SHAKER HEIGHTS TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

SHTA NEWSLETTER No. 3

January, 1971
Editor, Burton Randall

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:

As a result of my skeletal outline of our precedent-setting Master Contract proposal in the November Newsletter, I have been asked to elaborate upon the key sections of this proposal. Negotiation procedures prevent me from going into an exact explanation of each section at this time; however, I will attempt to write in general as to what most Master Contracts contain.

Master Contracts are an attempt on the part of professional associations to solve the problems of teachers growing out of their concerns in regard to the problems of teaching supplies, class size, salary schedules, etc. In Phoenix, Arizona, this document is known as a "Educational Agreement". In Denver, it is called a "Professional Affairs Agreement" or a "Personnel Policies Memorandum". By any name, the intent is the same. A Master Contract is the reaching of a Legal and Binding agreement between the employer (School Board) and the employees (teachers) as to the salaries, hours, and other conditions of work.

These negotiated agreements between boards and teachers have included a wide range of topics. The following topics are to be found in most proposals:

PROCEDURE: Most Master Contracts begin with an agreement as to how items will be negotiated, who will represent the two sides to negotiate and the duration of the agreement when it is reached. Most school boards also include a section outlining their legal responsibility to run the school system.

ASSOCIATION AND TEACHER RIGHTS: A significant part of negotiated agreements is that section which guarantees the rights of teachers and the organization. The legal rights of teachers and their right to be represented by the association are prime considerations. As to the organization, it is usually given the right to use the buildings, conduct business on school time, use bulletin boards, and use the school mail service, the right to name members to school administrative committees, payroll deductions, and the right to represent teachers.

Citizenship rights of teachers are often covered in detail in this section, as well as the matter of academic freedom. The availability of a teacher's personnel files to the individual teacher may be included here, as well as the board's guarantee to back teachers in matters of student discipline. The guarantee of members to attend local, state, and national meetings of the organization is often covered in this section also.

EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS: Much of what is considered employment conditions has been previously covered by personnel policies within school districts. By placing these conditions in a Master Contract, individual teachers are more aware of their rights when they are on the job. Each teacher is given a copy of the Master Contract; therefore, teachers are more fully aware of what their employment conditions are.

Items included in this section may be the basic requirements made of all teachers. The manner in which teachers are assigned should be covered in detail, as well as the procedures for filling vacancies, granting promotions, or effecting teacher transfers. The evaluation of the teachers' performance is usually covered under employment conditions.

LEAVES OF ABSENCE: Leaves may cover sickness, bereavement, religious holidays, personal business, conferences and workshops, legal proceedings, sabbaticals, professional leaves, work experience, maternity, adoption, military and jury duty.

Such details as the length of the leave, remuneration during the leave, how fringe benefits are handled during the leave, how one must qualify for the leave, and how one may return to work after a leave are all important matters that every teacher should be aware of; therefore, they are included in the Master Contract.

SALARIES: The salary schedule is not the only part of this section. As most teachers know, the application of the salary schedule can take a long section of any contract. Teachers are concerned about degree allowances, prior experience, credit for part-time or adult education teaching and the schedule for being paid.

Extra duty pay schedules are also a part of the teachers' salary schedules. These cover all of the coaching assignments, club assignments, teaching in the evening school or adult education, attending conferences or workshops at the request of the administration or board and any reimbursement needed for travel to perform the job.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS: Grievance procedures may be a very long and involved process. Usually a good grievance procedure will go through at least four levels, ending in binding arbitration at the last level. For such a procedure, there are very definite steps which should be outlined.

In the final analysis, anything relative to the relationship between the teacher and the board can be included in a Master Contract if both parties will agree to it. That is why most associations, when they first begin the process of developing a Master Contract, survey their members quite thoroughly (as we did early this year) to determine their exact wishes. The Master Contract should reflect what the teachers and the Board agree will bring about an improved educational system for the school community.

Sal Fabrizio
President - SHTA

IN MEMORIAM

Mrs. Loretta B. Jones, former assistant librarian at Woodbury, passed away after severe illness. Her colleagues wish to express their sense of loss of a close and personal friend, one who was a warm human being and a humanizing member of the Woodbury family.

