

'Heartware' Needed, Not Just Hardware

School Shooting Brings

QUESTIONS

about Security

Things changed irrevocably in the Cleveland Metropolitan Schools on October 10, 2007. Our District joined a small but tragically growing number of school districts that have experienced a school shooting.

News media across the nation covered the facts: a troubled freshman, Asa Coon, who was suspended at the time, entered SuccessTech Academy, a small, successful magnet high school on Lakeside Avenue at East 15th Street. He changed out of the school dress code and proceeded through part of the school, which is located on the third, fourth and fifth floors of the building. (The Lakeside site also houses some CMSD administrative and other offices.) He shot two teachers, David Kachadourain and Michael Grassie, two students, and then fatally shot himself.

Thankfully all four victims survived and are recovering, physically. But CMSD is now on the growing list of districts across the country that are grieving and struggling to recover from and deal with this trauma.



The media covered the teen shooter's troubled past: a sad history of being abused and neglected; a turbulent family background, including documented involvement with social services and the law; and being bullied and "not fitting in" at school, despite some outstanding academic abilities, even winning a recent chess tournament.

Reactions from City, CMSD, CTU

CMSD leaders reacted quickly. They closed schools on October 11, provided assistance to staff and students as needed, and reshaped some of the professional development topics covered at the already-scheduled October 12 Professional Day.

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CTU President Joanne DeMarco and other officers rushed to the SuccessTech site that afternoon, as did CMSD leaders, to offer any assistance possible. CTU and CMSD leaders met in the following days to discuss and address security

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November is Open Enrollment Month



November is Open Enrollment month for benefits for all CMSD employees. The website for enrollment will be open from November 1 to November 30. All changes *must* be made by midnight on November 30, 2007.


All employees should have received a benefits summary package with information about benefits and instructions. These were mailed to home addresses. If you have not received one, contact CMSD, Benefits Department, immediately.


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Last chance to enroll or make changes for your medical benefits

THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN

 **THUMBS UP** to the **staff and students at SuccessTech/Lakeside** for their heroism, both on October 10 and in the following days, as they work together to heal themselves and their school community. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.


 **THUMBS DOWN** to the **declining enrollment** in CMSD schools. While some can be attributed to population decreases, we continue to lose too many students to charter schools, despite the abysmally low academic records and even worse financial accountability at some of these schools. CTU and CMSD must continue efforts to make our District a premier district, to build on our increasing academic successes, to provide parents with attractive educational choices for their children, and to step up efforts to make every school safe and secure.

 **THUMBS UP** to **Ohio Attorney General Marc Dann**, who wants to hold charter school to the same standards their advocates apply to public schools. It's about time! Charter schools have been in existence for 10 years in Ohio. A small number have shown strong positive results, most show performance that is the same as traditional public schools,





and a number of charter schools show appallingly low results. Dann wants the state to be more aggressive in closing the worst charter schools down. Until some changes were made by state legislators last year, the authority to close charter schools rested with the school sponsors; sounds a little like the fox watching the hen house, doesn't it?

New laws were passed last year, but only after embarrassing exposés about gross financial mismanagement and terrible academic results at some schools. Lawmakers gave ODE the power to close charter schools that are in academic emergency for three consecutive years with no signs of progress, making the end of the 2008-9 school year the earliest a charter school can be closed for lack of academic performance, no matter how dysfunctional it is. And schools with "unauditable books" must improve within 90 days or lose all state funding. Dann thinks this is too little too late, and wants stronger action. We agree.

 **THUMBS DOWN** to **violations by CMSD administrators regarding the 20:1 class size limit in grades K-3, and to split classes and class size inequities in schools.** The CTU has already filed class action grievances on these issues. As we work to get clarity on the implementation of this new contract, CMSD leaders must remember that the 20:1 limit and reduction in split classes are important steps toward the elimina-

tion of the achievement gap for third-graders by the end of this contract.

 **THUMBS UP** to the **South High faculty** for their cooperation in using an alternative parking site in the neighborhood while their parking garage was renovated as part of the South High Athletic Complex project. The project will benefit the entire South High community, but required a sacrifice by the staff — and a little extra walking exercise — while their regular parking area was closed.

 **THUMBS UP** to **CMSD administrators** who spent several hours at the November Delegate Assembly to listen, explain and answer questions on some important topics. Ed Skinner and Maria Monroig explained the Open Enrollment and Dependent Audit procedures, and answered lots of questions. COO Dan Burns discussed several issues, from safety and security to copy machines, and stayed until the end of the meeting to talk to CTU chairpersons and delegates who had questions or concerns. The openness and accessibility of these high-level administrators is refreshing, and long overdue. Their willingness to work with CTU reps as partners in the smooth operation and continued improvement of the District is laudable and appreciated.

Belated  **THUMBS UP** to **Regional Superintendent Phil Pempin** for helping to secure the Quicken Loans Arena, to Cavaliers' owner Dan Gilbert for his cooperation in letting CMSD use the Q, and to everyone who made that Professional Day gathering successful. It was a huge logistical effort, but a wonderful opportunity to come together to acknowledge our improvement as a District. Now we are involved in the hard day-to-day work of keeping the momentum going, and continuing to build on our students' academic successes.

United States Secret Service Looks At School Violence

The following findings are from an October, 2000 study conducted by the United States Secret Service on "school targeted violence."

"Why the Secret Service?" A key component to their service is *threat assessment*, which involves efforts to identify, assess and manage persons who might pose as a threat.

Finding #1
Incidents of targeted violence at school are rarely impulsive. In almost all of the incidents, the attacker(s) developed the idea to harm the target before the attack over half at least two weeks prior to the attacks.

- In over 3/4 of the incidents, the attacker(s) had planned their attacks very well.

Incidents of targeted violence at school are rarely impulsive.

- In more than 1/2, revenge was their motive.
- In more than 3/4, attackers had known grievances before the attacks and had communicated to others about them.

