotte Observer	Obama	Clinton
Tampa Bay Times	Obama	Clinton
Hartford Courant	Obama	Clinton
Columbus Dispatch	Romney	Clinton
Alabama Media Group	None	Clinton
USA Today	None	Not Trump
Denver Post	Obama	Clinton
The Salt Lake Tribune	Obama	Clinton

Respectfully submitted,
Eileen Sweeney, Chairperson

PUBLIC RELATIONS

This month, I requested an advertisement in the *Shakerite* and *Shaker Life* Magazines. I am currently creating a new format for the winter *Shaker Life* issue that congratulates various scholarly achievements of Shaker Heights students. I am also beginning the process of selecting this year's teacher appreciation gift. I will be distributing long sleeve SHTA shirts to head representatives later this fall to make it easier for member to purchase.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Bognar, Chairperson

EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Evaluation conferences and observations have begun across the district. All evaluation information and forms are available on shaker.org for you to access. Some important reminders about the evaluation process are as follows:

- All pre and post observation conferences and observations must be scheduled ***at mutually agreed upon dates and times.***
- Professional Growth Plans should be written by individual teachers and shared with evaluators.

Evaluators should not change goals on these plans or dictate the content of goals, but rather support teachers in reaching their own goals. Professional Growth Plans should have been completed and uploaded by September 30.

- Teachers are encouraged to submit additional evidence to their evaluators to be included in their evaluations. Teachers should upload these pieces of evidence directly into eTPES. Be sure to tag each piece with a title and date.
- The evaluation process should always be conducted with the goal of professional learning and development, rather than in any kind of punitive or "gotcha" style.
- All teachers will have a minimum of two Informal Observations, formerly known as walkthroughs, one each semester.
- eTPES will continue be used to house evaluation forms. Remember, there are items on eTPES that should be "skipped", as they are not part of our current evaluation program. They include the Pre-Conference (these questions are discussed during conferences) and the Teacher Professional Project. The Improvement Plan item is only used for those on state or district mandated improvement plan, otherwise it can also be skipped. Please forward any eTPES questions or concerns to your SHTA representative or a teacher on the Evaluation Committee.
- The "Evidence Summary Form" is now called the "Performance Rubric" but will function in the same way as before.

Please be sure to connect with me, or any member of the evaluation committee, with any questions or concerns you may have.

Respectfully submitted,
Lena Paskewitz, Chairperson

PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Since the last Newsletter, I attended the Finance and Audit Committee meeting, the business meeting of the Board of Education, and the regular SHTA meetings of Executive Board and Representative Council. The Finance and Audit Committee welcomed two new members, Betsy Potiker and Joe Romano. Anthony Peebles is now the chairperson of the committee. The meeting focused on the Master Plan and the Bond Issue. There were also questions about the recent state Report Card.

At the Board of Education meeting, Merle Johnson, candidate for State Board of Education for District 11, spoke about the upcoming election and her platform. A promotional video on the Shaker schools was presented. The majority of the meeting was on the Five-Year Forecast and district expenditures and revenues.

My attendance at these meetings allows the SHTA leadership to focus on other responsibilities while maintaining an SHTA presence. I appreciate the opportunity to serve the Association.

Respectfully submitted,
Becky Thomas, Chairperson

SHTA Is now on @SHTAssoc

POLICY COMMITTEE

This month I'd like to highlight Article V from SHTA's Constitution, which deals with membership:

A. Any certificated employee of the Shaker Heights City School District who is employed as a Teacher or a Support Teacher becomes a member upon payment of annual dues.
1. Each member has the individual right to participate in the affairs of the Association and to attend the regularly scheduled meetings of the Representative Council.

Because of the addition of Support Teachers to SHTA's purview, it is important that we spread the word of the benefits of membership in Our Association. I ask that you encourage your colleagues, be they support staff or classroom teachers who are currently not members, to consider joining our ranks.

Respectfully submitted,
Tim Kalan, Chairperson

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

We are looking forward to seeing you at the Annual Autumn Happy Hour!!! On Monday, November 21st we will be meeting at Buffalo Wild Wings at Harvard Park (26200 Harvard Road) in Warrensville at 4:00 p.m. (Monday, November 21 and Tuesday, November 22 are Professional Development days.)

Please plan to socialize, eat, and toast to another fabulous school year! Please email me with questions (boyer_s@shaker.org). Have a great year!!!

