

IMPORTANT DATES

May 4 thru May 9: National
Teacher Appreciation Week

Tuesday, May 6: National Teacher
Appreciation Day

Monday, May 10: Representative
Council @ Onaway, 4:30 PM

Tuesday, May 13: Board of
Education Meeting, HS Upper
Cafeteria, 6:00 PM

Thursday, May 22: District
Recognition Reception @ SHHS,
3:30 PM

SHTA *news*

April 21, 2014

ISSUE NO. 7

Message From the President

I begin this letter with an appeal to our membership. Please give generously to our PAC Levy Fund. I know it feels like we are in a good place with our community and we have faith in the tradition of levy passage in our district. However, stakes are too high to warrant anything less than our full engagement in the process. As you know, we cannot give to political campaigns as an organizational body due to our by-laws. However, we do have a PAC that can. Donating \$10, \$20, \$30 or more to the Levy Campaign goes a long way not only in supporting levy efforts, but also in letting the community know where we stand - alongside our students, advocating for the best education that we can provide. By this time last levy cycle, our members had already contributed over \$3,000 to the PAC levy fund. We have donated a bit more than a tenth of that thus far. Please send your check to Bill Scanlon at the High School written to "PAC of SHTA" with "Levy Fund" in the memo line.

Likewise, I encourage you to volunteer with the SHTA through our PAC for a levy phone call night. You are surrounded by good people from our community and the other bargaining units in the district to talk to other community members about supporting the levy. As someone who knows the importance of our budget to making programs in this district work, your voices are invaluable on the phone. Our Executive Board will be making phone calls. When Eileen Sweeney sends out the opportunity via email, I hope that you sign up and show up as well.

It's been a busy Spring thus far. I dealt with disciplinary and evaluation issues throughout the district. I met with Mrs. Robinson and Dr. Stokes concerning evaluations, transfers, building issues, and upcoming district initiatives. I met with Vice President Matt Zucca, Secretary Darlene Garrison, and Treasurer Bill Scanlon to discuss Association Issues. I talked to Ouimet Smith, Registrar, concerning future ALICE security training. I attended the AdvancED accreditation presentation at the High School. I conversed with Dr. Hutchings about upcoming negotiations and district concerns. Finally, I conferred with Erin Herbruck and Lisa Scott about eTPES notifications, indicating only that teachers names have been entered into the online system, and extending the specialist evaluation deadline to May 30th.

On a final note, I would like to respond to questions about teacher retirement and the SHTA's role. First of all, we do not have a retirement committee because the retirement process is so individualized that we don't believe you should consult with anyone but your own STRS advisor. Secondly, our district's protocol for Severance Pay is in the contract. Feel free to contact your representative council members with questions relating to contractual issues or peruse the contract yourself at www.shtaweb.org. However, reserve those vital retirement questions for your STRS

advisor. These decisions are too important to make with anything less than first hand information.

It continues to be a pleasure to serve as President of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association. We are a group of consummate professionals who provide great service to our students, our schools, our peers, and our profession. I encourage you to make a public affirmation of our role by contributing to the PAC Levy Fund. I will be doing the same. Feel free to contact me with any questions or comments at morris_j@shaker.org or 295-6033.

*Respectfully submitted,
John Morris, President*



Reports from the Executive Board

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I hope that everyone had a restful spring break. It is hard to believe that we only have two more months of school left. We have survived a winter that we won't soon forget and we are forging our way through OTES requirements. We have taken on new state testing requirements and still face an unfavorable political environment. Through all of these challenges the teachers of Shaker Heights have persevered and excelled.

I would like to congratulate Ellen Battle, Stacey Krantz, Ruth Mardell, and Nicole Smith for earning Continuing Contracts from the district. I would like to again thank all of you who supported *the Night for the Red and White*. There were over 816 tickets sold, the highest amount since 2007. While the exact amount of profit is not yet known it is in excess of \$120,000.

Finally I would ask the membership to please consider making a donation through our PAC by sending a check to SHTA PAC c/o Bill Scanlon at the High School. Consider making a personal contribution to the levy at <http://www.yesforshaker.org> so your name will be posted on the website and so that you can request a yard sign as well.

I continue to ask that you help and support each other. If you have any questions for me feel free to contact me at 295-4692.

*Respectfully submitted,
Matthew Zucca*

Vice President Matt Zucca Selfie!



