

AISHA FRASER IN MEMORIAM

Tragedy has touched our Shaker Heights family with the death of Aisha Fraser. Aisha symbolized the spirit of Shaker Heights. She was a Shaker graduate, a Shaker teacher, and a Shaker parent. She was beloved by the students at Woodbury Elementary School where she taught for 16 years. She was active in the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association, serving as one of the Woodbury Representatives for the last six years. Aisha exemplified the best of Shaker Heights Teachers: smart, amazingly caring of her students and her colleagues, active in her profession and in Our Association. She is loved and mourned by many. She is survived by two daughters.

Aisha loved to travel and supported our Cleveland sports teams—especially the Cavaliers. After graduating from Florida A & M, Aisha received her Master's degree from Ursuline College. She was active in Delta Sigma Theta, a sorority dedicated to public service. Her friends knew her to be full of joy. A person who shared her infectious smile and heartfelt laugh.

John L. Morris, President of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association wrote:

“My heart is broken. The death of our colleague, Aisha Fraser, hurts so deeply and I struggle to comprehend it, let alone accept it. Her presence at Woodbury and on our Representative Council has been an essential part of my experience in the SHTA. For now, know that we support Aisha's family, peers, students, and friends as we all grieve her loss.”



IMPORTANT DATES

Thanksgiving Recess: November 21-23

SHTA Executive Board: Monday, December 3 (*Tentative*)

SHTA Representative Council: Monday, December 11 (*Tentative*)

Winter Break: December 24, 2018 to January 4, 2019

SHTA *news*

NOVEMBER 19, 2018
ISSUE #3

Message From the President

When I began teaching here in 1997, Shaker Heights was not a perfect place. We had student and teacher concerns. We wanted to improve our communications with parents and the community. We wanted to bridge the achievement gap. We wanted to make the schools a better place for students to learn, for teachers to teach, and for parents and community to take part. We had in many ways the same concerns we have today. However, there was a crucial difference. We trusted each other and worked collectively on these problems. Let me write this again for emphasis: the administration and teachers had a mutual trust in each other.

That is not nostalgia and we didn't always agree. There were still contentious staff meetings, difficulties communicating effectively with the board, and a few grievances on the part of Our Association. But there was also the sense that everyone from our administrative staff was "all in". They were fully invested in the success of the district from the ways our buildings look to the ways our teachers teach. It was not uncommon for the Superintendent to drive to a parent's or a teacher's house to talk about a difficult situation, or for the Assistant Superintendent to drive a child home if the parent was unable. We knew that a grievance would be handled promptly, confidentially, and with expedience. We knew that even if we did not agree with the outcome, the process would be honored. Conflicts and issues were handled quickly and with sensitivity. Even our building principals were known in times of need or conflict to let a teacher know, despite the conflict that they may have been embroiled within, that their rights would be protected and that we would do our collective best to keep them as a member of our school family. And now, after twenty-one years, I feel like we are on the precipice of either returning to some of these best practices or losing what has made us a model for other school districts for so long.

I don't mean to paint with too broad a brush. We do have administrators who truly care and are fully invested. We do have principals who are doing their absolute diligence and who are honoring the process. But we also have district leaders who have adopted a top-down, corporate style that is endangering the well-being of this district, its students, their families, and our teachers. We are not a large, top down district! That is not how

our students, parents, residents, community members, or teachers operate. That's not why I or many of my colleagues, and other parents moved here.

The actions of the current administration have resulted in the need for uncharacteristic responses from Our Association. Their autocratic decisions have resulted in a combative reaction from Our Association. If we are forced to continue this way, we can. We have the finances to make every grievance a legal grievance, but at what cost? Financially, we will weather the storm but I'm afraid we will sacrifice the soul of this district in the process. We will lose the reason why many of us came here.

We love the students of Shaker Heights. We honor their voices and their concerns. That's why we have all dedicated our lives to their betterment. That's why we have processes in place to honor student and parent concerns. But the district failed to honor our professional commitment when they mistreated one of our own, Jody Podl. If we let the administration deny due process and publicly humiliate one of our most veteran and valued teachers, or any teacher for that matter, we cannot call ourselves a Teachers' Association that truly represents its members. Sadly, while this may be the worst violation of academic freedom towards a teacher I have ever seen, it is not the first from members of this administration. I can assure you that we will follow this path of grievance and disclosure until Jody's situation is made right.

I also promise that we will do the same for you should the situation arise. Collective bargaining and due process are not negotiable. We believe in these rights in Shaker Heights. We are also overwhelmingly supported by the parents and residents of this district. If we don't fight this fight for one of our members, how can we fight it for all of us? We will fight when it's time to fight and take part in resolving these issues when it is time to come to the table to heal our wounds. That's what Our union does.

In the meantime, know that despite Thursday's tumultuous and chaotic meeting, we are here for you. We will do everything we can to work for what is right for our students, our teachers, our parents, and our community. While these events certainly are demoralizing, look at your students and remind yourself that they are why we are here. We must candidly explain, discuss, and be open about these events with them, because we know we, and they, will overcome these times of distress. And I hope we will be better when we come out the other side of these upcoming administrative transitions. Know that you are valued, and trusted, and supported, and loved by your fellow SHTA Members. We are here for each other. Please contact me at x6033 with any questions or concerns or feel free to email me at morris_j@shaker.org.

*Respectfully submitted,
John Morris*



Reports from the Executive Board

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I would like to acknowledge the recipients of the 2018- 2019 Fellowship Grants. These members have earned \$100 that they can use to promote their professional development. These fellowships may be used for any of the following, but not exclusively for:

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

These fellowships may not be used for classroom materials, supplies, or special projects.

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

1. The applicant must be a member of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association and expect to continue teaching in the Shaker Heights City Schools.
2. The money may be used at the discretion of the recipient with the provision that the activities will benefit the professional growth of the teacher, and in turn, the students with which whom he/she works.
3. The entire fellowship money must be used between November 2018 and September 30, 2019.
4. In the event the recipient is unable to use the award within the prescribed time no money will be issued.

