

## IMPORTANT DATES

**April 22-30:** Passover

**Tuesday, April 26:** BOE Work Session

**Thursday, April 28:** Finance & Audit Committee

**Monday, May 2:** SHTA Executive Board Meeting @ Fernway School

**Monday, May 9:** SHTA Representative Council Meeting @ Onaway School

**Friday, May 13:** St. Baldrick's @ SHHS's multi-purpose room from 3:00 - 5:30.

# SHTA news

April 18, 2016

ISSUE NO. 7

## Message From the President

One of my favorite things to do as a child was to look at my grandfather's watch collection. He owned classic watches, digital watches, expensive watches, and cheap watches. One of my favorites was a clear-backed model that featured the watch works in all their exposed glory. It was always fascinating to me that the wheels and gears seemed to be moving in both opposing and complementary directions, while still keeping time and maintaining the function of the watch. I didn't realize it then, but what I was viewing was true transparency.

Transparency has become an increasingly popular word in organizational management, including throughout our school district. Part of the definition entails all stakeholders being given a voice in the direction of the organization, in our instance Shaker Schools. Parents, teachers, students, school board members, community members, staff, and business leaders are all among the voices to be considered in order to achieve true transparency in decision making. However, I think there is one crucial element to recognize that my grandfather's watch reinforced. Transparency does not mean that all stakeholders are always working in unison, or even in the same direction. Transparency does not mean forced, or obfuscated, consensus. Transparency is not a game of follow the leader. Transparency is something much more difficult, and ultimately much more valuable. It is the consideration of all voices, even and especially those in disagreement, and honoring those voices through civil discussion and meaningful consideration.

Transparency does not mean that everyone will get their own way. The best interests of all stakeholders must be considered, but ultimately decisions have to be made by those in power; in our organization the school board and central administration. However, all voices must be recognized and honored, even if their perspectives are not the ones that are reflected in the decisions that are made. For transparency to work, honesty is essential, especially when difficult decisions are made. And that includes recognizing and acknowledging dissenting voices. To try to co-opt or "massage away" differences is the height of false transparency and is, as one group of colleagues describe it, "fauxlaboration" or fake collaboration. It is my hope that our school board and central administration will stand by the concept of true transparency, an ideal that many of our board members were elected to implement and a unifying premise central administration have said they would uphold. Without true transparency, we all end up winding watches, which neither measure progress nor tell the truth.

April has been a deceptively active month. I have consulted on a member's legal concern. I dealt with more transfer requests. I consulted on calendar concerns and surveys. I worked on a member

concern over a stolen phone at the Middle School with Tim Richards. I corresponded with Meryl Johnson and Bill Lavezzi concerning the Ohio School Board Candidates' Forum. I attended a stakeholders meeting with Dr. Hutchings on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, prior to the announcement of the new High School Principal. I attended another meeting with Dr. Hutchings, Terri Breeden, Steve Wilkins, Mike Sears, Matt Zucca, Jody Podl, and Tony Cuda on Wednesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>. I had my weekly conversation with Dr. Hutchings on the 24th. I dealt with a non-renewal issue. I attended the "Every Student Succeeds Act" (ESSA) Advance Committee meeting. I attended the Cuyahoga County Educator Summit Executive Board meeting this Thursday, April 6<sup>th</sup>. I attended the Master Planning Community Engagement Meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> as well. I signed the SHTA Support Teacher Contract with the district and ST Negotiations Team. I attended the Calendar Meeting. I also attended the Ohio State Board Candidates' Forum. It is all important work and it is my pleasure to do it. Please contact me at [morris\\_j@shaker.org](mailto:morris_j@shaker.org) or x6033 if I can be of any help.

*Respectfully submitted,  
John Morris*



**SHTA President  
John Morris at the  
April SHTA  
Representative  
Council meeting @  
Lomond School.**

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

# Reports from the Executive Board

## VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I hope that everyone had a restful spring break.

I would like to officially welcome and congratulate the members of the SHTA Support Teachers. The contract signing earlier this month ends a long and hard journey of a group of educators fighting for fair and just causes.

Congratulations to Krystal Allen Jackson, Jenna Baldarelli, Kristin Clark, Jevette Collier, Daniel Crain, Abigail Goldstein, Anna Jo Gosses, Yvette McClaine, Cara Motelka, Catherine Richards, Scott Sumerak, and Kevin Thomas for earning Continuing Contracts from the district. This is a wonderful accomplishment for our colleagues.