Respectfully submitted,
Selena Boyer, Chairperson

TEACHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

New teachers should have received a letter from me with important information from our contract as well as an SHTA enrollment form. If you have not done so already, please consider joining the association.

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 not on a 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).

There are some important dates to remember:

- ***Salary Reclassification***: Coursework must be completed by the November and April board meetings. Requests must be submitted in time for these meetings. The board meeting for November is Tuesday, **November 8th**.
- ***Tuition Reimbursement Fund***: Deadline for applications is **December 1st.**

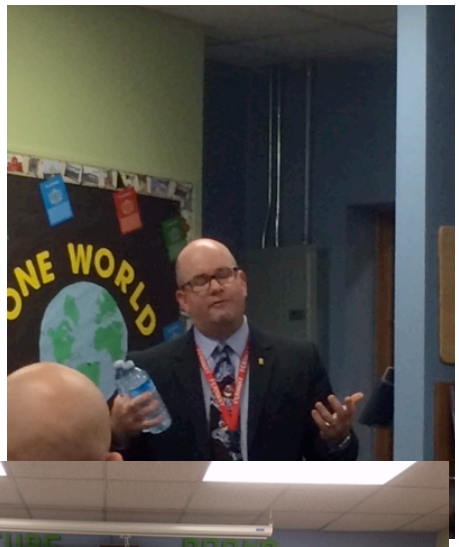
Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hardiman, Chairperson

MEMBERSHIP/ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Payroll deduction for SHTA dues began with the October 1st paycheck - $30 per pay for 10 pays. For those who paid by check, thank you for your payment. Or, if you have not yet done so, please submit your check for $300 to your building representative.

Respectfully submitted,
Chante Thomas-Taylor, Chairperson







The October Representatives Council Meeting @ Fernway School. Thank you Representative Andee Hassell for hosting.

WANTED: SHTA PAC TREASURER

Seeking a politically minded Association dedicated person to oversee the duties of Treasurer.

DUTIES INCLUDE: Bi-Annual reporting to the B.O.E. & keeping abreast of state election laws. Time commitment is approximately a couple hours/month

Interested? Contact Eileen Sweeney at:
pacshed@gmail.com

WANTED: SHTA PAC MEMBERS

Seeking Association dedicated people to participate and represent the SHTA politically.

Committee members will develop political positions on issues impacting the SHTA and organize political actions. Time commitment is approximately a couple hours/month

Interested? Contact Eileen Sweeney at:
pacshed@gmail.com

MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

October 10, 2016, Fernway School

SHTA President, John Morris started the October 10, 2016 Rep. Council Meeting at 4:30PM.
Chris Hayward, Principal of Fernway Elementary School welcomed SHTA membership to Fernway. Tour Your Schools Day went very well today. We are very excited about our Self-study. IB authorizers will be visiting Fernway soon.

MINUTES from the September 06, 2016 Rep. Council meeting were approved by membership with one opposed.

Administration Report
Dr. Marla Robinson was present for the Rep. Council Meeting

- Dr. Hutchings was unable to attend Rep. Council meeting but provided notes for Dr. Robinson to read. There are 2 areas he would like to discuss: Facilities & State Report Card.
- The Facilities Community Meeting held at the Middle School was well attended. The Bond Issue will be on the ballot for May 02nd.
- Talking points are being prepared and we will need help from SHTA. The community needs to hear from SHTA.
- The State Report Card – All information is located on our website under Board of Education Documents. Encouraged to read the actual articles listed on the website.
- The state report card is not an actual reflection of our schools and what is being done in our district. One report stated, "Not one district with more than 18% poverty received an "A" on the report card.
- Strongly encourage you to read the entire analysis.
- Talking point tools will be made available when talking to individuals in the community.

P.T.O. Report – Heather Weingart was present to give the P.T.O. report.

- Saturday P.T.O provided a third education service for help with Google. We are really trying to help the community with the Google Transition.
- For Tour Your Schools Day, we tried something new, added student ambassadors to help facilitate parent tours. We also added two times in the day for each principal to speak with the parents.
- P.T.O will help buildings that don't get as much help with fundraising.
- The newsletter communication process is different. Newsletters for each school are now under one heading except for the High School. They still have the separate OVAL because the high school has so much information to share.