Implications

- Students who engage in targeted

There is no accurate or useful profile of 'the school shooter.'

violence typically do not "just snap."

- Some attacks may have been preventable.
- Because of the short time span between the plan and attack, quick efforts to inquire and intervene are necessary.
- Inquiries should include special attention to grievances and bad feelings about school or individuals.

study, the person told was a peer or friend, schoolmate, or sibling.

- In fewer than 1/4 of all incidents the attacker did communicate his threat to his target.

Implications

- We must distinguish between making a threat (telling people they intend to harm someone) and posing a threat (engaging in behaviors that indicate an intent, planning, or preparation for an attack).
- We must attend to concerns when someone poses a threat.
- Threat assessment inquiries must involve efforts to gather information from anyone who may have contact with the student in question.
- We must decrease any barriers in school that may prevent students with information from coming forward.

Finding #3

There is no accurate or useful profile of "the school shooter."

- Attackers' ages range from 11 to 21.

School Shooting Brings Questions About Security

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issues. DeMarco and the Executive Board led an aggressive demand for improved safety and security measures, assistance for staff and students traumatized by the event, and additional help for CMSD students in need, to try to prevent another tragedy like this from ever happening again in our schools.

State and city leaders, including Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson and Ohio Governor Ted Strickland, pledged additional support.

Safety and Security Improvements Announced

The District received a grant from the state, announced by CEO Eugene Sanders on October 12, that will fund additional safety and security measures. It calls for metal detectors to be installed in every building, and X-ray machines similar to those used in airports to be used in targeted sites.

Additional security officers will be hired and trained, so every CMSD school will have security personnel on site. Physical improvements related to security will be made to buildings as soon as possible, such as PA systems, working buzzer and monitor systems, securing doors, etc.

Safety and security plans for each building will be reviewed, and

staffs and students will review security measures for their buildings. Community resources, especially the Cleveland Police Department, will be tapped for their expertise and assistance.

Human Element, Not Just Hardware, Needed

“The hardware for improved security is important,” said DeMarco. “But just as important, if not more so, is the ‘heartware’ or human element.” Improving safety and security will require building stronger communication, trust, and relationships between students and CMSD adults. And despite security issues, school remains the safest place to be for some of our students.

CTU Leadership Retreat Includes Crisis Intervention

In response, the CTU added a workshop on Crisis Intervention to the November Leadership Retreat. The workshop presenter was Liz Arnett, a former NEA staff member who currently works for the National Organization of Victim Assistance.

Her workshop included a review of basic elements of crisis intervention, including safety and security, allowing victims to vent and validate their experiences and feelings, and helping to predict and prepare

Numerous expressions of support and concern from across the state and country have been sent to CTU and CMSD leaders, and SuccessTech staff and students, following the October 10 shooting.



Letter from Sen. Teresa Fedor

Dear Joanne,

I write with the utmost concern regarding last week’s tragic events at SuccessTech Academy. As a former teacher and member of the Toledo Federation of Teachers, I commend your leadership over the last few days managing the crisis. Thank you for your leadership and guidance during this trying time.

I express my support for you and your members at SuccessTech Academy as you work to rebuild a safe, constructive, learning environment. You will continue to be in my thoughts and prayers as you work with Cleveland Teachers Union members at SuccessTech Academy and throughout the district to reclaim the school’s morale and ensure a safe and effective learning environment for the students of SuccessTech Academy.

Sincerely,
Teresa Fedor

Teresa Fedor
Senate Democratic Leader, 11th District

for what comes next. She explained the various stages of child development in relation to how children of different ages react and respond differently to trauma, and discussed common coping skills among children and methods of intervention.

Ms. Arnett discussed school violence issues, saying that some instances may be preventable, but many are not. There are limits to our understanding of others and what they are thinking and planning. She told survivors of this type of violence never to say, “We should have seen this or done this.” We are not and cannot be responsible for what is going on in another person’s mind.” She presented four findings and implications from a study done by the Secret Service on “school targeted violence.” (See article at left.)

Your chapter chairperson or designee who attended the Leadership Retreat received this information about crisis intervention at the workshop.

A ‘New Normal’

Ms. Arnett told participants that after a crisis, people wait for things to “get back to normal.” But the reality is, things will never go back to the way they were. There will be a “new normal” that develops, but not what once was. She assured CTU members that “things will be OK again, but in a new way.”

CTU and CMSD will continue to use all the tools in their toolkit — equipment such metal detectors and X-ray machines, enhanced safety plans, additional security personnel, and building more relationships with students and families — to help deter future instances of school violence. There are no perfect answers or plans. The hardware is important, but so is the “heartware,” or human element. We all need to be integral parts of our school communities, and value every other member. Then we may never again have to hear Mayor Jackson’s comments after the SuccessTech shooting, that as a community, “We failed.” Let’s learn and move on to our new, better normal.

- They come from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds.
- They come from a range of family situations.
- Academic performance ranged from excellent to failing.
- Behavior history varied from no problems to multiple misbehaviors.
- Few had been diagnosed with any mental disorders.

Implications

- The use of profiles are not effective for identifying students who pose a threat.
- Personality and social characteristics of shooters varied substantially.
- Inquiries should focus on characteristics to determine if the student appears to be planning or preparing an attack.
- A fact-based approach may be more productive than a trait-based approach.
- The ultimate question to answer in an inquiry is whether a student is on the path of an attack and how fast they are moving.

Finding #4

In most cases, having been bullied played a key role in the attack.

- In over 3/4 of the cases, the attackers felt persecuted, bullied, threatened, attacked, or injured by others prior to the incident.
- Over 3/4 of the attackers had experienced bullying and harassment that was longstanding and severe. In those cases, the experience of being bullied appeared to play a major role in motivating the attack.