I will again be working with the Shaker Schools Foundation as the Teacher Liaison for *A Night for the Red and White*. I would like to encourage each of you to make a donation to this year's Silent Auction. The items donated by Shaker staff have been the most sought after of all the auction offerings. As an incentive to contribute to the auction, any SHTA member who donates will be entered into a drawing with a chance to win two tickets to the event.

Again, this year, the staff will be offered a special discounted price of \$100 per ticket which can be used to purchase up to two tickets. You will receive an invitation in your district mailbox in January with information on purchasing your ticket/s.

I continue to make disbursements to Fernway teachers from the Fernway Fire Fund. Again, I want to thank all those who contributed to the fund and especially the SHTA for their donation of \$1,000.

I have attended various meetings in preparation for the continued SHTA-ST negotiations.

I ask for the experienced and veteran teachers to look after our vulnerable members, those without the protection of a continuing contract. Please offer your help, guidance and support; especially during these difficult times.

As we approach the holidays, and especially Thanksgiving, I reflect on the things I am thankful for. I am thankful for Our Association and solidarity. I am thankful for collective bargaining and the contracts they create that guide and serve both labor and management. I am thankful for due process and those who follow it and those who defend it. I am thankful for the professionalism of the members of the SHTA. I wish you all a happy, safe, and restful Thanksgiving!

Respectfully submitted,
Matthew Zucca

TREASURER'S REPORT

I was not able to attend the entire Thursday night Community meeting. That was the night of my YEH Spaghetti Dinner, so I was only able to pop into the auditorium for the first fifteen minutes and then dash back up to the cafeteria to finish cleaning up. I wasn't there when the real chaos began. Only later, as I was finishing the last of the clean-up, I crossed paths with teachers exiting the building. They looked shell-shocked. During the following weekend, I watched the video of the meeting and I saw why.

The video was difficult to watch. What a low point for our district. But what pained me most was seeing my former student get up on stage and say, "I'm the student that they're referring to in that letter." This was a sixteen-year-old who did the right thing. She felt uncomfortable about things that went on in a class and she went to an adult to share her concerns. And then that adult took this information and so botched the handling of it that now this sixteen year-old is at the center of a chaotic situation she never asked for. This is not her fault. Blame for the situation our district finds itself in is in the hands of irresponsible adults, who had a situation that should have taken a day or two to resolve and instead has gone on for over a month.

In his Nov. 13 Message, Interim Superintendent Dr. Steve Wilkins wrote "I am reviewing the performance of Principal Kuehnle and Assistant Superintendent Breeden in regards to this important matter. They did not live up to my expectations for how to process such reviews. I will take any appropriate corrective actions pending a thorough examination."

Is there a timeline for this examination? How will the results be made available? And, what long term effects will these performances have on our district? This is not the first time that the decision-making process of members of the administration has been questionable. I am eager to see the resolution of the examination into the actions of Mr. Kuehnle and Ms. Breeden.

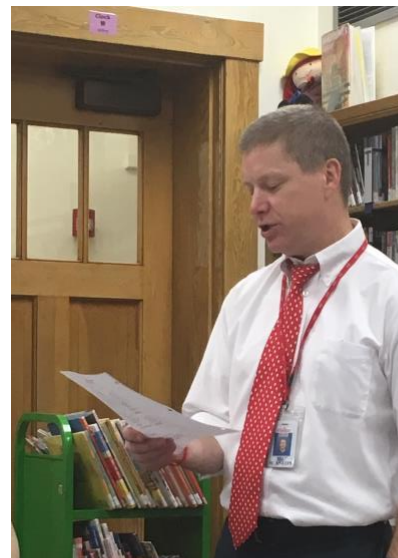
The Investments Committee (myself, Todd Keitlen, Chante Thomas-Taylor, and Matt Zucca) met in October with Brady Krebs, our Edward Jones advisor to evaluate our investment accounts.

I met with our accountants at Edward Hawkins & Co., LLC to finish last fiscal year's (June 2017 - July 2018) tax form filings, and to provide them with the financial records for our annual review.

I filed our annual report with SERB (State Employment Relations Board).

The current financial report is attached.

***Respectfully submitted,
Bill Scanlon, Treasurer***



**Shaker Heights Teachers'
Association
Profit and Loss Standard
July 1 through November 13,
2018**

11/15/18

	<u>Jul 1 - Nov 13, '18</u>
Income	
Income	
Member Dues	42,270.00
Total Income	<u>42,270.00</u>
Investments	
Edward Jones-Fees & Charges	-2,336.05
Key Investments Income	23.15
Change in Value for Key Investm	-39,073.41
Change in Value in Edward Jones	8,704.12
Total Investments	<u>-32,682.19</u>
Other Types of Income	
Miscellaneous Revenue	6,029.52
Total Other Types of Income	<u>6,029.52</u>
Total Income	<u>15,617.33</u>
Expense	
Operations	
Fernway Fund	1,397.92
Accounting	
Banking	-354.16
Accounting - Other	7,595.00
Total Accounting	<u>7,240.84</u>
Conferences & Meetings	1,103.96
Executive Board	95.89
Fellowships & Grants	486.37
Insurance	5,419.00
Legal	7,243.72
Negotiations	15,232.49
Officers' Expenses	132.99
Public Relations	1,234.66
Publications	89.00
Social	500.00
Total Operations	<u>40,176.84</u>
Total Expense	<u>40,176.84</u>
Net Income	<u>-24,559.51</u>