Officer's Report
President, John Morris

- Attended Instructional and Administrative Council Meeting – able to agree upon a 2 hr window on Professional Day for members to complete Public School Works online modules.
- Addressed fan issue at Woodbury.
- Addressed DP Concerns at the HS.
- Addressed 504 coverage and evaluation issue at the MS along with Addie Tobey, evaluation committee member.
- Addressed personnel concerns with Darlene Bushley.
- Continue to discuss testing issues with Dale Whittington.
- Addressed continuing contract issue among out-of-state teachers with Matt Zucca and Suzannah Muskovitz.
- Attended the Master Planning meeting.

- Updated Facebook page and Cuyahoga County Educator Summit page.
- Had weekly conversations with Greg Hutchings.
- Discussed 504 Concerns with Tim Gesing and Sara Cole. Received clarification and shared with Woodbury admin.
- Resolved a contract issue for Support Teacher concerning lunch period.
- Interviewed with the *Shakerite*.

Vice President, Matt Zucca

- Attended PTO Council meeting. Please contribute or make a donation to the PTO annual fund.
- Attended kick-off meeting for *the Night for the Red and White*. The foundation encourages staff to participate in some way with *the Night for the Red and White*. Donations made to the silent auction will be helpful. The forms will be coming soon. Would like an idea for a donation from the SHTA. This is the 25th Anniversary for *the Night for the Red and White*.
- Will be attending an Investment Committee Meeting.
- Head Reps. please make copies of the Fellowship Grant Applications. Be sure to distribute an application to all SHTA members. Completed applications are due by November 4, 2016. You have one year to use the Fellowship grant funds.

Secretary, Darlene Garrison

- Please be sure to sign the attendance sheet. If not signed, you will not be paid for attending meetings.

Treasurer, Bill Scanlon

- No financial report this month. Reports are given out every other month.
- Will be attending Finance and Investment meeting this month.
- Met with Rep. from Key Bank. We will possibly be making some changes so that we can do better with investments.
- Will be meeting with Edward Jones advisor at the end of October.

Executive Board Reports

Past President, Becky Thomas

- Attended the last Board of Education meeting. Will be attending BOE meeting tomorrow, October 11th. The meeting starts at 5:00 P.M.
    - Facilities discussion took place majority of the last meeting.
    - Teachers will be asked to pilot furniture.
- Local 153 (Aides) finished their contract. John Morris has been instrumental in promoting collective bargaining contracts for all district employees. His leadership has resulted in many more colleagues being represented by bargaining agreements. Thank you, John.
- At tomorrow's board meeting, they will be discussing the 5-year forecast.

Teacher Education, Lisa Hardiman

- Sent letter and created an informational packet to pass out at the New Teacher Meeting.

Membership/Elections, Chante Thomas-Taylor

- There are 395 members confirmed at this moment. Still waiting for payment from some members.

Policy, Tim Kalan

- No Report

Public Relations, Bob Bognar

- There will be a new advertisement in the *Shaker Life* Magazine.
- SHTA will also have advertisements in the *Gristmil*l, the high school yearbook and the *Shakerite* paper.
- We still long-sleeve SHTA shirts and "really" large short-sleeve shirts.

Legislative, Eileen Sweeney

- No Report

Support Teachers, Latina Pope

- Would to encourage Support Teachers to join SHTA.

Publications, Andrew Glasier

- Wednesday at midnight all submissions are due for the newsletter.
- Updated the Facebook and Twitter Page.
- English teacher Chris Cotton wrote an editorial for the newsletter with a focus on the State Report Card.
- SHTA file cabinet is now in storage, it was moved out of office.
- Dr. Hutchings wants to make connection between *Skillful Teacher* and the evaluation rubric.
- School district should define the topic of personal accounts on Facebook and Twitter in Employee Handbook.
- Question asked concerning district WiFi being used with our personal cell phones. Does the school district legally have access to what we are doing on our cell phones?

Social, Selena Brown

- SHTA Happy Hour will be on Monday, November 21st, location to be determined. Will have flyers for the next meeting.

Legal Aid, Cathy Grieshop

- No Report

Professional Rights and Responsibilities, Mike Sears

- Working with many members on maternity leave.
- Worked with Addie Tobey on Professional Growth Plans.
- Insurance Meeting November 17th, 2016.
- Received clarification about Middle School teachers getting paid for missed planning periods.
- Worked on supplemental contracts for academics and athletics. Will continue to work on supplementals for clubs and activities.