Implications

- Bullying was not a factor in every case. Not every child who is bullied in school will pose a risk for targeted violence in school.
- In a large number of cases, attackers described experiences of being bullied in terms that approached torment and mental torture.
- Since bullying played a major role in a number of many school shootings, we, the USSS, strongly supports ongoing efforts to combat bullying in American schools.

In most cases, having been bullied played a key role in the attack.

Resources for Teachers and Parents

Recovering from a traumatic event is difficult and takes time. Teachers and parents may need help to deal with children in the aftermath. The American School Counselor Association has a wealth of resources on their website, www.schoolcounselor.org, not only for counselors but for everyone who works with or cares for children.

Some recommended books for children are: *A Terrible Thing Happened* by Margaret M. Holmes; *Reactions* by Allison Salloum; and *Why Did It Happen?* by Janice Cohen.

Books for parents are: *Children and Trauma: A Parent’s Guide to Helping Children Heal* by Josey Bass and *The Scared Child: Helping Kids Overcome Traumatic Events* by John Wiley.

Professional publications include: *About Traumatic Experiences* by Joy Berry; *Safe from the Start: Taking Action on Children Exposed to Violence* by the U.S. Department of Justice; *Terrorism, Trauma and Tragedies: A Counselor’s Guide to Preparing and Responding* by Debra D. Bass; and *The Peace Book: 108 Simple Ways to Create a More Peaceful World* by Louise Diamond.

CTU, CMSD Host City Council

by Michele Pomerantz
Legislative Committee Chairperson

On October 19, members of the CTU Executive Board, in a joint venture with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, hosted a luncheon for Cleveland City Council members at Massimo da Milano's. Participants included President Joanne DeMarco, 1st Vice President Mary Ann Fredrick, 2nd Vice President David Quolke, 3rd Vice Presidents Mary Lou Prescott, Sandy Green and Kurt Richards. The district was represented by CEO Dr. Eugene Sanders, Chief of Staff Pam Smith, Chief Academic Officer Eric Gordon, Chief Operations Officer Dan Burns, Chief Financial Officer James Fortlage, Chief Legal Counsel Stephen De Vita, Chief of Human Resources Clinton Faulkner, Deputy Chief of Special Projects Sharon McDonald and Executive Assistant to the CEO Mickey Brown. After dining on a luncheon of pasta and chicken, the real work of open dialogue began.

President DeMarco began by thanking City Council members for attending and reminding Cleveland City Councilmen and women that as a district we have reached Continuous Improvement thanks to the work of the teachers in this district. Now our goals are even higher, and in order to reach these standards, we need the support of city leaders to expand widespread community support. She thanked Councilman Joseph Cimperman for his support and presence immediately following the shootings at SuccessTech, and reached out to all Council members to embrace our plans for safe schools.

CEO Dr. Eugene Sanders presented the district's Safety, Security and Human Relations Plan and spoke of human-ware and hardware strategies that would involve the hiring of more staff as well as purchasing metal detectors for school buildings. He invited City Council members to

reach out to CMSD's 12th graders in a door-to-door campaign that encouraged students to prepare for the OGT.

Cleveland City Council was represented by Council President Martin Sweeney who thanked

Council President Martin Sweeney . . . said that for the first time in 11 years, he felt that City Council is fully part of the leadership team that represents Cleveland Metropolitan Schools.

CTU and CMSD for hosting this event. He then said that for the first time in 11 years, he felt that City Council is fully part of the leadership team that represents Cleveland Metropolitan Schools. He thanked Dr. Sanders and President DeMarco for their achievements in the new contract, highlighting Continuous Improvement status, student uniforms and the joint collaboration displayed by the union and the district in negotiating a contract that put students first.

City Councilman Jay Westbrook (Ward 18) commented that he felt the district is in good hands and commended the leadership of CTU and CMSD in their swift reaction to the SuccessTech tragedy. He endorsed the safety plan presented by the district, although he felt that the community meetings at Cudell left him with short notification. He asked that the district give more notification to Council in order to publicize the event at the ward meetings held each month. He also commented that the west side of Cleveland needs a high school alternative as John Marshall is overcrowded.

Councilman Anthony Brancatelli asked the CEO to check on the status of the security guards at buildings in his Ward 12, and questioned starting time of

Fullerton. Councilman Roosevelt Coats from Ward 10 asked the district to please think about the idea of metal detectors at each building and the message it sends to students. He commented that most of the children in our schools are

up throughout the schools in Ward 9, showcasing leadership of fathers and decreasing the bullying behavior.

Councilwoman Nina Turner is the education liaison for the City Council and is working on parent responsibility legislation to improve conditions within her ward, and combat juvenile misbehavior. She commends teachers in CMSD who have to be mom, dad, nurse, social worker and police officer to the students in their classrooms. She would like to see some segregation of violent juveniles who ruin the educational setting of others. She asked the CEO to work on a plan for truancy and a plan for students who have to deal with aggressive media outlets in Cleveland who are looking for comments on news stories.

Ward 17 Councilman Matt Zone sent his assistant, Blanca Salva, to represent the ward and she asked CTU and CMSD to continue investing time and resources to

good students and should not be subjected to armed security guards and prison-like learning environments.

Councilman Michael Polensek from Ward 11 respectfully disagreed with Councilman Coats and requested fast action on security guards and metal detectors. He wondered why no county or juve-

Councillman Roosevelt Coats from Ward 10 asked the district to please think about the idea of metal detectors at each building and the message it sends to students.

nile justice system is in place to deal with the few delinquents who spoil the relatively safe conditions of the schools within his ward. He feels that too many of our good students choose charter schools over CMSD schools because parents feel the charter schools are safer. He asked for a hot line to provide anonymous tips to the CEO or district officials so that problems can be stopped before crime occurs.