**Shaker Heights Teachers' Association
Balance Sheet Standard
As of November 13, 2018**

11/1

Nov 13, '18

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings

Key Investments2 45,79

Key Bank (checking) 61,73

Total Checking/Savings 107,52

Other Current Assets

Edward Jones 13760-1-1 478,67

Edward Jones 13768-1-3 687,68

Total Other Current Assets 1,166,35

Total Current Assets 1,273,87

TOTAL ASSETS 1,273,87

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Equity

Opening Balance Equity 5

Retained Earnings 1,298,39

Net Income -24,51

Total Equity 1,273,89

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY 1,273,89



EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES REPORT

During the past month, I have:

- Attended the Executive Board and Representative Council meetings in November.
- Watched a video of the Community Meeting on November 8.
- Read the *Shakerite* and other news reports to stay current with events happening at the high school.
- Consulted with John Morris about a grievance at the high school.
- Assisted members with maternity leaves, caregiver leaves, and a medical leave (FMLA).
- Continued to provide support to Science and Social Studies teachers at the middle school regarding struggling readers. Intervention specialists have been hired to start modifying assignments for these departments. It has been a collaborative effort with the administrative leadership team at the middle school.
- Attended the Insurance Committee meeting on October 11.

If you take advantage of the Flexible Spending Account benefit for either medical or child care expenses, the platform is merging with our Medical Mutual health care online accounts. Your current cards will stop working in mid-December. You can still be reimbursed for expenses through December 31, 2018.

Reimbursement requests may be submitted through the end of March, 2019. New cards should be ready and sent to you in January. There was a change for medical expenses this year. Only \$500 of money left can be transferred to 2019 (for the entire year). Any additional amount not used by the end of 2018 will be lost. Now might be the time to purchase those Ray-ban prescription sunglasses you have always wanted. Child care accounts will continue to have a grace period, and all 2018 money must be used by March 15, 2019 with reimbursement requests submitted by the end of March, 2019.

Members continue to contact me about bills from the Emergency Room. Two appeals are completed, and the members only had to pay the \$100 co-pay. If you receive an unexpected bill from an emergency room visit, there is an appeals process through Medical Mutual. Contact Human Resources Generalist Sarah Fish to guide you through this process. Also, you could take advantage of Health Advocate, a benefit provided to help all employees with health care decisions. Check out their website:

<http://www.healthadvocate.com/site/>

You can create an account, and request information or call them to assist with denied claims. They act as a mediator so you don't have to call Medical Mutual directly.

Best wishes for a peaceful and relaxing holiday season!

***Respectfully submitted,
Mike Sears, Chairperson***

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

The status of charter schools is changing. In what might be the biggest fallout from the recent elections, support among elected officials for charter schools is dropping. See the following New York Times article: (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/09/nyregion/nyc-charter-schools.html>).

Because voters in Wisconsin selected a former state school superintendent to be their governor, Wisconsinites can expect improvements in how schools are funded and in the treatment of teachers. In Ohio, cross your fingers and hope that Governor DeWine will be forward-thinking about how to fund education and on the treatment of teachers. Let's see what happens.

EdWeek.org has plenty of election coverage from the education point of view. Some stories of note (<https://www.edweek.org/ew/section/multimedia/edweeks-election-watch-party.html>):

- Although 40 teachers won elections on November 6, 80 teachers lost.
- Vouchers were on the ballot in Arizona, and public education won. The voters chose to maintain tight restrictions on which students could receive state funding to get schooled privately.
- The voters of Colorado chose not to increase their funding of their schools. The schools there are clearly underfunded (some schools have closed and many have slashed what they provide students), and teachers put a lot of effort into the failed referendum.

If you know of an education issue that is in transition in the legislative world, please let the Legislative Committee of the SHTA know about it.

*Respectfully submitted,
David Klapholz, Chairperson*

EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Greetings everyone! In these tumultuous and controversial times, it is even more imperative that we are knowledgeable about the evaluation process, expected protocols, and the overarching goal - Professional Growth. Please keep this goal at the forefront of your work with your evaluator and communicate with your building representative or a member of the Evaluation Committee if you feel your evaluation is not growth focused.

I continue to encourage all teachers and evaluators to review the Teacher Evaluation Packet, as well as forms and resources on the Evaluation page of Shaker.org.

Last month, I reminded everyone of the protocol for conferences to take place in your teaching space, if they haven't been as of yet. This protocol is designed to honor each teacher's space, build trust, and allow teachers and evaluators to reflect on the teaching environment collaboratively, among others.

There seems to continue to be confusion about requirements for Formal and Informal Evaluations. While this information is readily available in the Evaluation Packet, I will provide the basics for you below.

Formal Evaluations for teachers on LIMITED contracts:

- Three Lesson Observations (TWO in the Fall, ONE in the Spring) that include pre-and post-observation conferences
- Two informal observations of 3-5 minutes each (ONE each Semester) - data from these must be added to Performance Rubric

- Completion of Performance Rubric throughout the year with data from observations, conferences, informal observations, and any additional evidence provided by the teacher

Formal Evaluations for teachers on CONTINUING contracts:

- Two Lesson Observations (ONE in the Fall, ONE in the Spring) that include pre-and post-observation conferences
- Two informal observations of 3-5 minutes each (ONE *each Semester*) - data from these must be added to Performance Rubric
- Completion of Performance Rubric throughout the year with data from observations, conferences, informal observations, and any additional evidence provided by the teacher

Informal Evaluations (only available for teachers on continuing contracts):

- Two 15 minute informal observations (one in Fall, one in Spring) using the Informal Observation form - ***No lesson plan or additional conferences are needed for Informal Observations.***

All teachers and administrators are expected to follow the Evaluation Committee agreed upon protocols for evaluation. The Evaluation Committee will be meeting on November 28th to discuss evaluation issues, particularly concerns shared with the committee. Please be sure to forward your questions and concerns as soon as possible to me, any committee member, or your building representative.