I would like to again thank all of you who supported *the Night for the Red and White*. Close to 800 tickets were sold for the event that has raised millions of dollars for our children over the last 24 years. I am looking forward to the 25<sup>th</sup> year and many more to come.

Please continue to submit receipts for reimbursement of Teacher Fellowship Applications. The deadline for reimbursement is the beginning of October 2016.

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

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Matthew Zucca*

**SHTA Vice President  
Matt Zucca and the other  
officers at the April SHTA  
Representative Council  
meeting @ Lomond  
School.**



## TREASURER'S REPORT

I'd like to thank James Reed for a heartfelt year of service. He stepped into the High School at a time when many staff members were feeling anxious about coming to work each day. His straightforward peaceful demeanor and obvious love for Shaker established a sense of calm order. He was a salve for the staff, helping us heal as a building. I am grateful for his commitment and thank him for his dedication.

The Investments Committee (Todd Keitlen, Matt Zucca, Chante Thomas-Taylor, and myself) will meet with Brady Krebs, our Edward Jones financial advisor, the week of April 25th to look over our investments.

Next month's Representative Council meeting (May 9<sup>th</sup>) is when the Representatives will be discussing the 2016-17 SHTA budget and sending it to the membership for approval. A preliminary budget was distributed to the Representatives at April's meeting to take back to their buildings for discussion. If you have any concerns please let your head building Representative(s) know, so it can be communicated at May's Representative Council Meeting. Or you are welcome to email/call me directly (ext.6296).

*Respectfully submitted,  
Bill Scanlon*



**SHTA Treasurer  
Bill Scanlon at the  
April SHTA  
Representative  
Council meeting @  
Lomond School.**

SHTA is now on  @SHTAssoc  
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# ***EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS***

## **PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES REPORT**

In my last report, I wrote about concerns related to student growth measures being administered consistently across the district. Specifically, members are concerned about computer tests compared to paper and pencil tests. Other members are concerned with the variation in testing environments across the elementary schools. Director of Research and Accountability Dale Whittington told me testing decisions for student growth measures are made at the building level. Middle School Principal David Glasner told me the decision to use the online tests for CAP Science and Social Studies post-assessments was made so we could get the results faster, and to prepare students for future online testing. For example, the AIR Math tests students are currently taking does not have a paper and pencil option. Thank you to Dale and David for responding to our concerns. If you have a question or concern about a specific test in your building, please contact your administrator and/or your SHTA building representative for answers.

The supplemental review committee recently finished a report with recommendations for academic leadership positions (department chairs, team leaders, TBT coordinators, etc.) in compliance with a side letter in the collective bargaining agreement. John Morris and Greg Hutchings will meet soon to review the report.

Several high school teachers and SHTA Executive Board members attended a meeting on March 23 with Central Office Administrators regarding the appointment of Jonathan Kuehnle as the High School Principal for the 2016-17 school year. High school teachers surveyed preferred to appoint Interim Principal James Reed. Everyone who attended agreed James Reed has done an outstanding job during a difficult time of transition.

An issue regarding use of sick days was brought to my attention by a member. Both a building administrator and the Human Resources Department may document a member's use of sick leave. They may document it in writing and meet with members about it. However, these actions may not be considered disciplinary in nature.

Article XX (20.01) describes use of sick days: <http://shtaweb.org/media/442/shtacontract123117.pdf>  
The only time medical documentation may be required is when an employee has used five sick days in a row and plans to use a sixth day consecutively.

During the last month, I also spoke to members about maternity leave, sabbatical applications, and health insurance.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Mike Sears, chairperson*

## **EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

The end of the evaluation cycle for this school year is fast approaching. All evaluators should be concluding their spring walkthroughs and conferencing with teachers to share final ratings and Evidence Summary Forms. The final performance rating is indicated on eTPES for those in a Formal Evaluation cycle. This rating is then combined with the SGM to determine the final rating. Teachers on an Informal Evaluation cycle will only have the SGM rating for this year.



The Peer Evaluation Intent Forms will be distributed to teachers shortly within the next week. The Peer Evaluation Coordinators met to finalize the form and review procedures for the program and the criteria for approvals and denials. We will be advocating for increased participation across the district. Please review the form and consider participating in the Peer Evaluation Program!