Councilman Kevin Conwell offered thanks to the CEO for visiting the ward and asked for a fatherhood piece to become part of schools. Dads' Clubs are popping

bilingual programs and services for students with disabilities. Other City Council attendants were: Ward 21 Councilman Martin Keane; Ward 16 Councilman Kevin Kelly; Ward 14 Councilman Joseph Santiago and Ward 13 Councilman Joe Cimperman. The luncheon paved the way for more serious discussions regarding the safety and academic progress of students within the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. Check CTU publications for further Cleveland City Council reports as CTU representatives meet with their councilpersons throughout the school year.

OFT Weighs In at Professional Conduct

Representatives of the Ohio Federation of Teachers testified October 24 before the House Education Committee during its review of Ohio Department of Education policies on investigating teacher professional conduct.

"Schools should be the safest place for our children to spend their day. OFT welcomes any opportunity to work with school districts, the Ohio Department of Education and legislators on any programs or plans to guarantee that safety," said OFT President Sue Taylor.

The vast majority of those in Ohio's education workforce are changing young people's lives by teaching children the skills and knowledge they need to be successful, Taylor said. State Superintendent Susan Zelman has categorized 99.9 percent of Ohio teachers as "good role models."

Teacher and other educator misconduct came under recent scrutiny when the *Columbus Dispatch* newspaper did an investigative series about teacher misconduct and reporting — or non-reporting — by

school districts.

As a result, the Ohio Department of Education set up a link on its ODE website that lists teachers and other educators who have been disciplined. The "Educator Conduct Search" link can be accessed from the ODE website. The website states, "Ohio's educators are nationally recognized, highly qualified and well prepared. The search form [on the website] allows citizens to access a database of a small subset of educators subjected to disciplinary actions since the Office of Professional

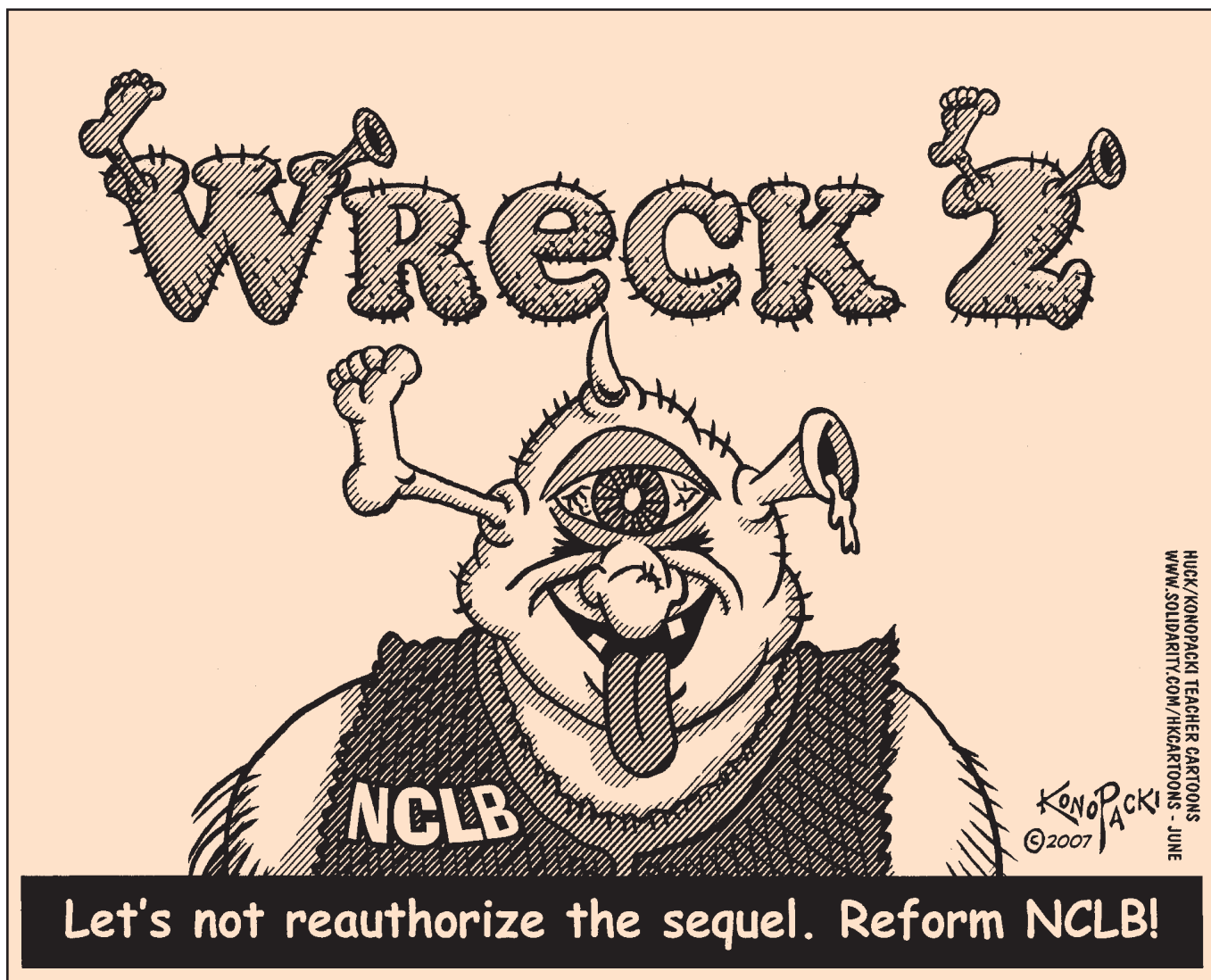
Conduct was created in 1999."

The Union does not stand by any teacher or school paraprofessional who is guilty of sexual misconduct with a student.

To that end, OFT supported passage of House Bill 79 last year, legislation that strengthened and clarified how such allegations are handled by the state. And in testimony before the House Education Committee, OFT outlined several new recommendations to further guarantee the safety of students and staff.