Evaluation, Lena Paskewitz

- Observations and Conferences have to be mutually agreed on for date and time.
- Professional Growth Plans are for the benefit of the teacher, they are not for administration to decide.
- Walk-throughs are now called Informal Observations.

Building Representative Reports

Boulevard, Angela Anderson

- There are major concerns about fire regulations.
- Issues are in the process of being resolved.
    - Lag time dealing with the response time of technology issues.
    - Baby grand piano in a teacher's classroom, they are now removing it.

Fernway, Andree Hassell

- No skills teachers assigned to the 4th grade. There is no plan in sight.

Lomond, Donita Townsend

- Concerns about compensation for summer hours.
- Questions about reclassification.
- Is there a flow chart of some type of document explaining job responsibilities? Is there one being created? Seem to be getting the run-around about who is responsible for what.
- Bad language is on the sidewalk by Lomond Elementary. It has been there for some time, when will it be removed?

Mercer, Nicole Smith

- Staff is awaiting summer writing payment; documentation has been sent from Mercer to Central Office multiple times.
- Roof project was quite intrusive for Mercer; it also resulted in multiple classrooms flooding, causing teachers and students to be displaced and countless materials and personal items being permanently damaged.
- Teachers have inquired about the timeline of items being reordered and being reimbursed for damaged/lost instructional and personal items.
- Concern from the flood is one classroom is still displaced and IB Self Study visit is around the corner.
- Big thank you to James Dean for working diligently to help teachers and students make the best of the situation and be able to continue with daily routines and effective learning, even with the circumstances of the flood. Teachers who were impacted by the flood have been patient and understanding; staff joined together to help each other with materials and daily structure.
- Questions and concerns regarding the reimbursement for materials (and time spent) in rooms that are out of compliance with the Fire code. We have been extended until after IB Self Study, but will be responsible for removing all materials after the visit.
- Ongoing situation for resolution with submission of teacher waiver forms in accordance with fulfilling allotted contract time for lunch and planning for MD unit teachers, with appropriate coverage during those allotted times

Onaway Paula Klausner

- Thank you for helping the Intervention Specialist and their lunch period. Specialist no longer has to walk from building to building eating their lunch.
- Issues with fire regulation codes.
- Health Inspector said that the Art Room needed an eye wash unit.

Woodbury, Angela Goodrum

- Teachers were told to treat fabric items in the classroom and they would not have to be removed through an email. They were told that they still had to be removed. Will they be reimbursed for purchased items?
- Teachers are asking the Woodbury Technology person for help with their concerns. The technology person never gets back to them, should they go directly to the Help Desk instead?
- When the Woodbury clock/bell tower was refurbished this summer, some additional land/hardscaping work was done in front of the Woodbury steps. It noticed the architectural stones that surrounded the landscaping bed were removed and not replaced. Also, the brick used to pave the area in front of the steps is concrete pavers, not clay bricks. These clay pavers are cheap and an inferior product to clay pavers. Answers please…

Middle School, Kathy Manning

- An inaccurate statement regarding counselors posted in the recent SHTA newsletter under Middle School Concerns needs to be clarified: School Counselors get paid units for attending the Summer Leadership Institute and per diem rate for the scheduling work that must take place over the summer like every other counselor in the district.
    - This statement is a correction to what was reported in the last SHTA newsletter. SMS counselors have always been paid the same units as other teachers who attended the Summer Leadership Institute.
- Testing Challenges: On-going and frustrating. We have met with administration 5 times to resolve these issues. Our principal has assured us that they will be resolved before the next testing date. Stay tuned.
- Planning Period Disappearance: Final resolution to the multiple scheduling of 504, IEP and parent meetings being scheduled during teacher's planning time. Per Human Resources, Our Association and administrators it has been agreed that every effort will be made to schedule these meetings during Raider Time (3:00-3:45). If they cannot be scheduled during this time, teachers are advised to attend and then submit a pay slip to secretary. In the case of 504 and IEP meetings, it is mandatory that 1 member of the regular education team be present.
- Can some type of symbol (like eyeglasses for IEP) be created in Progress Book for indication of a 504?
- Noise pollution: Repeated requests were made over the years to not mow under classroom windows during the school day. Finally reached an agreement with our awesome maintenance crew.
- Reviewing excessive paperwork (daily lesson plans). Are we the only building?
- PGP Goals: Many members receiving their PGP goals back and being directed to include a MAP goal. PGP goals are specific to the individual and should be connected to previous evaluations, and their choice. Still under discussion.
- Should building psychologists be evaluated by building administrators or central office/qualified to evaluate? (currently building admin).
- Linda Roth has resigned as building rep. Do we need to facilitate another election?