LOYAL SERVICE:

President Sal Fabrizio has written to Business Manager Arthur H. Erholm on the occasion of his retirement to express the gratitude and best wishes of the Association. We all wish Mr. Erholm many years of relaxed enjoyment of his newfound freedom from the many tasks of hi position in a growing, building school system.

WE'RE AT THE BOTTOM:

We like to regard ourselves as at the top, and so we are in the quality of education the Shaker Schools provide. How well are the teachers paid who provide this education? Here, from Salary-Tenure Committee Chairman Ed Wachtel, is a sampling of salary information from some of the other school systems among the Lighthouse Districts, a group of which Shaker Heights is rightly considered a part. All of these figures are for the 1970-71 school year. Of course the systems may differ somewhat in fringe benefits, and they differ in the number of years it takes to reach the maximum (the highest district has eighteen steps whereas Shaker has fourteen), but the figures on salary do paint an interesting and discomfortingpicture: among the fourteen systems in this sampling, Shaker is at the bottom in the remuneration received by its experienced, permanent staff. A fact possibly related to this is that of the high school's 116 teachers, some 47 do not have tenure; in most instances, that is, have not been here long enough to gain tenure. This is a very high proportion for a school which recognizes the value of experience.

SYSTEM	B.A. MIN.	M. A. MAX.	NO. OF STEPS
Valley Stream, N.Y.	$8100	$13,875	12
Deer Park, N.Y.	8950	19,092	18
Highland Park, Ill	8100	16,500	13
Scarsdale, N.Y.	7900	16,401	17
Bronxville, N.Y.	8275	16,300	15
Edina, Minn	7500	15,521	12
Lower Merion, Pa.	7600	14,600	13
Birmingham, Mich	8225	15,125	11
West Hartford, Conn.	7800	14,400	15
Beverly Hills, Cal.	7776	15,083	Not Available
Oak Park, Mich.	8200	15,100	" " "
Manhassett, N.Y.	8200	16,000	" " "
Great Neck, N.Y.	8250	16,500	" " "
Shaker Heights, Ohio	6700	13,400	14

PUBLIC RELATIONS:

Chairman Larry Maniglia is seeking ideas about useful things his committee might do. Sal Fabrizio said in Executive Board meeting he thought the most important task would be to work for passage of the levy this spring. Dick Oberdorfer suggested that Larry arrange a personal meeting with Dr. Lawson to offer the services of SHTA wherever we could best help the levy campaign. Another job for the committee, possible working jointly with the Legislative committee, is to promote letter writing to the representatives of our various districts, urging tax reform.

DIFFERENTIATED STAFFING:

Commenting in the December 17 Representative Council meeting, on the results of the opinion poll on differentiated staffing, which are posted in each building, President Fabrizio said he thought the vote indicated two things: first, the staff is generally satisfied with the present salary ratio schedule; second, they want to see specific planning for any radical change in staffing patterns before indicating clear approval or disapproval.

ZUT, ALORS!

Members of the high school staff have started a Gourmet Club. First meeting, January 7, was a progressive dinner, eminently suitable to a progressive school. Progress of the opposing faction of dieters is less easy to weigh.

SHTA, INC.:

The Association is now officially a corporation in Ohio, Number 404742 - one more step in the officers' efforts to make it a still stronger, fully professional organization. The nearly unanimous support of the members for this move (259 to 12) demonstrates with what force and confidence Shaker teachers are moving. Incorporation helps to protect officers and members legally, and preserves tax-exempt status.

ASSOCIATION THANKS DRUG COUNCIL WITH CHECK:

Organized by a dedicated group of volunteers and staffed by trained personnel under the management of the Jewish Family Service Association, a center where young people of the community can go to get information or help with drug problems has been open two nights a week since November in Christ Church. Along with many other local organizations, Shaker teachers are grateful for this much-needed service to the community. The Representative Council recently voted a $100 donation towards its support. We are concerned for the welfare of our students beyond the classroom, aware of their problems, and aware that real human relations transcend the black-white issue.