"Any allegation of sexual miscon-

Senate Puts Brakes on NCLB Reauthorization



Senators Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), the top two lawmakers on the Senate Education Committee, announced that they will wait until next year to consider changes to the No Child Left Behind law. They decided there is not enough time this year to complete the necessary work on the legislation, which had not been formally introduced yet.

The original law was passed in 2002 and is scheduled for reauthorization. Kennedy said he hopes to bring up a bill for consideration early next year. However, with the presidential election coming next year, it may be even more difficult to get the bipartisan consensus needed to pass major legislation.

“No Child Left Behind is important to our children’s future, said Enzi. “We will not and cannot rush it. Senator Kennedy and I have agreed that our goal must be to produce solid legislation — not to meet an arbitrary deadline.”

AFT President John McElroy supported their decision. “Senators Kennedy and Enzi are right to slow down reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act, insisting that quality, not the calendar, drive this process,” he said.

“AFT members have had a consistent message to Congress on NCLB reauthorization: Let’s Get It Right. We know that it is too important to our students, teachers and communities to do otherwise. We look forward to working with Congress to make sure the next version of this important federal education law makes sense for the teachers and students in our nation’s classrooms.”

Lawmakers from both parties support important revisions to the law. But if it isn’t revised by Congress, then the existing law stands. It is generally agreed that the law should be changed to measure individual student progress over time, instead of the current “snapshot” of specific grade levels. There seems to be consensus that NCLB should be changed so that schools that just miss their progress goals won’t face the same harsh consequences as schools that miss their goals by a lot.

Many questions and concerns remain about some proposed changes, including merit pay for teachers and whether ratings of schools should include test scores in other subjects, not only reading and math.

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STRS Plan Will Bolster Retiree Health Care Fund

From the OFT website,
www.oft-aft.org

A proposal to create a dedicated revenue stream to preserve the STRS Ohio health care fund for retirees got new life September 18 when it was reintroduced by Rep. Scott Oelslager (R-North Canton). Without additional revenue, health care for retirees via STRS will disappear. House Bill 315 is supported by the Health Care Advocates for STRS (HCA), a coalition of major management, professional and retiree organizations representing Ohio’s public K-12 and higher education teachers.

This member-driven initiative

calls for increasing public teachers’ contributions to STRS Ohio by 2.5 percent and their employers’ contributions by 2.5 percent of teacher payroll to create an ongoing, dedicated revenue stream for the STRS Ohio Health Care Program for current and future retired educators. These increases would be phased in over a five-year period, in half percent increments.

Without additional revenue, the health care fund will run out of money. STRS and the member organizations of HCA, which includes OFT, are being proactive to prevent this from occurring by proposing this bill as a solution.

“It is smart public policy to let the people who use the benefit pay for it,” said OFT President Sue Taylor. Legislative action is required in order to allow teachers to increase their contributions to the fund. Oelslager previously introduced the legislation in mid-December 2006. However, no action was taken on it before the General Assembly adjourned.

Research shows that without access to health care in retirement, employees are likely to stay on the job longer in order to maintain access to health care. This tends to cost employers more in salary and other benefits than if longer term employees were to retire earlier and be replaced by lower salaried workers.

STRS and the Health Care Ad-

vocates groups are mobilizing members to become Health Care Champions to get involved in the campaign to pass House Bill 315. Health Care Champions get involved by learning about the issue and how to talk about it to colleagues, board members, legislators, and write letters to their local papers in support of the proposal. For information about this group, contact Laura Ecklar at STRSOhio by [emailing ecklar@strsoh.org](mailto:emailing_ecklar@strsoh.org) or calling 1-888-227-7877.

Contact Your Legislator

Contact your state representatives now to ask that they support hearings and continued discussion about House Bill 315. To find out who your state representative is, go to the OFT website, www.oft-aft.org, and click [Statehouse Link](#). Click legislator directory for contact information for state legislators.

House Bill 315 is co-sponsored by Reps. Matthew Barrett (D-Amherst), Barbara Boyd (D-Cleveland Heights), Edna Brown (D-Toledo), Kathleen Chandler (D-Kent), Steve Dyer (D-Green), Clyde Evans (R-Rio Grande), William Healy (D-Canton), Jim Hughes (R-Columbus), Matt Lundy (D-Elyria), Mark Okey (D-Carrollton), William Seitz (R-Cincinnati), Matt Szollosi (D-Oregon), Brian Williams (D-Akron) and Kenny Yuko (D-Richmond Heights).

Hearing

duct should be treated very seriously. That includes a thorough and confidential investigation, which includes the teacher, the student and the parents,” Taylor said. While guilty parties should be punished to the fullest extent of the law, false accusations have the potential to permanently impact the careers and lives of everyone involved.

Thorough background checks for all teaching candidates, as established by HB 79, are an important tool in keeping schools safe for students and teachers.

Amblyopia:

CMSD Nurses, Cole Eye Clinic, Browns Team Up To Fight Lazy Eye



CMSD/CTU school nurses are partnering again with the Cleveland Browns and Cleveland Clinic Cole Eye Institute for the 2007-8 school year. This partnership began in 2002-3 as a research project to detect amblyopia (lazy eye). Amblyopia is treatable if detected early, but can damage vision permanently if left untreated.

During this process, it was discovered that our CMSD children had many vision problems. Last school year, 5,650 children were examined free of charge, 85 were diagnosed with amblyopia, and 497 received free pairs of glasses.

Vision examinations are given at each school in the specially-equipped, child-friendly Vision First vehicle. Each exam includes assessing vision acuity, depth perception, and checking for crossed or lazy eye and the need for corrective lenses (glasses).

Pat Gunter, CTU Nurses Chapter Chairperson, stated: "This program targets pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and first-grade students, because school nurses know that vision develops over the first six years of life. The earlier a problem is detected and corrected, the sooner a child can begin the learning process more successfully."