High School, James Schmidt

- Faculty and administration from other buildings as well as at the High School are allowing their high school children to drive a car with a faculty permit and park it in the faculty parking lot as well as on the street in the area reserved for faculty permit holders. **Please ask your members and administrators to stop this practice, as we are very short on parking spaces**. **Mr. Kuehnle has said that in the near future, students will be told to move their car on the first offense, and after that, we will tow these cars. The High School parking lots and the designated permit parking only areas around the Oval are for faculty, staff and visitors only.**
- I have been following up with Mr. Kuehnle regarding our need for new paraprofessional staff as well as intervention Lab staff. There are 276 students that require small group testing per their IEPs and 25 that get 1 on 1 testing. There is a concern that these students are not receiving these accommodations and that we are out of compliance. Mr. Kuehnle has met several times with Dr. Breeden and has been asked to produce evidence and data to justify these needs, which he believes that he has done. We are waiting to hear back from Central Administration regarding this hiring.
- With the switch to being a Google District, some teachers have expressed concerns that there are students and families that lack access to computer resources, due to lack of hardware (computers) or internet access or both.

- We resolved an issue regarding the time at which students meet with Mr. Kuehnle for his Principal's Advisory Committee. They will be meeting on Tuesday mornings and not miss any further class time.
- Several teachers expressed a great deal of concern about the nature of some questions that students on the Superintendent's Advisory Committee were being asked, namely which teachers allow you to use headphones in class, which teachers allow you to put your head down in class, etc. Students expressed to a teacher that this line of questioning made them feel extremely uncomfortable.
- The new process for Professional Learning reimbursement is tied to completing the feedback in My Learning Plan. I have been told that not filling this out promptly may delay the reimbursement of personal funds that teachers spent to better their craft and we find this troubling.

Support Teachers, Bonnie Gordon

- Forming committees for Support Teachers
- Concern about 1 Support Teacher who has 24 IEPs and a study hall vs. another Support Teacher with a study hall. On the same pay scale.

Old Business

- None

New Business

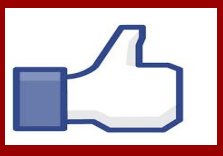
- None

Good of the Order

- Thank you Fernway, Andee for a wonderful hotdog feast. Baseball Game Meal!!

Motion to adjourn meeting made by James Schmidt, seconded by Chante Thomas-Taylor.
Meeting adjourned at 5:49PM

Respectfully submitted,
Darlene Garrison, Secretary

The SHTA is on   ***us @***

http://www.facebook.com/pages/Shaker-Heights-Teachers-Association

Crunched by the Numbers

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.

There are three kinds of lies: lies, damn lies, and data.

— Mark Twain (actually, Twain said "statistics," not "data," but it's close enough)

The Ohio Department of Education has given us an F in "Gap Closing" (which is pretty much what my wife gave me after I attempted to insulate the house before a particularly cold and drafty winter). The sweaty toilers of the ODE engine room shoveled our numbers into the great cruncher. The digits tumbled into the spinning teeth of its mighty algorithms. It chewed, it cogitated, it spat out a judgment. Shaker: F.

First of all, I'd like to point out that 86 percent of Ohio's 608 school districts flunked this category. If we teachers gave a test that 86 percent of our students failed, we would assume there was something wrong with the test. But this percentage is a political, not educational decision.

In any case, the data makes us look bad. Or does it? It all depends on how you chew it. For example, our African-American and Economically Disadvantaged (ED) kids, the ones on the lower tier of our gap, scored better than the white kids in Cleveland and in several other Ohio districts. Where's your gap now, ODE? Our ED kids performed vastly better than the same demographic groups—regardless of race—around the state and around the country. Might that be a sign of something we're doing right?

The problem is that no matter how well the lower tier of our gap performs, it's being compared to a group whose numbers are severely distorted by our very top-performing kids. The district rightly boasts about our graduates who are Presidential Scholars, National Merit Semi-Finalists, Ivy Leaguers, etc. etc. But the exceptional number of these exceptional students is proof *not* that we're great educators, but that we have a freakish concentration of freakishly smart kids. According to "Measuring What Matters," we are the 17th most educated community in the nation. That puts us squarely in freak territory: the top tenth of the top one percent of the 40,000 American cities and towns. We have many kids who come from families in which not only both parents have advanced degrees, but all four grandparents went to college. Most of these kids are going to be good students. Many will be superstars. And when you throw high income into the mix, the superstars are issued capes and wrist web-shooters and bullet-deflecting bracelets.