TREASURER'S REPORT

We need to support the upcoming levy, for the sake of the children we teach. Despite how happy or unhappy you are with the millage chosen by our Board of Education, this levy is essential to the continued high level of service our students deserve. In that effort, I have been collecting checks and cash and using the PAC of SHTA to send that money as a lump sum to the Committee for the Shaker Schools. So far we have sent \$345 to the levy fund, with another \$90 collected to send along. We can do better. Send your check made out to the "PAC of SHTA" with "Levy Fund" on the memo line to me through inner-school mail.

The Investments Committee (Todd Keitlen, Matt Zucca, Chante Thomas-Taylor, and myself) met with Brady Krebs, our Edward Jones financial advisor, the first week back from Spring Break to look over our investments.

I met with a Key Bank advisor to explore investment possibilities, which were then looked over by the Investments Committee. I am meeting again with the Key Bank advisor to finalize those investments.

Do not forget that next month's Representative Council meeting is when the Representatives will be discussing the 2014-15 budget and sending it to the membership for approval. A preliminary budget was distributed to the Representatives to take back to their buildings for discussion. If you have any concerns please let your head building Representative know so that can be communicated at May's Representative Council Meeting on Monday, May 10th.

*Respectfully submitted,
Bill Scanlon, Treasurer*

Treasurer Bill Scanlon Selfie!



EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES REPORT

“Personal days are personal,” said retired PR&R chair Gary Raymont. This is still true. You do not have to ask for approval for a personal day, unless it is before or after a holiday. You should enter it into AESOP yourself. If you want to have a personal day approved before or after a holiday, you should contact me first. If you receive a request with a DENIED stamped on it, your check will be adjusted based on an absence without pay. Also, check in AESOP to make sure you have personal days left. Teachers get 3 personal days per school year. If you don’t use them, they are added to your sick days at the beginning of the next school year.

“You don’t have to complete FMLA paperwork if you are using sick days. Throw it away if they send it to you,” said retired PR&R chair Gary Raymont. This is not true anymore, and has not been true for three years. Whenever you are on an extended sick leave (maternity leave, surgery, illness, etc.), the school district has a legal obligation to send you a federal form related to the Family and Medical Leave Act (1993). You have a legal obligation to complete the form with help from your doctor. Completing the form is in your best interest. It takes the place of a note from a doctor, and it includes more detailed information about your leave and when you may return to work. The form gives you the right to use sick days during your absence. Make sure you check the box that states you will be using sick days during your leave, or attach a note about your intentions. If you don’t have many sick days, you can take an unpaid leave and keep all your insurance benefits for up to 12 weeks per year. This type of leave (with or without sick days) may also be used to care for a sick family member. It is a benefit labor organizations fought for in the early 1990’s. Thank you President Clinton for signing it.

“The administration is not your friend,” said retired PR&R chair Gary Raymont. This is still true, especially when applied to teacher evaluations. I wonder what Gary thinks about OTES. Everyone should review the OTES rubric, which you can find on the shaker.org website under Teacher Evaluation, before you have your summative evaluation conference with your administrator. If you have any concerns that the rating assigned to you and the evidence presented does not match the guidelines in the rubric, do not sign your evaluation. Also, you have the right to bring additional evidence to your administrator and request another meeting after they have had time to review the evidence. It is their responsibility to review all the evidence about your teaching that you provide. The summative rating is designed to be holistic, and should consider all five areas on the rubric. If you think your evaluation is not being done correctly, speak to your building representative immediately. I have formed a Grievance Committee, and we will be studying evaluation violations on a case by case basis before deciding whether or not to file grievances. All members of the Grievance Committee are either SHTA officers or on the Executive Board.

John Morris appointed me to a committee, which is overseeing the interview process for the Middle School Principal and the Assistant Superintendent/Business Manager. Erin Herbruck asked me to serve on a committee that will help plan Convocation in August. I met with the Negotiations Committee to help plan a member survey for May related to next fall’s negotiations. I am also currently working on a worker’s compensation issue and two adoption leaves of absence.

***Respectfully submitted,
Mike Sears, chairperson***

PUBLIC RELATIONS

The SHTA donated \$300 to the Middle School Scholars to support their spring trip. Public Relations ads will continue in *Shaker Life* and *The Shakerite*, as well as in this year's *Gristmill*. I look forward to sending Teacher Appreciation gifts to each of you next month!!!