*Respectfully submitted,  
Lena Paskewitz, chairperson*

## **PAST PRESIDENTS COMMITTEE**

I hope everyone had an enjoyable spring break. Because of scheduling conflicts, the March meeting of the Finance and Audit Committee was cancelled. I plan to attend the next meeting on April 28.

The Board of Education meeting on April 12 was long—over 3 hours. It began with a number of remarks from employees and community members focusing on two main topics—proposed class size policy changes at the High School and the master planning process. Additionally, there was an eloquent statement in support of the interim principal at the High School.

The proposal to eliminate classes with fewer than 15 students (with notable exceptions) would have an impact on many of the classes in the high school's Arts programs. Speakers expressed their support of the Arts programs at the high school with one resident expressing appreciation for the outstanding teachers, diverse opportunities for programs, and the nurturing experiences of many smaller classes. Specialized interests will be undermined if smaller class sizes lead to cuts in offerings. One resident asked—What is a small class? Is this being applied to all programs and departments?

The remarks about the master planning process included residents indicating concerns about combining schools and frustration with the facilities meetings and process. One resident did commend the process for being inclusive.

It will be important for members of the Association to be aware of these issues and be prepared to support our colleagues should there be policy decisions that impact jobs.

Twelve teachers received continuing contracts at this meeting. It was great to have many of them at the meeting and to have them recognized by the Board. Please congratulate Krystal Allen-Jackson, Jenna Baldarelli, Kristin Clark, Jevette Collier, Daniel Crain, Abigail Goldstein, Anna Jo Gosses, Yvette McClaine, Cara Motelka, Catherine Richards, Scott Sumerak, and Kevin Thomas.

The majority of the meeting focused on an update on the Master Planning Facilities Process. Many questions dealt with the requirements of the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission for requesting and using funds from the state. The Board will decide if any facilities projects will meet OFCC requirements and if the district will seek OFCC funding.

Thank you all for allowing me to assist President John Morris and the members of the SHTA.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Becky Thomas, chairperson*

## **POLICY COMMITTEE**

With the approach of our year-ending activities, it is time again to start looking ahead to next year. One of our tasks as an Association is to determine our representation for the upcoming school year. By-Law II Section C of our constitution covers election of building and support teacher representatives.

## *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.*

Our support teachers will also choose two representatives as follows:

## *Support Teacher Representatives*

*1. Before the end of the current school year and not earlier than the 2nd of May, Support Teachers shall elect their two representatives to serve during the next school year. The current Building Representatives shall notify the Support Teachers within their buildings 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 Support Teachers of the outcome of the election. The Elections Chair shall report the results of the election to the Secretary before the close of the school year.*

Any Association member interested in becoming a representative should speak with their current building representative.

As always, our constitution, contract, and other items of interest are available at [www.shtaweb.org](http://www.shtaweb.org).

***Respectfully submitted,  
Tim Kalan, Chairperson***

## **SOCIAL COMMITTEE**

The District Recognition Reception will be held on Thursday, May 19<sup>th</sup> at 3:45 p.m. in the High School Upper Cafeteria. It was so well attended last year and we are hoping for awesome participation again this year! As you know, we will have a full meal with dessert and so it is imperative that you RSVP (whether you are coming or not) so that I can plan properly. I am looking forward to seeing you all! There's no better way to end the school year than to have your efforts and accomplishments celebrated amongst colleagues!

***Respectfully submitted,  
Selena Brown, Chairperson***

## **SUPPORT TEACHERS COMMITTEE**

Happy spring! As we all know, SHTA-ST negotiations are successfully completed. The negotiations team along with our President John Morris and administration management signed the Support Teacher's three year contract agreement on Wednesday April 6th. What a moment of groundbreaking history. Support Teachers began receiving retroactive payments this month and are adjusting smoothly to changes. Continued support is needed as SHTA-ST members are learning the ropes of a new contract and nestling into the Association. We thank you all, salute!

***Respectfully Submitted,  
LauraAnn T. Moore, Chairperson***

## **MEMBERSHIP & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**

If you are interested in serving as a representative for your building for the 2016-2107 school year, please submit your name to your head building representative by Friday, April 29th. Any continuing contract 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 representatives and vote on the proposed budget on Monday, May 16th.

*Respectfully Submitted,*  
*Chante Thomas-Taylor, Chairperson*

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

The public relations committee has begun ordering the teacher appreciation gift. On behalf of the Association, It is an honor to represent each of our fantastic educators and thank you for your all of your hard work.