We do a tremendous disservice to our students—in any disaggregated group—when we compare them to these outliers. If we want to construe any meaningful lessons from the data, we ought to toss out these off-the-chart scores before we do any calculations.

We often hear something like this: "We can close the achievement gap, because we are Shaker." I would put it the other way around: We *can't* close the achievement gap, because we are Shaker—a community with extreme inequalities in income and family educational background. Certainly we should work on narrowing the gap. Certainly we *must* bust our butts every day to narrow the gap. But if we think we can erase it, we're chasing unicorns.

The gap was not caused by schools; schools can't make it go away. For one thing, the kids arrive—whether first grade, kindergarten or pre-school—with an achievement gap already firmly in place, already gaping wide. We can create programs for the disadvantaged kids, we can work relentlessly on pulling them upward, but the gap may not budge. This is because the advantages don't stop pouring in for the advantaged

kids: nightly book readings, educational toys, museum memberships, tutors, psychologists, painting lessons, pottery classes, iPads, cameras, chemistry sets, horses, hockey teams, telescopes, cello camps, complete sets of Harry Potter. The parents not only understand the homework, they have the time to help with it—and also with the dioramas, book-binding, mousetrap-powered cars, baking soda volcanoes. As they get older, the disadvantaged kids get more and more opportunities in Shaker. I'm proud of all the programs that our district sponsors to help these kids. The energy and money we put into these problems are exemplary. But advantaged kids also get wonderful opportunities in school. And on the weekend they go to Shakespeare plays; when there's a day off they shadow their parents at the Cleveland Clinic; for spring break they go scuba diving in Costa Rica; over the summer they tour the museums of Europe.

Our achievement gap not only doesn't close over the 12 years of schooling, it grows slightly wider. And here we make another serious mistake when we interpret the data. We assume that, if we were a truly equitable district, the data would show it by having a gap that decreased, or at worst, held steady. But this assumes that learning is a straight, upward-slanting line, a steady accumulation of knowledge and skills. This is a fundamental misunderstanding of how the brain educates itself: not by inputting information, but by loading software. Growth is exponential. The more you learn, the better you get at learning. You learn faster; you retain more; your brain makes new connections and quantum leaps. Our achievement gap widens only slightly over the school years in Shaker, and this is a genuine achievement.

It appears that our district has begun to supplant the term "achievement gap" with "opportunity gap." I haven't heard the rationale for this decision, but it seems to me that we are reaching for whips with which to flagellate ourselves. "Opportunity gap" implies that the fault lies squarely with us: for surely we control what opportunities we give our students. But it is *our society* that has an opportunity gap. And this colossal injustice manifests itself in schools as an achievement gap.

What the data shows us is that, in our little community, we're doing a damn good job at battling an epic problem—a problem as wide as the nation and as deep as the most hidden and poorly understood mechanisms of the human mind. A problem as old as the Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria. Before that, the data is kinda murky.

I am certainly not advocating complacency. I'm not saying we should stop trying to close the gap. We should strive with every fiber of our teaching souls to reach and engage and inspire the kids on the lower tier of our gap. The obstacles in front of them are a monstrous injustice.

But when we hold ourselves to the impossible benchmarks of the ODE, when we hold up illusions as our standards, we not only set ourselves up for failure and recriminations, but we do a real disservice to the kids we want to help. For some of these kids are truly brilliant, some of them are pushing themselves to the limit, day in and day out, some of them are walking miracles. And are we telling them that no matter how hard they work, no matter how high they achieve, it's not enough?

The failing state report card has led to a lot of hand-wringing in the district, and some urgent communication to parents. But—can I tell you a secret? This is one hell of a good school system. We know it; most of the community knows it. Personally, I'm proud to be a Shaker teacher. I'm humbled by the work of my colleagues. The only message we need to send regarding the news from Columbus is to the ODE itself: take your report card and shove it where the data don't shine.

There. I feel better already. And now I need to get back to work.

Chris Cotton,
SHHS English Teacher
SHTA Member

Mix and mingle with all of your SHTA friends at

Buffalo Wild Wings!