Respectfully submitted,
Lena Paskewitz, chairperson

PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I continue to assist with the SHTA Leadership team as directed by President John Morris. This month, I helped with OTES issues and attended the regular meeting of the Board of Education and of the Finance and Audit Committee. I am happy to continue to serve the members of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association.

Respectfully submitted,
Becky Thomas, chairperson

POLICY COMMITTEE

As our school year reaches the home stretch, we must begin planning ahead for next year. As a member of Our Association, perhaps you may consider seeking more responsibility within our organization. One way to participate is to become a building representative. This is our monthly constitutional concern - BY-LAW II, Section C: Election of Building Representatives

1. Before the end of the current school year and not earlier than the 2nd of May, each building shall elect its representative(s) and an alternate to serve during the next school year. The current Building Representatives shall notify the members within their building of the date and location of the election no later than one(1) week prior to the vote. All ballots will be collected and sent to the Elections Chair for tabulation. The results of the building election shall be published by the Elections Chair, who will notify the members of each respective building of the outcome of the election. In the case of more than one representative, one shall be designated the Building Chair. The Elections Chair shall report the results of the election to the Secretary before the close of the school year.

In an unrelated side note, I recently experienced problems renewing my teaching license through the ODE's new online system. I discovered a solution which may help other members who get stuck during the online application process, particularly with the required district LPDC signature. I achieved success by typing in 'Shaker Heights LPDC', but I believe our districts LPDC IRN will work as well: 014771.

Respectfully submitted,
Tim Kalan, Chairperson

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Please mark your calendars for the annual Recognition Reception on May 22 at 3:45 PM in the Shaker Heights High School upper cafeteria.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Lewis, Chairperson

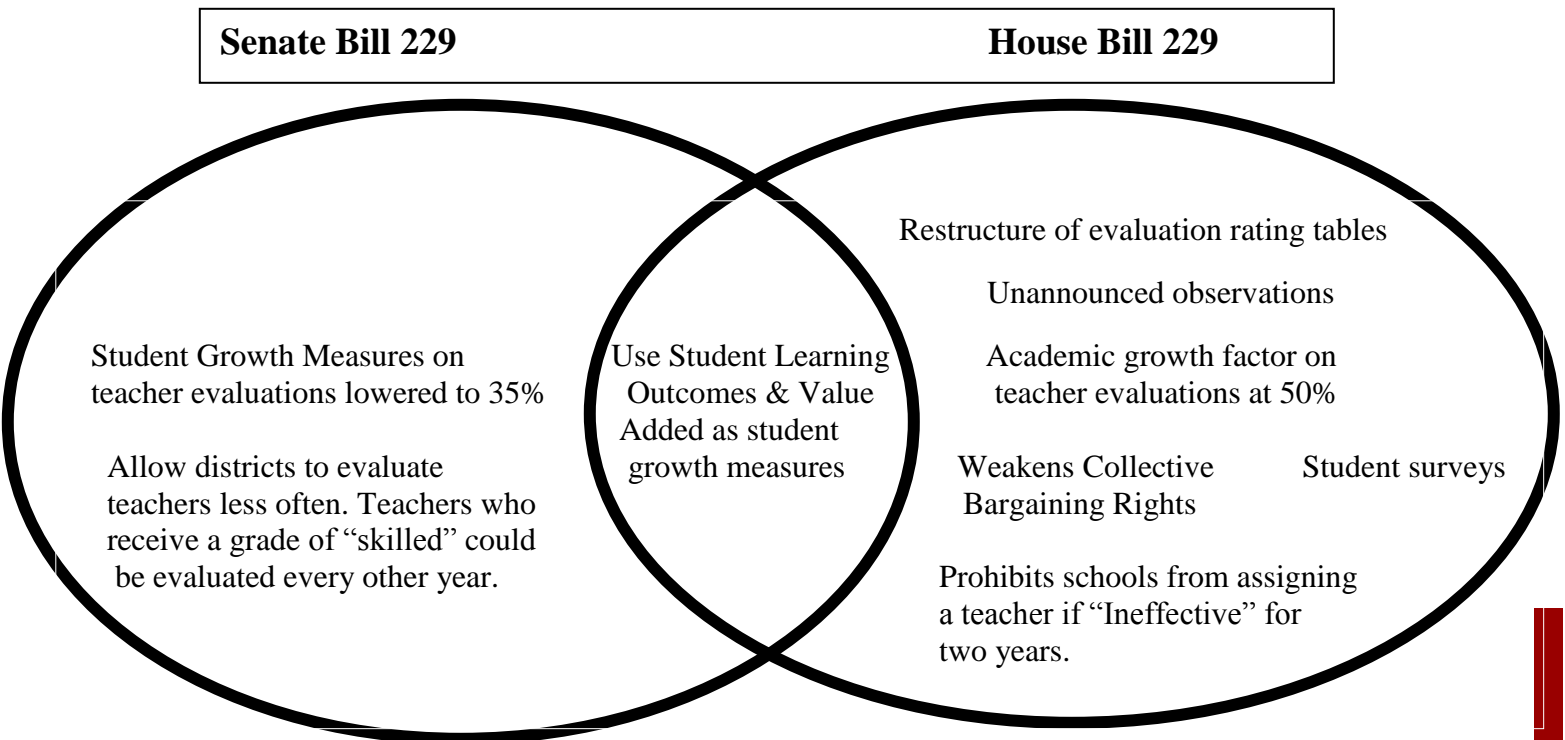
MEMBERSHIP/ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