The state of Ohio mandates that school nurses check students' vision at specific intervals, as well as when students are referred for special education testing. The teacher, parent or principal can also refer students any time they notice a student squinting, holding material close to their eyes, having difficulty reading, covering or closing one eye, or blinking or rubbing the eyes a great deal. School nurses also watch for students who visit the school nurse for frequent headaches, dizziness and blurred vision.

"School nurses know early detection and correction are part of keeping our CMSD children well, and healthy children are better learners," Nurse Gunter reported. "We are happy to be partners with the Browns and the Cole Eye Institute in this endeavor, and we enjoyed our visit to Browns training camp this fall."





The CTV honored 89 retirees and their guests at the annual Retirement Luncheon, held September 15 at Executive Caterers at Landerhaven. The celebration luncheon included comments and thanks from CTV officers, information about joining CTV-R, the CTV's retiree chapter, and presentation of certificates and gifts.

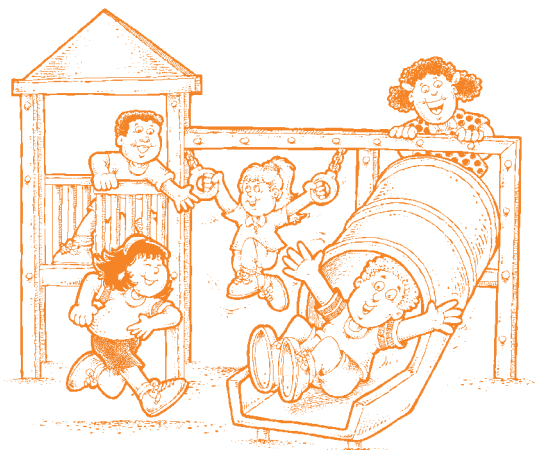


The annual gala is sponsored by the Union, under the direction of the CTV Social Committee Chairperson, Shari Obrenski, and her Committee.



Retirement 2007





Primarily Speaking, part 2

Reprieve! Veteran Middle School Teacher Won't Be Teaching First Grade After All — And is Very Grateful to Those Who Do!

If you are a true CMSD veteran you will understand completely how the next part of this story unravels. When I say "veteran," I mean someone who has been around the district long enough to be transferred at least three times, laid-off, walked a picket line, had their room moved several times in the same building, or traveled from room to room because there weren't enough classrooms available in your building. (Been there, done most of them.)

When I left you last I was busy laminating all the primary materials I had purchased for my new First Grade Classroom. There was an outpouring of support from everyone I talked to. Everyone offered help, materials, support and encouragement. Two weeks before school started and I had resigned myself to this new adventure.

Friday, August 18, I received a voice mail message from my principal. My hands started to sweat as I began dialing to return the call. Apparently there was new variable in this confusing equation; the 7th-8th Grade Reading teacher from my building was being transferred, leaving "my old position" available again. It was like a scene from a bad movie: the devil on one shoulder and the angel on the other. Go back, stay in 1st, go back, stay in 1st . . .

My temples began to throb and my wallet ached from purchasing educational resource materials. I waited for my heart to stop pound-

ing. I asked if I could let him know my decision by Monday. I also uttered, "I wish you had let me know \$250 ago!" He agreed.

After much debate, consideration, deliberation and little sleep that weekend, I decided to go back to the upper grades. Sometimes the devil you know is preferable to the devil

you don't know. It is hard to get an old dog to learn new tricks and my bite is worse than my bark these days.

The District had its "Hats off to Students Day" recently but I want to take my hat off to you, my educator colleagues in this District who do a great job, work hard, and face their own daily challenges no matter what grade you deal with! I know the terror that strikes the heart when you are forced to make a change. I have been transferred in the past unwillingly (more than once), and I understand the discomfort in that as well. Most times the variables are beyond control in a District that is plagued by fluctuat-

ing enrollment, charter schools, vouchers, and student mobility. Yet, time after time we rise to the occasion, do our best to adapt and serve the children of this city well.

The squirming, jumping, antsy, sometimes crying, velcro first-graders (attached to their teachers) pass by my room on their way to/from the cafeteria. I look at them kindly and smile while uttering a "thank you, God" under my breath. I may have to remind my students to use correct punctuation at the end of a sentence, but at least I don't have to show them how to hold the pencil! Hats off to those of you who do what my lack of patience and skill prohibits me from doing.

Eight Local Teachers Chosen for Environmental Science Program

The Wyoming mountains and Yellowstone National Park became a classroom for Cleveland Metropolitan School teachers participating in the Environmental Science for School Teachers program offered by Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. The Ohio Board of Regents provided the Improving Teacher Quality Program funds that enabled 85 teachers selected to upgrade their knowledge of geology, zoology, and botany in an environment superbly suited for learning environmental science.

Dr. Robert McWilliams of Miami University taught the geologic segment of the course. Dr. Richard E. Lee, Jr. of Miami's Zoology Department taught the zoology and Mr. Edward Soldo of Cincinnati's Sycamore High School taught the botany.

The course is designed to provide elementary and middle schoolteachers (K-8th grade) with training to use across the curriculum to attain Ohio elementary school academic content standards and achievement test outcomes.

Participating teachers spent two weeks of their summer in the natural laboratory of the Grand Teton-Yellowstone region. Wyoming offers one of the broadest spectrums of geologic formations and biologic diversity of any place in North America. On the second weekend of October, participating



Environmental Science Class in Wyoming: (left to right) Mark Miller, Linda Stanoszek, Jennifer James, (back) Don Farmer, Lead Teacher Charlotte Pliske, (back) Rayva Miller, Sally Pellegrin, Kathi Vogler

teachers took part in a three-day Ohio Environmental Science Follow-Up Workshop at 4-H Camp Ohio near Utica, Ohio.

The Cleveland Metropolitan School teachers who participated this summer were Mark Miller and Charlotte Pliske from Giddings K-8, Don Farmer and Linda Stanoszek from Jane Adams, Jen James from Paul Dunbar K-8, Sally Pellegrin from Clara Westropp K-8, Rayva Miller from Empire K-8, Kathi Vogler from Brooklawn K-8.