It is our solidarity that creates our strength as an Association! One simple yet effective way of broadcasting our collective might is through increased visibility! Buy a T-Shirt; broadcast your membership!

*Respectfully Submitted,*  
*Robert Bognar, Chairperson*

## **LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**

John Kasich delivered his State of the State speech on April 6, 2016. Kasich, candidate for president, presented an overly rosy picture of the state's communities under his administration. The governor's disconnect with the hardships local city government and schools he has inflicted upon them, highlights his willingness to allow cities and schools to balance the state's budget on their backs.

In 2011, Ohio's education ranking was fifth in the nation. Under the Kasich administration, our rankings have shot down to a dramatic 23rd nationally, according to *Education Week*. The governor has cut half-a-billion dollars in funding for schools since 2008. Simultaneously, Ohio charter schools budgets have ballooned by over \$1 billion taxpayer dollars.

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) sought input from parents and the community regarding Ohio Learning Standards in Math and English Language Arts. The window for giving feedback closed April 5th. The ODE and education experts will review them and teacher committees will propose changes based on the comments.

The Ohio House proposed legislation to fund paid family leave. The model proposed is similar to legislation in the state of California and Rhode Island. The proposal recommends a model with a sliding benefits scale based income with the top income earners eligible for 66% of the budget and the lowest income earners are eligible for up to 95% of their income. This dramatically impacts the lives of our students. More stability in our students' lives means that each student will be able to reach their fullest potential.

*Respectfully Submitted,*  
*Eileen Sweeney, Chairperson*



# MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

## April 11, 2016, LOMOND SCHOOL

**SHTA Vice President, Matt Zucca** started the April 11th Rep. Council Meeting at 4:33PM.

**Tina McCauley, Staff Assistant of Lomond Elementary School** welcomed SHTA membership to Lomond. During her welcome, it was announced that for the 2016-2017 school year her new position will be Assistant Principal of Lomond Elementary School. She shared that during the summer for S.E.L.F Summer Camp Program, she will be the contact person.

**MINUTES** from the March 14, 2016 Rep. Council meeting were accepted and approved. Motion made by Bonnie Gordon and Seconded by Tim Richards.

### **Administration Report**

- There were no Administrators present to give a report.

### **P.T.O. Report**

- There were no P.T.O. Representatives present to give a report.

### **Officer's Report**

*President, John Morris*

- Consulted member with concerns.
- Worked with Calendar Committee and survey results.
- Worked and discussed with members transfer requests.
- Dealt with a member at the Middle School about a stolen cell phone.
- Met with Cuyahoga County Educators' Union Summit.
- Attended stakeholders meeting on March 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Had weekly conversation with Dr. Hutchings.
- Dealt with early non-renewal contract issues.
- Attended Master Planning and Facilities Meeting.
- Signed contract with SHTA Support Teachers.

*Vice President, Matt Zucca*

- This was the 24<sup>th</sup> year for *the Night for the Red & White*. Next year, planning something special for the 25<sup>th</sup> year.
- Eight hundred tickets were sold for this year's event.
- Teacher and Staff contributions huge part of the success of this event.
- Attended March meeting with Dr. Hutchings.
- Last P.T.O. Council meeting is today, April 11th.
- Working on Fellowship Grant Reimbursements.

*Secretary, Darlene Garrison*

- Please make sure that your attendance is up to date for the May Rep. Council Meeting.
- Shared thank you card from Gary Raymond.
- Please be sure to sign the attendance sheet before you leave each meeting.

*Treasurer, Bill Scanlon*

- Financial report was distributed and discussed
- Shared the proposed budget for the 2016-2017 school year. Please share and discuss proposed budget with membership.

- Will be attending an Investment Committee meeting in April.
- Worked on teacher response - High School Principal.
- May meeting, we will vote on proposed budget for 2016-2017. Please share the preview budget with members.

## **Executive Board Reports**

### *Past President, Becky Thomas*

- Will attend School Board Meeting tomorrow night.
  - Three high school teachers – leave of absence
  - Sue Garber retiring
  - Tina McCauley Assistant Principal of Lomond Elementary
  - 12 Teachers on agenda to receive continuing contracts
- Will be attending a Finance and Audit meeting end of the month.

### *Teacher Education, Lisa Hardiman*

- Twelve teachers will be given a continuing contract and I will be sending them congratulatory letters.