If you are interested in serving as a representative for your building for the 2014-2015 school year, please submit your name to your head representative by Friday, May 2nd. Any tenured member, who has been an active member for the three years immediately preceding the election, is eligible to be a building representative. We will elect building representatives and vote on the proposed budget on Monday, May 19th.

*Respectfully submitted,
Stacy Elgart, chairperson*

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

We need you to take a stand. The Ohio House of Representatives has made radical changes to Senate Bill 229. As you may know, Senate Bill 229 is a bi-partisan proposal to positively modify the current Teacher Evaluation Law. The Ohio Federation of Teachers, the Ohio Education Association, and most unaffiliated associations back the Senate version of Bill 229 as a step in the right direction for teacher evaluations. The Ohio House of Representatives has gutted the Bill and proposed a new version that will negatively impact your collective bargaining rights. The differences in the two versions of the bill are illustrated below:



The bottom line is state legislators are trying to make teacher evaluations worse. Act now. Tell your state rep to pass the Senate version of SB 229 without changes. Contact your State Representative by going online to: <http://www.ohiohouse.gov/members/member-directory>. I have shared a letter with you on your email outlining concerns and urges their support of the Senate version of Bill 229. Please feel free to cut and paste this into an email to your representative.

*Respectfully submitted,
Eileen Sweeney, chairperson*

SALARY TENURE COMMITTEE

I met with our negotiations team last week. We worked on a survey to be sent out on May 1st. Matt Zucca was also announced as our assistant chief negotiator.

*Respectfully Submitted,
John L. Morris, chairperson*

TEACHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Board of Education held its April meeting recently, and accepted the recommendations for a continuing contract for the following teachers: Ellen Battle – Fernway, Stacey Krantz – Boulevard, Ruth Mardell – Fernway, and Nicole Smith – Mercer. **Congratulations to all of you!**

Please plan to attend the celebration on Thursday, May 22nd at the Shaker Heights High School Cafeteria. Many teachers, including our retirees, teachers with various years of service, and these four wonderful teachers, will be recognized at this celebration.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Steve Smith, chairperson*

WANTED: POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE TREASURER

*SEEKING A POLITICALLY MINDED, UNION
DEDICATED PERSON TO OVERSEE THE DUTIES
OF TREASURER.*

Duties include: banking, Bi-annual reporting to the Board of Elections and keeping abreast of state election laws. Time commitment is approximately a couple of hours per month.

WANTED: POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*SEEKING UNION DEDICATED PERSONS TO
PARTICIPATE AND REPRESENT THE SHTA*

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

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

MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

Lomond Elementary, April 14, 2014

SHTA President, John Morris started the April 14th Representative Council Meeting at 4:29PM.

Carina Freeman, Principal of Lomond Elementary School, welcomed SHTA membership to Lomond and shared that we have to remember that we are in this profession for the kids.

MINUTES from the March 10, 2014 Representative Council meeting were accepted and approved.

Administration Report

Dr. Hutchings and Lisa Scott were both present from central office.