Please contact Charlotte Pliske if you would be interested in participating in the summer 2008

class. The course is open to all K-8 teachers, principals, curriculum specialists and regional superintendents. Charlotte has application materials and urges interested participants to complete applications early due to the limited availability of slots. A science background is not necessary. Participants receive free room and board and five free graduate credit hours from Miami University. Out-of-pocket expenses are limited to travel to and from Wyoming and spending money. Charlotte can be contacted at Giddings K-8: 216-431-1298 or by email: bmorrette@aol.com.

Membership Update

by Jillian Ahrens

The Membership Committee is working tirelessly to make sure that each member has his/her membership card. New building lists were distributed to each Chapter Chairperson. Please make sure that all changes at your building are reflected in your new list. Chapter chairs, please list any new members at your building and any member who is no longer at your building. If you have not received your membership card, please let your Chapter Chairperson know as soon as possible, or call Jillian Ahrens at 216-861-7676 ext. 238.

We are happy to welcome so many new members this year! After two new teacher orientations and a new paraprofessional orientation, we are excited to have over 200 new members this year. Welcome to the Cleveland Teachers Union!

Triage, Necessary Transfers Completed

by **MaryAnn Fredrick**
1st Vice President

The CTU and CMSD worked diligently this fall to ensure that the new Collective Bargaining Agreement was implemented. Necessary transfers, 20:1 student-teacher ratio in K-3 staffing, and the October 1 deadline for necessary transfers were major issues of concern.

To make sure staffing was done correctly, and to reduce the number of transfers, CTU and CMSD used a “triage” process. Conference calls were held with the principal, build-

ing chairperson, CTU officers, and administrators from Human Resources, for every school. These calls checked the accuracy of staffing, student enrollment and class size numbers. The calls were very time-consuming but vital to assure that transfers would be done correctly.

The joint CTU/CMSD Triage Committee determined which transfers were necessary after all the calls were completed, resulting in a huge reduction in the number of necessary transfers that occurred at the end of October. However, some situations could not be resolved to both sides’ satisfaction. In these cases, a class action grievance will be filed, and an arbitrator will have to decide on the interpretation of the contract regarding 20:1 implementation, elimination of splits, and class size equity.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed that enabled the transfers to take place after the October 1 deadline as stipulated in the new contract. The transfer deadline extension and other provi-

sions in the MOU enabled teachers to stay in their original assignments and assign grades to their classes for the first marking period. The beginning of the second marking period was a more natural transition for these moves.

Teachers identified as necessary transfers met at Barbara Byrd-Bennett Professional Development Center on October 23 to select new assignments, by seniority, from a list of open positions. By contract, transferred teachers got one day to pack at their old assignment, and another day to unpack at the new assignment, before they began teaching.

In this first year of the new contract, it is expected that there will be “wrinkles” that CTU and CMSD need to “iron out.” But our goal is to implement the contract, including the 20:1 class size limit in K-3.

If your school has more than 20 students in any K-3 class, or numerous splits or inequities in class sizes, please contact Sandra Green, Director of Grievances, at the CTU office, 216-861-7676 extension 225. Depending on the situation, your UCC may need to file a grievance at the building level, or you may need to send information to Sandra Green for the class action grievance, filed by the CTU.

UNION NEWS

ER&D Trainers Present PD on Anti-Social Behavior, Classroom Management

One provision of the new contract states that professional development during the 2007-8 school year will include training on dealing with anti-social behavior and classroom management. The CTU has been an active part of this training, through its Educational Research and Dissemination (ER&D) Committee, led by Chairperson Mark Baumgartner.

Two CTU members from each school were trained during the summer on the first part of this professional development, which came from the AFT’s research-based program. They in turn presented to their building staffs during the

August 21 Professional Day.

A few schools did not complete the first part of the training on August 21, for various reasons, and now have two options. They can present for 30-40 minutes at several faculty meetings, or use VPD time to present this important training to their staffs.

These trainers have now received the second part of this professional development, and were scheduled to present during the October 12 Professional Day. However, due to the SuccessTech incident, most schools cancelled the training for that day. Again, schools may use VPD time or faculty meeting time to make up this important professional development training in their schools.

If you have questions about the ER&D program or professional development training, please contact Mark Baumgartner at the CTU office, 216-861-7676 extension 272.

CTU Constitutional Amendment Passed

All CTU members recently received a copy of a proposed amendment to the CTU constitution which was passed at the November 15 Delegate Assembly. The new amendment reflects the change from elementary and middle schools to K-8 schools.

Previously, the Executive Board included: one Elementary Vice President and one Middle school Vice-President; one Elementary Trustee and one Middle School Trustee; and two Elementary Members-at Large and one Middle School Member-at-Large. These officers were elected separately by schools who still were designated either elementary or middle schools, for voting purposes, although they were actually K-8 schools.

Since the amendment passed, instead of these officers, there will be two K-8 Vice Presidents, two K-8 Trustees, and three K-8 Members-at-Large, elected by CTU members in the K-8 schools.

This amendment was written by the CTU’s Constitution Committee, which has been looking at ways to make the CTU Constitution more accurately reflect the actual configuration of the Union membership, and provide more appropriate representation based on actual numbers of members in different groups.

**EARLY BIRD
LOSES A YEAR**

**Licensing Tip:
Don’t Be Too Early!**

CTU’s resident expert on licensing and certification, 3rd Vice President Mary Lou Prescott, has an important tip for teachers who will be renewing their licenses at the end of the 2008 school year.

Even if you have all your information and classwork already completed, do not turn it in to the state until after January 1, 2008. If you do, and it is processed, it will be backdated one year (to 2007) and you will lose a year off your new license.