### *Membership/Elections, Chante Thomas-Taylor*

- Voting on the proposed budget and building reps. will take place on Monday, May 16th.
- An email will be sent to all building reps. asking if there are any members interested in becoming a rep. If not, reps. from the 2015-2016 will be listed on the ballot. All names are due by April 29<sup>th</sup>.

### *Policy, Tim Kalan*

- Dealt with concerns of a member.

### *Public Relations, Bob Bognar*

- Took care of SHTA ad for the *Shaker Life* Magazine.
- Working on putting together the teacher appreciation gifts.

### *Evaluation, Lena Paskewitz*

- Things are going smoothly, only answered a couple of questions about evaluations.
- Evaluations should be wrapped up by the beginning of May.

### *Legislative, Eileen Sweeney*

- The State of the State report delivered by John Kasich misrepresents the realities of Ohio public schools.
- Kasich fails to acknowledge the reality that his administration's budget cuts have resulted in lower national rankings. His budget cuts are resulting in less effective schools. Meanwhile, Ohio charter school funding has skyrocketed.
- Ohio House of Representatives are proposing legislation to pay for paid family leave.

### *Publications, Andrew Glasier*

- Posted articles on Facebook and Twitter with a focus on “Why the profession of education is becoming less and less of an interest for new teachers”.
- A notice will be going out to peer evaluators to make sure that they want to continue peer evaluating next year.
- Evaluations are going smoothly.
- Please remember that submissions are due Wednesday at midnight.

*Social, Selena Brown*

- Working on Annual Spring Recognition, May 19th.
- Passing out flyers to be posted throughout the buildings for the reception.
- Please RSVP through Google.
- Thank you to those of you who have already sent in your RSVP.

*Legal Aid, Paul Repasy*

- No Report

*Support Teachers, Bonnie Gordon*

- Support Teachers received their 1<sup>st</sup> payment.
- New contract was signed.
- Support Teachers can get information from Bonnie Gordon, Jennifer Browne or Bryan Christman.

*Professional Rights and Responsibilities, Mike Sears*

- There was a discussion about the inconsistent measures for student growth.
- Discussion comparing students taking tests on the computer vs. paper and pencil.
- Meet with David Glasner to discuss the CAP test on the computer. David Glasner stated that computer assessment would generate scores arriving earlier. Also, assessments on the computer are the way of the future.
- Worked on maternity leave issues.
- Worked with member on the number of sick days being used.
- Dealt with a situation involving a student at Onaway.

**Building Representative Reports**

*Boulevard, Jennifer Goulden*

- No Report.

*Fernway, Andee Hassell*

- No Report

*Lomond, Donita Townsend*

- No Report

*Mercer, Nicole Smith*

- No Report

*Onaway, Paula Klausner*

- Working on an issue with one teacher concerning their supplemental contract. Will be meeting with Darlene Bushley to explain the supplemental.
- Concern that nurses have never been paid for missed planning periods.
- Last year, there was a meeting for retiring teachers. That meeting did not take place this year. A member feels as though important information about retirement from the district was not shared.
  - John Morris shared that STRS is so individualized members should make appointments to discuss their retirement in Columbus with STRS. Members need to become familiar with the options for their specific retirement plan.

*Woodbury, Lee Appel*

- No Report

*Middle School, Tim Richards*

- Building membership would like to thank Dexter Lindsey for stepping in again as a substitute Assistant Principal.
- The continuous testing this month has had a few speed bumps:
- The schedules have been continuously revised...very hard to plan.
- The same classes continue to be used for testing creating huge discrepancies in contact time.
- There were some students who did not make up their CAP test in time for their scores to be counted by the state/OTES.
- Working with building administration to work out issues with next year's proposed schedule. The Raider Time class (2:55 to 3:45) continues to be hugely unpopular with those teachers who get stuck with it. A group of teachers don't have lunch until 2:01.
- Continue to try and work with administration and a student's family to provide reimbursement for a staff member's phone stolen by that student.
- Teachers are extremely frustrated with continuous "restorative practices" that do not result in changes to poor student behavior. IEP's are often used as reason students are given limited discipline even when some of the behavior is extremely serious.
- Worked with administration on several individual personnel matters.

*High School, John Morris*

- Concern that there is no PA or telephone in the multi-purpose room

*Support Teachers*

- Concern that there is no balance with testing when support teachers are being asked to proctor at Woodbury.
- They need compensation for planning time.
- Support Teachers will be meeting with Erin Herbruck to discuss the evaluation process.