- Dr. Hutchings shared the calendar changes that staff members received via email and listed on our district website. He informed us that this was a committee decision. The committee is comprised of SHTA members, administration, teachers and parents.
- There is a need for more professional days. The main reason is to allow for district-wide professional learning.
- Spring Break will be shorter. Band, orchestra and choir members will have excused absences to travel internationally. Additional spring break days not needed for everyone.
- Trying to develop instructional learning days when students have days off. For example, art museum visits, online learning that ties into IB and learning packets.
- There will a national search to find candidates for Middle School principal and for central office positions. A committee has been formed to help with the hiring process.

P.T.O. Report – No Representative was available to give a P.T.O. Report

Officer's Report

President, John Morris

- Dealt with disciplinary issues in the district during the month of March.
- Worked with evaluation issues, peer evaluations vs. administrative evaluations. Wants to make sure that the evaluations are worthwhile and fair.
- Attended a meeting with Bernice Stokes and Marla Robinson.
- Attended a meeting with officers to discuss SHTA issues.
- Attended a calendar meeting to help with the new revised calendar.
- Members of SHTA please consider making a donation to PAC which will help with the school levy.
- Retirement issues are individualized and questions concerning retirement should be directed to STRS. They are better equipped to answer individual questions. Use of the contract will help to answer many questions, please try to read this document.

Vice President, Matt Zucca

- Received some final counts related to *the Night for the Red and White*. Over 816 tickets were sold, highest number sold since 2007. There were 34 teacher donations to the silent auction. About \$150,000 was raised for Shaker Schools.
- Attended a Finance Committee meeting.
- Attended a negotiations meeting in March.
- Working on distributing funds for grants.
- Would like to make visits to all the K-4 buildings on a regular basis. This will allow opportunities to become familiar with the buildings and staff members.
- K-4 student growth measures should be more consistent. A streamline message should be created. It needs to be the same message throughout each building.

Secretary, Darlene Garrison

- Attended an officers meeting in March to discuss SHTA issues.
- Please be sure to sign the attendance sheet before you leave each meeting.

Treasurer, Bill Scanlon

- Proposed budget report was discussed with executive board.
- Sharing proposed financial report as a preview to discuss with members before the vote in May.
- Notice that some accounts have gone up on the proposed budget.
- Voting on the proposed budget will be on Monday, May 19th.
- Attended an investment committee meeting
- Contributions to PAC, so far is about \$390.00. Members please consider donating to PAC. In the past, there was over \$3000.00 donated to the PAC in one school year.

Executive Board Reports

Teacher Education, Steve Smith

- Created a congratulatory letter to give to 4 newly tenured teachers.

Past President, Becky Thomas

- Attended the Finance and Audit meeting. Would like to see someone from the membership attend this meeting once a month on a Thursday.
- Finance and Audit meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 17th. The meeting takes place at the Administration Building, large conference room.

Membership/Elections, Stacy Elgart

- Election will take place on Monday, May 19th.
- Information was passed out for any members interested in becoming a building representative.

Policy, Tim Kalan

- No Report

Public Relations, Lena Paskewitz

- SHTA provided the Shaker Middle School scholars with a monetary donation of \$300.
- Working on teacher appreciation gifts.

Legislative, Eileen Sweeney

- Attended Executive Board meeting.
- Creating a comparison sheet or diagram explaining House Bill 229 and Senate Bill 229.
- PAC needs a new treasurer (see AD).

Publications, Andrew Glasier

- Wednesday at midnight all submissions are due.
- “Wanted Ads” are in the newsletter.
- Looking for more dates for the OTES Peer Training workshops. More members are interested in the OTES Training.
- Evaluations due for Specialists May 30th.
- New form created for May Summative Evaluations. You are to fill out one side and give to principals to fill out the other side.

Social, Wendy Lewis

- The Recognition Reception is all set for Thursday, May 22nd. The reception will be held at Shaker Heights High School, upper cafeteria.
- Flyers were distributed to building reps. to post in school buildings.

Legal Aid, Chante Thomas-Taylor

- No Report
- Attended an Investment Committee Meeting.

Professional Rights and Responsibilities, Mike Sears

- Dealt with an issue concerning Leave of Absence for adoption.
- Working on an issue with Personal Days.
- Is now on a committee dealing with next year's Convocation Opening of the School Year.

Salary/Tenured, John Morris

- Worked on a survey concerning negotiations.
- Survey will be given on May 1st. Members are to print it out from an email, fill out the necessary information and give completed survey to head building rep.