SHTA CONSTITUTION UP FOR REVIEW:

Vice-president Dick Oberdorfer and a committee of volunteers will soon begin scrutinizing the constitution and bylaws of the Association for needed revisions and up-dating. Suggestions are requested (in writing, please) from anyone who has a beef about how elections are run, budgets are set up and spent, duties are assigned, or any other aspect of SHTA operation under the regulation of the present constitution and bylaws.

NEA:

The 108th Annual Meeting of the National Education Association will be held in Detroit, Michigan, June 27-July 2, 1971. In compliance with the OEA by-Laws, all delegates must be members of OEA, NEA, district association, and local association where eligible. Qualified members in the school system or association may secure and file delegate petitions through the office of the Executive Secretary of the Ohio Education Association no later than January 30, 1971. If sent by mail, they must bear a postmark of no later than January 29. The address is 225 Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215.

MORE ON SUMMER SCHOOL:

The second issue of the Newsletter, quoting the more interest-provoking comments of individual teachers in the OEA survey "How Good Are Our Schools". pricked up ears, and perhaps a bristle or two, with the statement "Summer School is dead."

The presence of a quoted statement in a newspaper means that one person thought it and said it; it is not an official, collective, representative judgment. As your editor understands them, a newspaper's articles and editorials do not say those things which society, or authority, thinks should be said, as publicity releases; it says those things which the people it represents believe to be true and to be worth saying. It seeks, not to raise issues for the sake of raising them, but to bring into the open subjects and questions of serious concern, and to explore them. This newspaper is especially devoted to the expression of what teachers think.

No one who knows the thoroughness and care with which Kenneth Caldwell handles the administration of our summer school would describe that aspect of it as other than excellent. And obviously summer school at Shaker offers courses which are very much alive. Nonetheless, one of our members seriously meant what he said, about a part of summer school; and surely it is possible to believe, as your editor does, that we have a very good school system, without thinking everything in it is perfect, or pretending it is for propaganda purpose.

Kenneth Caldwell expresses the wish to receive any and all ideas from teachers for the strengthening of our summer-school program.

Therefore I set out to find what Shaker Teachers do think about summer school. There follows what I have so far. Future issues will frankly present other ideas and opinions as received. If you wish to be heard, then, write it. Several teachers have already expressed an interest in writing on this subject. Future issues will therefore probably pursue it.

The remedial English program presented to junior high students in Shaker's summer school is often a depressing, confusing time for both student and teacher. Other than a limited class size, little exists that is conducive to learning. To begin with, the idea of a remedial class, a class designed for failures, stigmatizes the students before the first period begins. By in large, the students know they are in summer school as punishment, justly or unjustly, for past sins. They must simply mark time for six weeks before parole. Any harm done to the student's ego or behavior by failure during the year is only furthered when he finds himself confined in a building on a clear summer morning, especially when every student around him is also branded and has like feeling.

And just what punishment in the form of material is to be doled out? Students, and often their parents, feel that summer school English should concentrate on that area in which their child failed. Areas can be many, including grammar, spelling lists, vocabulary work, and, only sometimes, reading and communication. My first summer teaching school, I concentrated on reading and writing, only to be asked by a student, "When do we get our grammar books?" He felt he was being short-changed by working only in basic communications.

One last item makes accomplishment in summer school difficult; the tremendous variation in student ability. Although most students attend because of failure or low grades, the reasons for their failure in no way make them a homogeneous group. Reasons for failure include laziness, missed notebooks, insolence, teacher conflicts, or parental punishment; thus, students who are acceptable readers and writers are in school for reasons only tangential to to language skills.

Mixing these students with those who honestly cannot read and write but adds to the difficulty of planning work for a group as large as twenty students.

The best way to correct these ills is to first cancel the course in remedial English. To simply reorganize a course that has such a broad range of both students and material---to reorganize a course that is rooted in student failure, is useless. A better plan would be to structure a series of enrichment courses aimed at specific areas in language skills and for which the student would be carefully checked as to need. Such a course in reading attack skills is now offered and has been very successful in serving student needs. The success of this course suggests that the program could be expanded to other language area, such as composition, literature, and linguistic-study skills. The courses would be offered to volunteer students, counseled to attend by teacher and staff but never required under penalty of failure. Above all, students with discipline or adjustment problems must not have the course waved before them like the infuriating red flag it can be. I realize this calls for a major revision of the Shaker grading system, but I have yet to see a child who failed because of discipline improve when locked in a hated classroom during the summer.