*Respectfully submitted,
Lena Paskewitz, Chairperson*

PAST PRESIDENT’S REPORT

In the past month, I attended the SHTA Executive Board and Representative Council meetings. I also went to the meetings of the Insurance Committee and the Finance and Audit Committee. Finally, I attended the November regular meeting of the Board of Education. At that meeting, Board President Jeffrey Isaacs stated that the Board “knows we can do better” and concluded by saying “We will get our house in order. You have our word.” The public comment period that followed included contentious comments about the situation at the high school along with statements about the rebuilding of Fernway. I feel I should mention that there were comments that were very pointed, even hostile. The Board allowed them.

Regarding Fernway, the Board approved the “\$3 million” option which will provide the rebuilding of Fernway with additional educational spaces including new spaces for Kindergarten, music, and special needs along with enlarged classrooms. They put the site improvements “on hold” in terms of funding and encouraged looking at opportunities for city funding and/or fund raising. Air conditioning is not being funded, although there was a discussion about doing the prep work for it. No clear decision was made about this feature.

Congratulations to Treasurer Bryan Christman, who was reappointed to the position of Treasurer from 2019 to 2024.

At this time, there will not be a Newsletter until 2019. I want to wish all of you a wonderful holiday season. Your work is very important and valued.

*Respectfully submitted,
Becky Thomas, Chairperson*

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The public relations committee has begun to compose a new SHTA T-Shirt order. The order form has already been sent out via e-mail. If you do not have a shirt or need to upgrade, please fill out the google form below. Please make all checks payable to SHTA and send to Robert Bognar at Woodbury. I would like to wish all of the members a restful and restorative Thanksgiving break!

<https://goo.gl/forms/wr3NCNzMzNUAtI503>

*Respectfully Submitted,
Robert Bognar*

POLICY COMMITTEE

Today's policy focus concerns one of the many committees delineated in our association's constitution. Under BY-LAW V - Standing Committees, section K - Professional Rights and Responsibilities (GRIEVANCE) Committee reads:

There shall be a Professional Rights and Responsibilities Committee. The function of this committee shall be:

1. To interpret the Agreement between the Association and the Board on behalf of the Association. Final interpretations may be subject to review by legal counsel, the Representative Council or Executive Board.
2. To assist in the preparation of, and to implement, all grievances as outlined in Article XII of the Agreement. The Agreement is to be construed only as a reference point and not as part of the By-Laws.
3. To assist in the resolution of any professional problems of any of the members where the good offices of the Association may be utilized.
4. To receive allegations of breaches of professional ethics against any of the members and to seek solutions using Association channels.

Our Association provides a mechanism through the negotiated collective bargaining agreement to compel due process for our members and find reasonable solutions to disputes between SHTA members and administration. It is important for our members to know their rights and responsibilities. Don't hesitate to contact your building representative or an Executive Board member with any questions or concerns.

*Respectfully submitted,
Tim Kalan, Chairperson*

LEGAL AID COMMITTEE

I am monitoring the issue at the High School and will discuss it with legal committee members if and when necessary.

*Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Grieshop, Chairperson*

MEMBERSHIP/ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

We are still growing! Membership forms can be found at shtaweb.org. If you have potential new members, help them out by printing off this form and giving it to them. **Completed forms should be sent to my attention at Woodbury School.**

Our Association has a total of 468 members. Here is the breakdown by building:

Members per Building:

Boulevard 33

Fernway 29

Lomond 38*

Mercer 33

Onaway 35

Woodbury 75

Middle School 72

High School 153

I will be sending updated spreadsheets to each building representative to confirm members. Once the lists have been confirmed, 2018-2019 SHTA membership cards will be distributed.

Respectfully submitted,
Chante Thomas-Taylor, Chairperson

TEACHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

New teachers should have received a letter from me with important information concerning our contract. Please take a look at this information.

Please remember that my role with SHTA is not only to assist new teachers and mentors. I am also available to any teachers who are not on a continuing contract. If there are questions or concerns I can be reached through my district email (hardiman_1@shaker.org) or by phone at Mercer (#4867).

There are some important dates to remember:

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

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hardiman, chairperson

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

I am pleased to announce that we will have our *SHTA Holiday Happy Hour* on December 7th at Slyman's Tavern (4009 Orange Place, Beachwood)! Because this is the season to be festive and celebrate, please come dressed in your SHTA shirt (or a red shirt) and accessorize it with all your best holiday stuff! We hope to see you all!

Respectfully submitted,
Selena Boyer, Chairperson

SUPPORT TEACHERS COMMITTEE

The SHTA-ST collective bargaining team will testify before the outside fact-finder for hopefully the last time on November 19 - six months after the start of negotiations. We will present our case that the District can afford to pay Support Teachers the same pay for doing the same work as regular SHTA members. In October, the SHTA filed a grievance, based on our current contract, requesting that Intervention Specialist STs and English Language Learner STs be paid at SHTA rates because the work they do is indistinguishable from SHTA Intervention Specialists and ELL teachers. The grievance was rejected by the Administration as being an issue currently under negotiation. STs, who teach some of Shaker's most vulnerable students, make an average of 30% less than comparably qualified SHTA members.

Respectfully submitted,
Bonnie Gordon, Chairperson

SHTA PAC

During the past month, I...

- updated the P.A.C Facebook page. Please feel free to post articles or invite others to join the group.
- attended the High School meeting on November 8th and this month's Board meeting.
- passed out election literature in my neighborhood.
- wrote a letter to Board of Education about the way teachers are being treated in our district (see below)

Respectfully Submitted,
Cathy Grieshop, Chairperson

SALARY TENURE COMMITTEE

The SHTA Support Teacher Negotiations Team will meet with the district again on November to hopefully conclude fact-finding. We look forward to a conclusion to the process and findings to be presented to both sides, as well as the School Board.

Respectfully Submitted,
John L. Morris, Chair

MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING November 12, 2018, Boulevard School

SHTA President, John Morris started the November 12th Rep. Council Meeting at 4:33P.M.

Neal Robinson, Principal of Boulevard Elementary School welcomed SHTA membership to Boulevard. Mr. Robinson thanked members for what they do on an everyday basis. The teachers are the life-blood of Shaker Schools. We believe in you, never give up.