**Old Business**

- None

**New Business**

- Question from Bonnie Gordon – What is the status of the State Superintendent?
- Are we going to continue to have Student Growth Measures? Recommendations will be made in May.

**Good of the Order**

- Thank you Lomond for your hospitality, John Morris.

**Motion for Adjournment**

- Motion made by Bill Scanlon and Seconded by Bob Bognar

**April 11<sup>th</sup> Rep. Council meeting was adjourned at 5:53 PM.**


**May Rep. Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 09th at Onaway Elementary School.**

*Respectfully submitted,  
Darlene Garrison*



**SHTA April Representative Council Meeting @ Lomond School. Special thanks to Lomond Representatives Donita Townsend for hosting the meeting.**



SHTA is now on  @SHTAssoc  
**FOLLOW US !**



## ***AM I BECOMING A LUDDITE!***

*This newsletter is a publication of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association, an independent organization of professional educators in the Shaker Heights City School District. Signed editorials represent the opinion of the author(s) and may or may not reflect the thinking of other officers or members of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association. Members and friends of the Association are invited and encouraged to express their opinions or share information via this newsletter.*

I recently hosted as part of the Asian Studies program 20 students and two teachers from Takatori-Kokusai High School of Japan. While giving a tour of the high school, the teachers remarked at the amount of technology that teachers and students had available to learn from at Shaker. At their school, they had one computer lab for the entire school with a student population of over 600. I was surprised that a country as advanced as Japan was behind us in terms of use of technology in the classroom. On reflection, I am even more surprised, as I recall how much better Japan has done on international education tests as compared to American schools. In several studies by varying groups such as the Economic Intelligence Unit and education company Pearson, Japan ranked fourth in the world, while the United States ranked 17<sup>th</sup>. Why do countries like Finland, Japan and Korea, which spend negligible amounts on education, far outrank the United States in various levels of educational attainment? It is a complicated answer but overspending on technology is not the silver bullet.

As any good teacher, my ideas about instruction has evolved and changed over the years. As I have grown professionally I have found things that have worked and others that have not or have required adapting to a particular group of students. This has meant constantly reviewing research and new ideas for those that I think will work in engaging students in the curriculum as well as building the curriculum. Since the beginning of my teaching I have examined the use of new technologies to incorporate in my teaching. I journeyed south to Columbus for eTech conferences to see how other Ohio teachers are using technology, I became engaged with the Gaming & Learning Society to investigate the use of video games in teaching, I have written grants to purchase and explore new hardware and software, and have attended many professional development opportunities to explore how to incorporate the latest and greatest.

Much of what I learned I tried to incorporate into my teaching, specifically to engage struggling readers in the high school's TEAM program. My thinking was students not reading on grade level will be better engaged with technology that incorporates the curriculum and the helps to improve their reading and make them less passive in their learning. My co-teachers have had amazing patience with me as I introduce new websites and programs to try to reach our students.

So what have I learned from my seventeen years of technology integration and student learning? What I have found is all the bells and whistles of new technology are overhyped and typically tend to distract rather than truly engage. The best learning still comes from solid teaching, be that with a laptop or paper and pencil. The media has hyped that the future of education is technology, yet we have seen very little gains from all these purchases of Smart Boards, laptops, iPads, and related software. It is time to reflect on what we know about integration of technology.

Successful technology integration means turning students into active learners rather than passive observers. In order for this to happen, you still need face to face teacher time which produces better results than online learning. But there is very little research on what works and what doesn't. Techniques and integration is very teacher specific and has varying degrees of success based the many variables of the classroom (students, teachers, socio-economic status of the school, classroom dynamics, etc...).

What we do know is that reading text on paper rather than on a screen produces deeper comprehension of text and longer memory of the material. eReaders become more popular in education, as they are more convenient than heavy textbooks and can have pictures and connections to the Internet and vocabulary integration, people understand better and longer if they read material on paper, especially longer texts, such as

novels and textbooks. Scientists are still examining why this is the case; it could be the way the brain interacts with a book versus a screen, but the how and why are only theoretical.

This brings us to a more disturbing trend of the use of computers for testing students that have severe implications for the child's future. Recent studies of computer testing vs. paper & pencil testing have shown that students do worse if tested on computers. Scientists have found that we read computer screens in a vastly different way than paper text. It is much more shallow reading and similar to scanning rather than true deep reading. The effect of using computers for high stakes testing could have a devastating effect on our students. Reading tests in third grade can determine whether a student can move on to fourth. The high school End of Course exams determine whether students will graduate. Many of these online tests determine teachers' student growth measurers, which are 50% of our evaluation. I have heard people remark that students need to learn how to take online tests, but when they represent such high stakes, is this the best way to practice? Our students deserve fair evaluations of their progress.