Harvard Park

26200 Harvard Road, Warrensville

Monday, November 21, 2016

4:00 p.m.

(PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS ON MONDAY, 11/21 AND TUESDAY, 11/22)

Shaker Schools Foundation News for SHTA

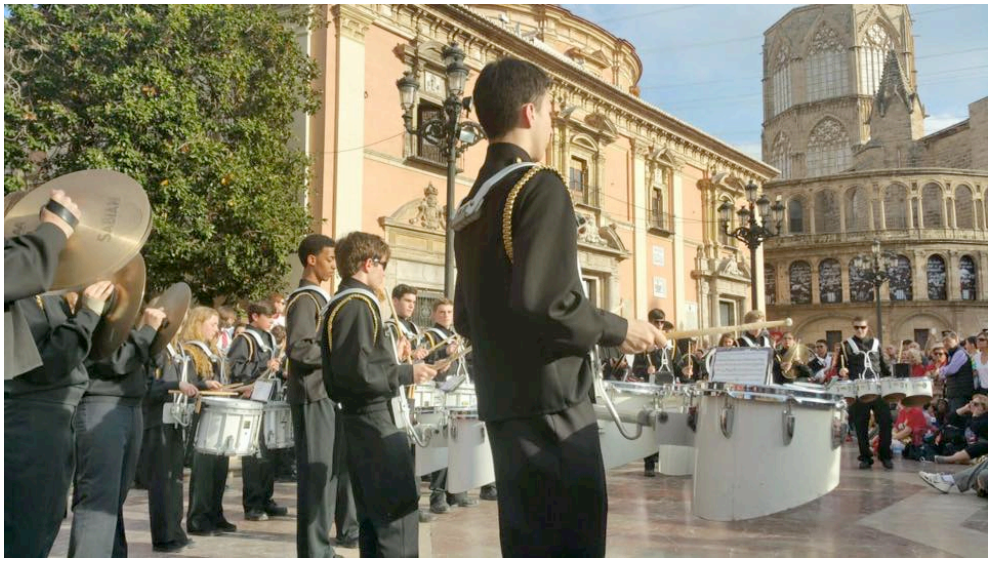
SHHS Alumni Reunions

The Foundation welcomed the classes of 1956, 1966, 1986, and 1996 this past summer and during September. They toured the High School (and some of their elementary schools) and reconnected with people, places, and memories. Many alumni talk fondly of their teachers – we hope you know how important you are in our students' lives, and we thank you for your dedication.

Donors' Gifts at Work

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, the Shaker Schools Foundation infused more than $235,000 into the District during the 2015-2016 academic year. We helped purchase materials for libraries at Boulevard, Fernway, and the High School; continued to provide funds for the Audrey Stout Learning Garden; underwrote student travel to England, Japan, and Spain; and raised an additional $150,500 for Shaker's First Class!

The Foundation also supported academic teaching and learning through teachers' enrichment grants and through special project funding for the International Baccalaureate Program, engineering activities, and master classes in music and theater. To help struggling students, the Foundation funded the MAC Scholars Program and supplemental reading activities for kindergarteners, and provided supplies to Summer Academy students.



The Shaker Heights High School Marching Band impressed all their audiences in Spain this past March.

You Can Help Even More

The Foundation thanks faculty members who have donated through the Charity Choice campaign. Please watch for this year's Charity Choice email, and know that you can make a tax-deductible gift at any time by sending us a check or visiting shaker.org/foundation.aspx.

FELLOWSHIP GRANT APPLICATION

Please complete the bottom portion of this sheet and return it to Matt Zucca at Fernway School by November 4th.

The $100 SHTA Fellowship Grant can be used for but not limited to the following items listed below:

- Seminars
- Professional conferences
- Course work
- Membership fees for professional associations excluding the SHTA

The $100 <u>may not</u> be used for classroom materials or supplies.

The awards are intended to professionally benefit the recipients, and in turn, benefit students.

1. The applicant must be a member of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association and expect to continue teaching in the Shaker Heights City Schools.
2. The money may be used at the discretion of the recipient with the provisions that the activities will benefit the professional growth of the teacher, and in turn, the students with which he/she works.
3. The entire fellowship money must be used between November 2016 and September 30, 2017
4. In the event the recipient is unable to use the award within the allotted time period prescribed no money will be issued.

FELLOWSHIP GRANT APPLICATION return slip

Attention Matt Zucca

Fernway Elementary School

Applicant Name _____

Building _____