MINUTES from the October 08, 2018 Rep. Council meeting were approved. A motion to approve the minutes was made by James Schmidt and the motion was seconded by Paula Klausner.

Administration Report

Dr. Erin Herbruck and Dr. Lois Cavucci were present for the Rep. Council Meeting

- Dr. Herbruck shared that Dr. Breeden was in Columbus and could not attend the meeting.
- She is present to answer questions and listen to comments, collaborate with teachers

P.T.O. Report – There was no PTO Representative present to share a report with the Association.

Officer's Report

President, John Morris

- Attended Insurance Committee Meeting with Mike Sears and Becky Thomas.
- Worked on Special Education issue.
- Worked on personnel issue.
- Met with HS members.
- Met with calendar committee.
- Attended Special Education mediation.
- Worked on supplemental committee issue.
- Consulted on Professional Development issue.
- Consulted on a facilities issue.
- Worked on ongoing legal issue.
- Posted to SHTA and CCES Facebook pages.
- Spoke regularly with Superintendent Dr. Stephen Wilkins.
- Attended HS meeting on appointment of Dr. David Glasner as substitute HS principal.
- Sent a letter on the High School personnel issue to members.
- Consulted on a school psychologist issue.
- Attended Community Talk Back.
- Sent a letter to membership on protections that the SHTA offers our members.

Salary Tenure Report

- The SHTA Support Teacher Negotiations Team will meet with the district again in November to hopefully conclude fact-finding. We look forward to a conclusion to the process and findings to be presented to both sides, as well as the School Board.

Vice President, Matt Zucca

- Assisting a member with a reclassification question.
- Collected SHTA Fellowship applications.
- Recipients of the Grants will be informed by email and names will appear in the newsletter.
- Made final disbursement for 2017-2018 Fellowship Grants.

- Will be attending a kick off meeting for *A Night for the Red and White*.
 - Event is scheduled for March 2, 2019; more information will follow shortly.

Secretary, Darlene Garrison

- Please be sure to sign the attendance sheet.
- Attended Community Meeting.
- If you have extended reports please email the reports to be included in the notes. The reports are needed before Wednesday at midnight.

Treasurer, Bill Scanlon

- Attended Investment Committee Meeting with Chante, Todd, and Matt.
- In touch with financial advisor, getting last year's books in order.
- Passed out current financial report.
- Still waiting to close out Negotiations. So far, we have spent \$15,000 on negotiations.
- Have paid accountants for records over \$7000.
- We have brought in \$42,000 so far in the collection of Union Dues.
- Edward Jones account is still in good shape, doing well.
- Fernway Fund - \$3,863.50 donated, \$1,397.92 paid out and \$2,465.58 still available.
- Have been helping to support Dr. John Morris.
- Communicated with one school board member and will be communicating with all of them.
- Communicated with the PTO co-chair.
- Monday, November 26th speaker on Restorative Practices - High School Large Auditorium 7:00-9:00.

Executive Board Reports

Past President, Becky Thomas

- Attended Board of Education Meeting.
 - Will be attending the School Board Meeting on Wednesday, November 14th.
- Attended the Finance and Audit Meeting.
 - Discussion was about Fernway Elementary School
 - Replace the building using insurance money, 2 options; 3.5 million or 5.5 million. Second option more compatible with other schools. Could be a brand new, state-of-the art school.
 - Still discussing the idea of having air conditioning: \$300,000-\$360,000.

Teacher Education, Lisa Hardiman

- Will be sending contractual information to new teachers.
- Will be sure to include tuition reimbursement information.

Legal Aid, Cathy Grieshop

- Monitoring issue at the High School.
- Updated PAC Facebook Page.
- Attended Community Meeting.
- Wrote letter to school board about the treatment of teachers when they are on administrative leave.
 - decline of the relationship between administration and teachers.

Policy, Tim Kalan

- Attended Community Meeting.
- Writing an essay for Newsletter.
- Working on an issue at Lomond.

Public Relations, Bob Bognar

- New material for the advertisement in the *Shakerite & Shaker Life* Magazines.
- Putting together new t-shirt orders.
- On the Master Planning Scheduling Committee at Woodbury.

Legislative, Dave Klapholz

- The status of charter schools is changing. In what might be the biggest fallout from the recent elections, support among elected officials for charter schools is dropping. See the New York Times article (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/09/nyregion/nyc-charter-schools.html>).
- Because voters in Wisconsin selected a former state school superintendent to be their governor, Wisconsinites can expect improvements in how schools are funded and in the treatment of teachers. In Ohio, cross your fingers and hope that Governor DeWine will be forward-thinking about how to fund education and on the treatment of teachers. Let's see what happens.
- EdWeek.org has plenty of election coverage from the education point of view. Some stories of note (<https://www.edweek.org/ew/section/multimedia/edweeks-election-watch-party.html>):
- Although 40 teachers won elections on November 6, 80 teachers lost.
- Vouchers were on the ballot in Arizona, and public education won. The voters chose to maintain tight restrictions on which students could receive state funding to get schooled privately.
- The voters of Colorado chose not to increase their funding of their schools. The schools there are clearly underfunded (some schools have closed and many have slashed what they provide students), and teachers put a lot of effort into the failed referendum.
- If you know of an education issue that is in transition in the legislative world, please let the Legislative Committee of the SHTA know about it.