Building Representative Reports:

Boulevard, Tina McCauley – No Report

Fernway, Michelle Berggrun – No Report

Lomond, Donita Townsend – No Report

Mercer, Lisa Hardiman

- Dealing with a personal leave issue.
- Working on Aimsweb assessment issues.

Onaway, Sanya Godbold – No Report

Woodbury, Robert Bognar

- Welcomed new principal today at staff meeting, Danny Young.

Middle School, Paul Repasy

- Quarterly membership meetings are not well attended.
- Members send concerns to building reps via email.
- Dealt with 2 disciplinary issues.

High School, James Schmidt

- There is a problem with the number of substitutes at the high school, not enough.
- One class was left unsupervised and 7/8 periods were not covered.
- There was an assault on teacher and the teacher was injured.
- Dealt with evaluation equity issues.
- Issue with teachers being notified at 1:00PM that there will be a 3:00 Staff Meeting.

Old Business – None

New Business

- Tim Kalan made a motion to add a new standing committee to the executive board. This committee position will be in charge of teacher evaluation. This person will be a point person to handle issues pertaining to evaluations. Eileen Sweeney seconded the motion. The motion was moved to a vote and was passed.

April 14th Representative Council meeting was adjourned at 5:56 PM.

May Representative Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 12 at Onaway Elementary School.

*Respectfully submitted,
Darlene Garrison, Secretary*

A New Paul Revere

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.

“RIGHT TO WORK IS COMING

“RIGHT TO WORK IS COMING”

If Governor John Kasich is reelected this fall, he will move to enact so-called “Right to Work” legislation. He will do it like other governors’ in Michigan, Wisconsin, Indiana; behind our backs and with no recourse. The legislation will destroy the Shaker Heights Teachers’ Association, make your job less secure and reduce your wages and benefits. I cannot scream it enough...

“RIGHT TO WORK IS COMING

“RIGHT TO WORK IS COMING”

It may seem alarmist to begin in such a dire way, but we have only to look to our brethren in Wisconsin for the results that such legislation has on our profession. Teachers’ salaries in Mequon-Thiensville School District near Milwaukee were frozen for two years. Employee contributions to health care rose and a merit pay system was implemented. The retirement age for some districts was raised. In Oneida County, Wisconsin, county supervisors rid contracts of “just cause” language, allowing for the immediate firing of employees, making workers fear speaking out about anything. The state of Wisconsin has increased employee contribution to their pension by 6% and their health care by as much as 12%, leading to many state workers having a 12% pay cut on top of wage freezes. Some past-union members are now receiving food stamps because of the loss of income. In December of 2013, 400 school district unions asked for recertification. Eighty

were decertified because they failed to get the needed majority. Worst of all is the morale of those still in the unions and those that were in the unions. The hundreds of thousands that marched on the state capitol protesting Governor Walker’s policies feel destroyed, hanging on to their former lives as best they can (Greenhouse).

“RIGHT TO WORK IS COMING

“RIGHT TO WORK IS COMING”

We are a battered profession. The morale in our schools is tenuous at best. Increased class sizes, OTEs, SLO’s, Common Core, PARCC, attacks on our wages, new this, new that. The attacks have come even after we defeated SB5. Students must take endless tests. Yes we are busy. This, of course, is on purpose, so that you don’t have time to complain to your legislators, that you don’t support opposing candidates, so you don’t donate to campaigns against these measures. You are beaten into submission by a well funded and organized group that see market solutions to educational problems, none of which has worked since first being implemented twenty years ago.

“RIGHT TO WORK IS COMING

“RIGHT TO WORK IS COMING”

The time to act is now. When you joined this profession you probably did not think how political it could become. Yet it is. We must watch our national, state and local governments who wish to “reform” our profession with little or no input from teachers. We must make our voices heard. We must speak our minds. We must call, email, write our legislative leaders. They must hear us mobilize to the point that they will cry;

“TEACHERS ARE COMING

TEACHERS ARE COMING”

I would like to thank Cleveland Heights Teachers’ Union President, Ari Klein, for his kind allowance of the use of the CHTU State of the Union address, March 2014 for this editorial.

Greenhouse, Steve. “Wisconsin’s Legacy for Unions.” New York Times. February 22, 2014. Web. <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/23/business/wisconsin-legacy-for-unions.html?_r=0>

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