With just such an expansion of the English program, the Shaker summer school could better serve the specific needs of the students while also removing the stigma and force attached to a remedial program. With creative teaching, summer school English might become a positive learning experience rather than a six week purgatory.

Jim DeMersseman
Byron Junior High

REPORT TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION JANUARY 4, 1971

TRIE - Tax Reform for Improved Education is the outgrowth of the trend of the late 1960's for voters to reject adequate financing for Ohio's public schools.

The O.E.A. hired a public opinion poll firm from New Jersey to find out how the people of Ohio felt about matters relating to schools. Some of the important findings were:

Education is a basic social responsibility and ranks among the top issues of concern.
Public schools have a favorable rating.
The state should increase its support of education.
Local control should be kept.
Ohio does not tax its citizens fairly and equally.
Against income related tax alone.
Favor income related tax with reduction of property tax.
State legislature should act on problems of finance in Education.

At a meeting of O.E.A. leaders in Columbus on October 10, 1970, Mrs. Helen Bain, president of N.E.A., pointed out that Ohio has the unenviable position of having had more schools close for financial reasons than any other state in the Union. Ten schools closed in Ohio during 1969.

Everyone here is aware that tax levies for support of schools are in deep trouble. Just last November and December levies in Ohio suffered their greatest defeat in the history of the state.

According to the report of the rankings of the states with respect to various measures of finance, Ohio ranks poorly. Therefore TRIE was born to inform people of our plight and to act to see that tax reform becomes a reality in Ohio.

This program is a public relations information project through the use of the media with advertisements, bumper stickers, and meeting with various concerned groups.

The final phase of the effort is still to come as the General Assembly moves through the task of devising means of providing adequate support for Ohio's schools.

Governor-elect Gilligan in speaking to the O.E.A. delegate assembly cautioned everyone that the answers to the pressing problems in school finance will not come easily and that there is a lag of a year or more on funding after legislation is passed. Thus 1971 is a very serious year in terms of school finance.

We hope this effort will be successful and that Ohio will become the leader it should be.

Respectfully,

Donald C. Scherer

OEA DELEGATION REPORT:

This year's Delegate Assembly was an extremely active convention as the 1196 delegates considered the more than 100 pieces of business brought before tham. To illustrate just how busy, a special session was called for Friday evening after the banquet since we had not yet completed all business from Thursday morning's session.

It is not possible here to discuss all that occurred; so we have attempted to put things in some sort of order and indicate the general patterns that emerged.

Govenor-elect Gilligan spoke to the issue most prevalent in everyone's thoughts, deeds and words; tax-reform. This is, without a doubt, the number one issue voted to reconvene in the Spring, date to be determined by the O.E.A. Executive Board. First on the Spring Agenda will be what action(s) should be taken additionally toward gaining the necessary tax-reform (much will depend on what the General Assembly has done at that point). We were all reminded, however, that reform takes some time and that when (note, not if) tax reform comes the mechanics of "setting up" will necessarily be somewhat slow. We in SHTA are in the meantime all needed to "sell" the merits of the May levy in Shaker. Still the single most important contribution to excellence in education in Shaker is the job done by the teaching staff. Each of us is capable of doing this "selling" job required of teachers, and in maintaining our status among the "Lighthouse Districts".

The second item on the Spring Agenda will be to consider the some half-dozen motions concerning unification that were tabled. The idea of unity in all professional organization (SHTA, NEOTA, OEA, NEA) seemed to be a rather emotional one at the convention and your O.E.A. representatives will be seeking your thoughts for guidance on the subject.

Your representatives were mandated to work on three specific items at the convention. Here are our results:

1) Work for 30 and out (retirement).

- motion to enable retirement at age 60 years with 30 years service, also to include other benefits, was withdrawn at the last minute because of press of time, but will be considered at another time. Since we were not aware in advance that this was to occur we were not able to take action, but will pursue the concept at the next assembly.

2) Change in method of electing O.E.A. delegates.

- this requires a change in By-Laws which in turn requires at least 60 days notice to O.E.A. membership. This will be turned over to our legislative committee for consideration.