Publications, Andrew Glasier

- Facebook & Twitter Updates including the Halloween photos, letter about Jody Podl and posted from the disaster last Thursday.
- Mike Sears editorial sent out on FB and linked on Twitter. Really shows the disconnect between the Board & this administration.
- Cathy Grieshop letter to the Board will be added to the newsletter .
- Mario Clopton-Ziegler speech from HS meeting with Dr. Wilkins will also be included.
- Tim Kalan editorial on Class Size will be added to January newsletter with his permission.
- Attended the Special meeting on Thursday, aka the disaster.
- Talked to parents about why they should not take their kids out of Shaker schools after the meeting.
- Talked to colleagues about not looking for jobs in other districts.
- BOE Meeting Wednesday the 14th.
- Sent out emails about SHTA shirt day on Thursday to support our teachers and Wednesday BOE meeting.
- Sent out email with Dr. Morris's letter to members which I also edited.
- More people need to JOIN the PAC SHTA FB Page. Will advertise in newsletter.
- Following superintendent search with Shaker and CH/UH. Using same search firm.
- Have been working with Dr. Glasner on evaluations that were on Kuehnle's case load. We have agreed to move 5 tenured teachers to be evaluated by Peers, with the help of Dr Cavucci.
- Most Spectacular Holiday Outfits contest will happen again. Please send your photo of your amazing you in your amazing outfit to Glasier the last week before break. Valuable prizes will be awarded!
- Executive Board: need your blurb in Wednesday by midnight
- John Morris great leadership in difficult times. We want to support him and his family for the overtime he has had to put in.

Social, Selena Boyer

- Attended Community Meeting.
- Holiday Happy Hour is scheduled for December 07th. Looking for a location.
- Let's try to get new faces there, the same people attend.
- Please email Selena possible venues for the event.

Membership/Elections, Chante Thomas-Taylor

- Checking our membership lists. Checking who our members are and are dues paid

Professional Rights and Responsibilities, Mike Sears

- Attended the Insurance Committee Meeting
- It appears that Medical Mutual is not the same as Anthem. Most problems are with the Emergency Room Charges
 - Reprs. from Medical Mutual don't seem to understand and can't explain.
 - If it's not life-threatening, it may not be covered.
 - There is an appeals process that can be accessed online.
 - You can also contact Sarah Fish, she can walk you through the process.
 - New service, a health advocate can help with a denied claim.
- Helping people with questions about leave.
 - Maternity Leave is now 8 weeks for Vaginal and C-section birth.
- Talked with Dr. John Morris about high school issue.

Evaluation, Lena Paskewitz

- Scheduled Evaluation Committee Meeting for November 28th.
 - Please review protocol established by the committee.
 - Pre & post conference is to take place in the teacher's space not the space of the administrator.
 - Suggestions or concerns submitted prior to November 28th meeting.

Support Teachers, Bonnie Gordon

- It has been quiet
- Next Monday, last day before the Fact Finder
 - SHTA members have done finance reports on the district to report

Building Representative Reports

Boulevard, Angela Anderson

- No Report

Fernway, Victoria Goldfarb

- Helped a non-member join SHTA.
- Continue to address paraprofessional needs.

Lomond, Steve Smith

- Having monthly meetings for SHTA members, working to schedule meetings with principal.

Mercer, Nicole Cicconetti

- Consistent shortage of paraprofessional subs.
 - Shortage overall, children are in need.
- Looking forward to positive results regarding paraprofessional improvements after the meeting.
 - Teachers are documenting when there is no paraprofessional.

Onaway, Paula Klausner

- Similar issues with paraprofessional staff - not enough coverage.
- Dealing with an ongoing personnel matter for the last several months.
- Cut back on computers in 3rd grade. Fifteen computers in the classroom and they will be losing 3 due to Google.

Woodbury, Angela Goodrum

- No Report.

Middle School, John Koppitch

- There are many teachers who believe that there are students who are in regular education classes and are not receiving sufficient support because they have significant struggles with reading. Many teachers agree that there are students who would benefit from a reading intensive class environment.
- There is confusion about quarterly special education reports, teachers are having to use a new program that is confusing and time consuming with no guidance or support.
- A principal did not intervene as two students fought in their vicinity. A nearby faculty member stopped the fight, while the injured student was left unsupervised. Reps followed up with head principal and were told that this administrator is being coached about procedural expectations.
- Teachers are still asking for consistent follow up from the MIT team and assistant principals when a student has had a restorative issue.
- Teachers are confused because they are being asked for their whereabouts during their planning period, whether they're leaving the building or not?
- Teachers were frustrated over the grade entry deadline, a request for an extension was made and was denied. We have been asked to; accept all late work, allow re-takes on all assessments and to allow unlimited revisions on essays.
- Several Middle School teachers are still receiving past due bills from previous ER visits.

High School, James Schmidt

- I attended the High School SHTA building meeting on October 19th.
- I met with Mr. Kuehnle on October 26th to discuss updates to the process with the teacher on administrative leave and other issues that are ongoing.
- I worked on an issue with the temperature differential throughout the building and have been assured by our outstanding maintenance and facilities crew at the High School that it is being addressed and will be stabilized very soon.
- I met with Dr. Glasner along with Dr. Morris on November 2nd to discuss ongoing issues at the High School as he assumed the role of Substitute Principal of the High School.
- I attended the building meeting on November 2nd where Dr. Wilkins and Mr. Glasner addressed Mr. Kuehnle being placed on administrative leave.
- I met with Dr. Spurrier and a teacher about an issue brought forth by a student.
- I met with Mr. Clark to discuss an issue with another teacher brought to him by a parent.
- I received feedback from parents and teachers regarding the meeting that was held on 11/8/18, although I was unable to attend the meeting myself.
- There is an ongoing issue at the high school involving Special Education and caseloads, about which we are anticipating a response from the Administration shortly.
- There is an ongoing issue at the high school involving Special Education student scheduling that needs to be addressed by the Administration, as we are out of compliance with ODE regulations and Ohio State law (ORC) for the number of students with certain disabilities that are permitted to be in a given class at a time. We are awaiting a resolution.
- There is a grievance in process regarding the Administration's handling of the situation with the teacher that has been placed on Administrative Leave that is ongoing.

Support Teachers, Bonnie Gordon

- It has been quiet.
- Next Monday, last day before the Fact Finder.
 - SHTA members have done finance reports on the district to report.