More and more districts are turning to One-to-One technology programs, in which each student is given a laptop or tablet to use in the school and at home. Costing the taxpayers a significant amount of money, these programs have shown no increase in student performance. Maine's statewide one-to-one program found no increase in academic achievement. These programs are a boom for technology manufacturers and related technology industries but do little to increase student learning.

So what do we know to work? There are good teachers out there doing good work with new technologies. These are teachers that have thought about their objectives and have created thoughtful lessons using technology that they are comfortable. There are also teachers who use very little technology but are also designing highly engaging and thoughtful lessons using "20<sup>th</sup> century" techniques. Teaching is a person specific creative profession. Professionals need to feel comfortable with the tools they use. Each teacher needs to work with their students in ways that make sense to them. Therefore, we need not try to create a one size fits all technology based curriculum. We need to allow teachers access to the technologies they want to create and administer their lessons. Maybe someday, technology will be embedded in all lessons, but as far as we have come in the past few decades we still have oceans to go before that is possible.

#### WEBSITES USED IN WRITING THIS EDITORIAL:

<http://www.edutopia.org/technology-integration-research-learning-outcomes>

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/reading-paper-screens/>

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2005/08/31/01online.h25.html>

[http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational\\_leadership/feb11/vol68/num05/One-to-One Laptop Programs Are No Silver Bullet.aspx](http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/feb11/vol68/num05/One-to-One_Laptop_Programs_Are_No_Silver_Bullet.aspx)

**AG**

**The class of 2018 will be hosting a St. Baldrick's event on Friday, May 13th, in the High School's multi-purpose room from 3:00 - 5:30. If you are interested in participating or donating, please click on the link below or contact Brian Berger. Last year, they raised over \$8000. Thanks for all who contributed in the past and for those who will contribute this time around.**

<https://www.stbaldricks.org/events/shhs2016>

## **Shaker Schools Foundation News for SHTA**

### *A Night for the Red & White*

Thanks to all SHTA members who supported the event by attending, donating to the silent auction, and/or winning a silent auction item. This year's event was a great success because of you and everyone who was associated with the event. We extend sincere thanks and congratulations to Shaker Schools Foundation Executive Director Chris Auginas and the Executive Committee of Sarah Morgan, Hallie Stewart, Tracy Peebles, and Theresa Walsh. Financial results are not available yet, but we will share them soon.

### **SHHS Alumni Reunions**

The Foundation welcomes the classes of 1976 (on June 18) and 1996 and 1966 (on September 17). They will be returning to Shaker Heights, touring the high school, and reconnecting 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**

The following recent projects were possible because of the Shaker Schools Foundation's funding.

- The purchase of robotics materials for Dr. Joe Marencik's Engineering Applications classes, thanks to the **William James and Kathleen Suzanne MacIntyre Fund**;
- Support for two students to participate in co-curricular activities, through the **Beyond the Desk Fund**;
- An artist-in-residence to work with Junior Advanced Ensemble and Senior Ensemble to create original songs for their spring show, through the **James Thornton Fund**;
- Recognition of three Onaway teachers (Jennie DiLeo, Penny Weiss-Flynn, and Katie Porta) by the **Lynn Cowen Fund** for incorporating innovative math instruction into IB units;
- The purchase of new books for Fernway Elementary School through the **Alice Stein Fund**; and
- Underwriting of fees for four students to participate in the band's tour of Spain by the **Jeffrey E. Fox Fund** and the **Brian Hutton Fund**.
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In addition, the Shaker Schools Foundation is proud to announce the receipt of a \$30,000 grant from the **Martha Holden Jennings Foundation** to support *Shaker's First Class*. The Jennings Foundation will help fund professional development for faculty, purchase of materials for the classrooms and playgrounds at Mercer and Onaway, and an enrichment project with University Circle Incorporated's Early Learning Initiative.

### **You Can Help Even More**

The Foundation thanks faculty members who already have donated through the Charity Choice campaign. If you missed it, please know that you can make a tax-deductible gift at any time by sending us a check or visiting [shaker.org/foundation.aspx](http://shaker.org/foundation.aspx).