3) Seek a change in Ohio Law to liberalize sabbatical leave policy.

- the O.E.A. passed the concept of liberalized sabbatical leave as a policy position. Your Shaker delegation brought a motion to the floor to change the position from one of policy to one of initiation for action (which literally means to seek a change in the law through General Assembly action). The assembly, although agreeing with the concept, felt that since tax-reform was the number one priority, sabbatical leave should remain, at this time, a policy position and narrowly defeated our motion. As a side note, your delegation did manage to be the only group to get the assembly to over-ride the O.E.A. presiden's ruling that our motion was granted and carried. As you can see, it did not accomplish our original goal, however.

Some other considerations brought before the convention.

I) Legislative Committee report:

1. Ohio tax structure revised to include graduated state income tax on corporate and business profits and on individual adjusted gross income. (Passed)

2. Collective bargaining rights guaranteed. (Passed)

3. Summer School salaries proportional to regular base salary. (Passed)

4. Work to eliminate all non-tenured temporary certificate holdees within 5 years except for vocational education. (Passed)

5. Building assignments must be approved by principal (Failed)

II) Other Motions brought to the floor.

1. Motion to enable O.E.A. Executive Committee to use means they deem necessary to bring about tax-reform (Passed)

2. Motion preventing endorsement of political candidates by O.E.A. Executive Committee unless entire membership is polled. (Failed))

3. Motion to sell all O.E.A. stock in E & E Insurance Company by January 1, 1972. (Failed)

4. Motion recommending that every Administrator, Principal and Supervisor return to the classroom one year out of every 5 years. (Failed)

There were, of course, many many others brought to the floor to be considered. If you wish information on something in particular contact any of the representative listed below.

Dick Oberdorfer, Vice-president
Chuck Hendrickson
Don Scherer
Don Vogel

ANNOUNCEMENT OF:

UNISERV FIELD STAFF POSITION
FOR
ST. LOUIS SUBURBAN TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
10330 Old Olive Street Road
St. Louis, Missouri 63141

The St. Louis Suburban Teachers Association is now receiving applications for the position of a Uniserv Field Staff Representative. Apply immediately. The Executive Committee desires to fill the position by February 1st, 1971.

GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS

Successful classroom teaching background. Active member of the United Profession. Master's Degree desirable. Meaningful experience in working with local, state and/or national professional associations during their educational experience. Ability to direct, supervise, and coordinate local association activities. Knowledge of School Law and School Finance desirable.

DUTIES

More specifically the duties of the Uniserv Field Staff will include: 1) Negotiations consultation; 2) Administration of the Grievance Procedure; 3) Membership consultation; 4) Public Relations Assistance; 5) Management of local association publications; 6) Research Assistance; 7) Legislative and political activity; 8) Co-ordination of office staff and procedures; 9) Co-ordination and supervision of the local association financial program.

SALARY: Commensurate with background and experience.

FRINGE BENEFITS: Package which include insurance, paid vacation, paid holidays, personal leave, sick leave, and retirement.

ALL COMMUNICATIONS WILL BE TREATED AS CONFIDENTIAL

A letter will constitute a formal application and should be accompanied by a complete resume with references. All correspondence should be addressed to:

Vito Maniaci, Chairman of Uniserv
Staff Field Screening Committee
St. Louis Suburban Teachers Asscciation
10330 Old Olive Street Road
St. Louis, Missouri 63141

POLITICAL ACTION:

Comments from members of the O.E.A. Convention delegation chaired by Dick Oberdorfer made clear that it will be a long hard fight to get a good tax bill through the legislature, and pressure on our representative should begin soon. SHTA members should be especially alert to methods suggested for returning tax money to school districts and fight against any which would discriminate against districts like Shaker which do support their schools.

MEMBERSHIP:

Final figure is 461 out of a possible 465, the clearest possible demonstration that President Sal Fabrizio and the Negotiating Team do speak for Shaker teachers, do represent the will of the vast majority of Shaker teachers in pressing for major salary improvement.

KUDOS (BUT NO BAKSHEESH)

Particular thanks for help in putting together this issue go to the named contributors and to the high school's Jean Brattin, SHTA Recording Secretary, for her excellent minutes and good ideas.