New Business

- Motion to send Jody Podl a Gift Card from SHTA - made by James Schmidt
 - Motion passed unanimously

Old Business

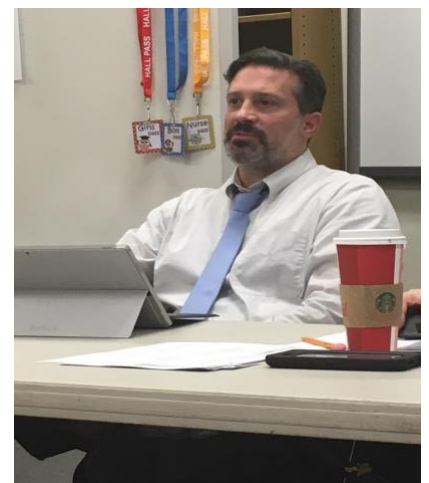
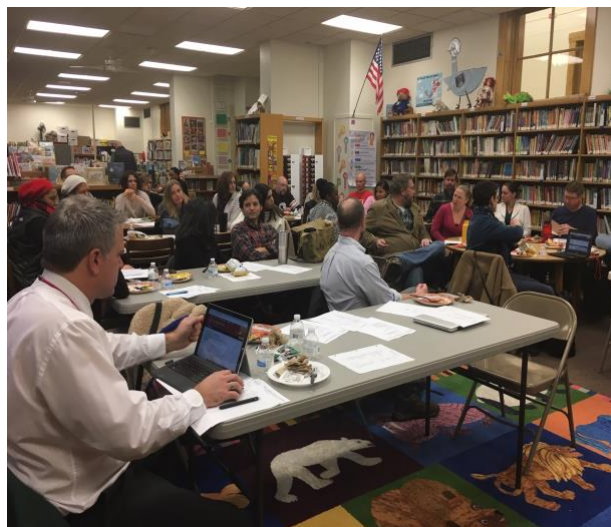
- None

Good of the Order

- Thank you, Angela Anderson, for hosting the Rep. Council Meeting and providing such a delicious meal.
- Have a safe and happy Thanksgiving & Holiday Season.
- “Thank you, I could not do this without you. You are an advocate for your Association and your colleagues.” Dr. John Morris

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Tim Kalan, seconded by Bob Bognar.
Meeting adjourned at 6:24PM

***Respectfully submitted,
Darlene Garrison, Secretary***



A Letter to the Board Concerning Administrative Leave

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.

October 29, 2018

Dear Shaker Heights Board of Education Members,

I want you to understand how painful it is to wait for a decision to be made about your career and life. Four years ago, when I was told the Board was going to terminate my contract, I was traumatized.

I was a mother with two children attending Shaker Heights schools and trying to keep a home over their heads. I had so many worries to face: How on earth was I to take care of my children? Should I apply for nursing school? Will I have to move back in with my mother at age 45? How would I pay my bills without a decent job? I spent many hours and sleepless nights figuring out how I was going to take care of my family IF this were to happen.

I told my children “no” to any requests for money or activities. I bought less food and was careful with money. My children watched their mother cry as her life was turned upside down. You see, my young children were affected also. Their lives changed. They were living with knowledge that their mom was being treated like a dangerous criminal, having to ask permission to walk into any school building. This conflicted with what they knew about their kind and caring mother. I sat... waiting for a decision.

I had to change my life patterns. I grocery shopped at a further away grocery store, not wanting to run into people and have to field constant questions about my case. I stopped going to church, because well meaning people would want to talk about my case. Four of my students in that kindergarten class attended my church and it hurt too much to see them.

I grew up as a teacher in the Shaker Heights schools from student teaching to my current 25+ years. I learned from some of the very best: knowledgeable, creative, and caring teachers and worldly, thoughtful and professional administrators. During that time, administrators and teachers worked together cooperatively and honestly. There was no Us vs Them feeling, like there is now. Of course, issues came up, but they were solved respectfully. Teachers felt safe and valued.

In January of 2015, I had my entire adult life wrapped up in Shaker Heights and the Shaker schools as a community member, teacher, parent, friend and respected colleague. All of a sudden, in one day, my whole life was abruptly turned upside down. This was devastating for me and eventually lead to a PTSD diagnosis. When I first heard of Jody Podl's paid administrative leave, my stomach turned and I burst into tears. I am sharing this private information because I want the administration and board members to understand that you are dealing with real people, whose lives are invested in the Shaker community and the children of our schools.

Becoming an IB school system fit perfectly in the Shaker Schools curriculum that I knew and loved. I sent my own children here because I trusted that their best interests were being met. We were already living the IB learner profile of being caring, open-minded, principled and good communicators. We were worldly and humane. I find it ironic that we are not treating each other the way we are expecting the kids to treat one another. We are teaching the IB learner profile without actually modeling it.

I don't understand how we got here. I don't understand labeling teachers as guilty until they can fight or prove their innocence. I don't understand why we call ourselves an IB school system, yet we are not all living up to the expected IB values.

Frankly, the abrupt way human resources issues are being acted upon is cruel. I waited for over two months to learn my fate. Waited in anxious anticipation as my fate was decided. In reaction to the events of my case, many teachers confided in me that they do not have trust in this administration. Many feel this way but are scared to speak up; afraid of repercussions.

My job as a teacher is to guide children academically as well as emotionally and socially. I am expected to understand my students as the diverse humans they are and guide them through issues with open-minded, respectful conversation. Why isn't our administration held to the same IB values as I am? The time and stress involved in waiting for a decision to be made without open communication is cruel.

When issues arise, please take communicative, forthright, respectful steps to solve the problem. Please start treating Jody Podl the way she deserves. Respectful, professional and kind. This is not who we are in Shaker Heights.

*Sincerely,
Cathy Grieshop
2nd grade teacher
Boulevard Elementary School
Resident
Parent*

A Speech Given to Interim Superintendent Wilkins On November 2, 2018

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I'm an appointed public safety official serving the people of Cleveland so I understand how important it is to make sure a good plan is in order before making announcements to the masses. But, we aren't the masses, we are your first line of defense. If you choose to empower us, we can be your greatest allies and most sincere counselors. The choice to remain silent only breeds false rumors, angst, fear and lack of trust.

I'm not a catastrophist, I'm usually the one that says, "it'll be fine in the end" or "don't worry about it." But recently I've found the collaborative, creative and passionate spirit in this high school to be slowly waning. I believe in the tagline "A community is known by the schools it keeps".

I came to this school district from Cleveland Heights. When I taught at Roxboro Middle School, a few teacher friends of mine would jokingly call Shaker Heights "the promised land" - a place where there was mutual understanding between administration, teachers and families. And when I got here, I got a glimpse of the life in the promised land. I was treated as a professional. I was held to high standards but not dictated to. Most importantly, I got to teach confidently with support from my principal and colleagues.

It feels like each year the culture gets less recognizable, less promised land, more corporate. If culture and tone is set by the leaders in our building, I have now had to become accustomed to the culture and tone of Michael Griffith, James Reed, Johnathan Kuehnle now David Glasner.

If you're going to do another investigation you should start with an investigation into why Shaker Heights High School, a school of tradition, marked accomplishment and promise can't seem keep the same person at the helm for longer than a few years.

Our students need stability, and in order to tend to their academic and personal needs, the faculty too need stability. We need a principal that is an advocate of our professionalism, not a check on it. It's disheartening to say that for the past month, the only communication I've received from the upper administration has informed me that colleague after colleague after colleague is either fired or placed on administrative leave for reasons that are unknown because "It's a personnel matter." That doesn't give me the confidence to go into the classroom and do what I do best. It makes me wonder, not knowing any information behind these disciplinary actions, "Am I next"?

I'm a black, openly gay, Catholic, left-handed man. I've dealt with a lot in my 31 years, so I don't scare easily and I'm not scared now. One of my life philosophies is to "See the good in all things" Said a different way "Assume good intentions" - one of our norms here at the high school. I want so badly to see and assume good from the administration at Parkland Drive. However, I feel evidence shows that the administration building as a cohort, has been ineffective in treating the high school faculty as professionals. At times, it feels as if we are perceived as whiny in our requests and suggestions, therefore easily ignorable. Bob Schneider, my mentor and colleague, called me in the summer of 2013 while I was in graduate school during the summer and painted for me a picture of Shaker Heights as a place of growing professional and personal possibilities. That's what got me here. I want to stay here. So, find me a good, caring, and competent Principal that wants to stay here too.

Mario Clopton-Zymler
High School Music Teacher

A Speech Given to the Board of Education November 14, 2018

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I would like to first acknowledge my appreciation for Dr. Wilkins' letter of apology to Ms. Podl and the students and families affected by the handling of that situation. I believe that it is an important step forward to gracefully admit when things have not gone according to plan.

I have nothing but respect for the student who expressed concerns regarding her perceptions. I do wish to share, however, that the impact of the handling of the complaint regarding Ms. Podl has deeply affected all Shaker teachers.

Our motto is: “A community is known by the schools it keeps.” And the specific aspirations listed along with that: Excellence. Equity. Exploration. These are all important goals, and the concerns regarding equity have deservedly been a focus of discussion and action. But, I believe the excellence of our schools is also now at stake.

Why? Because a climate of distrust has developed, which most certainly impacts teacher effectiveness. If teachers feel unsupported in challenging or even correcting student mistakes, they begin asking questions like: Is having high expectations for students the same as bullying? Are challenging assignments the same as intimidation?

If teachers feel unsupported in challenging or correcting student mistakes, how can we enforce the high expectations that true excellence demands? Trust me, it would be easier to just give full credit, or a check mark, or a star, or a smiley face or the word “Good!” on a writing assignment, than to sacrifice the 30-40 hours giving authentic, formative, written feedback, that an English teacher spends per writing assignment. (That’s assuming only 20 minutes per paper with 100 students.)

The student who expressed a concern regarding Ms.Podl, also was quoted in the November 12th *Shakerite* article saying “I just want it to be known that I hoped it did not have to go this far. ...I know she’s hard on grading. I feel like it’s important to have that kind of ‘tough teacher’ but at the same time, there’s a way to balance it and deal with it.” The ambiguity of the way the district “deals with it” needs to be addressed.

In the November 9th letter written by the Board of Education, the process for looking into concerns involving staff was outlined. Bullet point #2 states: “Assessing the need to place a staff member on administrative leave pending a review.” I request that the Board formally articulate *exactly* which kinds of situations merit a teacher’s removal from the classroom, and that only in those specific situations should a teacher be put on leave. If teachers are uncertain about exactly what kinds of situations merit removal, we begin to ask questions, about when we might be put on administrative leave: If I give a grade a student doesn’t like? If a student disagrees with me? If a parent or student is frustrated with me? If teachers feel unsupported and uncertain, that will impact their effectiveness because they will be forced to second-guess every decision they make.

The third step articulated in the November 9th Board letter for looking into concerns involving staff states: “Gathering statements from witnesses and other involved parties.” If the concern is teacher “bullying and harassment” what safeguards do we have in place to prevent the fact-finding from becoming a free-for-all witch hunt, where every disgruntled student who has ever felt slighted comes forward? Will honest criticism of an assignment that doesn’t meet expectations be categorized as an “intentional act that causes emotional harm?”

Overall, I implore the Board to address these questions, articulate policies regarding exactly when a teacher merits removal from the classroom, and seek leaders who listen and attempt to repair relationships, rather than taking actions that cause further harm. At stake is nothing less than the excellence of our schools and the integrity of our community.

Aimee Grey
High School English Teacher
Shaker Heights Resident
Parent of two students in the district