Do not wait until the last minute, of course, but do wait until after the first of the new year, so you will get the full number of years on your new license.

If you have questions, call Mary Lou at the CTU office, 216-861-7676 extension 253.

GRIEVANCE REVIEW

Sandra Green, CTU Director of Grievances, reported that as she receives grievances in the CTU office, she is noticing some common problems. Please take a moment to review the correct procedure if you are filing a grievance.

Remember, any CTU member can file a grievance. If you need help, talk to your CTU chairperson, or call the CTU office. But as a Union member, you have the right to file a grievance.

The grievance cannot be filed against a fellow Union member. You must file the grievance with an administrator, who could have or should have taken care of the situation, so the grievable offense would not occur.

Grievances start with an “Initiation of Grievance” form, given to the building administrator or site supervisor. They have three working days to respond to the grievance.

If the answer is not satisfactory to the grievant, the grievant has the right to appeal using the blue “Appeal of Decision of Principal or Supervisor” form. This should be addressed to Donna Bowen, the Executive Director of Human Resources. The original Initiation of Grievance form with the principal’s or supervisor’s response must be attached to the blue form.

If the original Initiation of Grievance form is not included with the Appeal, it cannot be processed.

Official class-action grievances regarding violations of the 20:1 limits in grades K-3, split classes, and open positions not being filled with certified staff have been filed by the CTU. Also, three arbitration cases regarding terminations of CTU members have been argued before an arbitrator. In one case, the District reversed itself before the arbitrator ruled, and the CTU member was reinstated with back pay. The CTU is waiting for the arbitrator’s decision on the other two cases.

Open Enrollment Month

■ continued from page 1

If you are currently enrolled in Aetna, Kaiser, or Medical Mutual, and you are satisfied with your current coverage, you do not need to take any action. Your 2007 selections will roll over into 2008 with no change. Life insurance will be adjusted for age bands automatically. If you have a working spouse, your coverage for your spouse may change. Check the benefits summary booklet in your package.

If you want to make any changes, you **must** use the internet. Go to the District's website, www.cmsdnet.net and click on the Open Enrollment 2008 link on the District's homepage. Your PIN is the same as last year, unless you made a change, and is printed on the information sheet in your benefits summary package.

If you want to change your med-

ical or dental plan, or delete a dependent, make a change to your voluntary or portable life insurance, or make a contribution to a Dependent Care Reimbursement Account, you **must** re-enroll. If you opted out of medical coverage last year, and want to opt out again this year, you **must** use the site to opt out of coverage again for 2008, and show proof of other coverage. The 2007 medical coverage opt-out will **not** carry over automatically into 2008.

As part of the new contract, eligibility of your legal spouse for medical coverage may change. Check page 14 of the benefits summary booklet for specific information about the working spouse provision and medical coverage.

If your spouse's open enrollment period is different than CMSD's, you may need a letter from CMSD

that will enable your spouse to enroll in their employer's health care plan. Individually prepared letters designating this as a "qualifying event," and specific to each request, are available from the Employee Benefits Department. Call Edwin Skinner or Maria Monroig at CMSD at 216-858-1274 to request one of these letters for your spouse, if necessary.

CMSD Simultaneously Conducting Dependent Eligibility Audit

Besides Open Enrollment, CMSD is conducting a Dependent Eligibility Audit during November. The information for this **mandatory** audit came in a separate package, and **must** also be completed by November 30.

This audit is **separate** from the Open Enrollment process. It is part

of a joint labor/management effort to control rising health care costs. It will update records of covered family members, confirm the eligibility of each dependent, remove ineligible dependents, and ensure that CMSD is not paying for ineligible dependents.

Remember, this audit is **required**. Even if you are not changing your benefits on the Open Enrollment site, if you have a covered dependent, you **must** go through the Audit site.

Audits that are incomplete, inaccurate or not submitted by November 30 can result in loss of dependent benefits or re-payment of premiums and claims incurred for ineligible dependents.

Be prepared to provide additional proof documents, such as birth or marriage certificates, tax forms, child support agreements, if requested to confirm your survey answers.

The Audit site can be accessed at www.mydependents.com. The CMSD employer code is 705. Your user name is the last 5 digits of your social security number, and your password is the 4-digit year of your birth.

It is recommended that you use a broadband internet connection, such as cable or DSL. A dial-up connection may be very slow.

November 30 is the Deadline!

Don't forget, November 30 is the deadline for the Open Enrollment and the Dependent Audit. Get this done soon — don't wait until the last minute! Be sure that you and your family will be covered in 2008 with the benefits that you want. The changes you make in November will be effective January 1, 2008.

Helpful Holiday Hints

by Beverly Smith, *chairperson*
and LaTreacha Rice, *asst. chairperson*
Community Relations Committee

Jump Start Your Day

- ◆ **Have an egg.** Eggs are high in choline, a key component in getting our brain to communicate without muscles. An egg for breakfast will have you up and running in no time!
- ◆ **Get busy.** Becoming active as soon as you wake up stimulates the brain waves that are responsible for alertness. Take a minute to make your bed, and you may not need a caffeine jolt!
- ◆ **Get a lemony-fresh start.** Adding the scent of lemon to the workplace increased productivity by 54%. To get that invigorating effect at home, try using a lemon-scented shower gel or shampoo.
- ◆ **Commute with an audio book.** Learning new things help keep our brains sharp. Try listening to an audiobook during your commute, and you'll arrive at work feeling energized!

Hair Conditioner

- ⦿ **Make Band-Aids ouch less.** Put a little conditioner around the edges of a Band-Aid before removing and it will peel away painlessly!
- ⦿ **Beautiful Silver.** When you are out of silver polish, don't just give up. Try conditioner!
- ⦿ **Wool softener.** A capful to the final rinse when you wash a wool sweater will be less itchy!
- ⦿ **Leather re-shined.** Rub some conditioner into scuffed leather bags and jackets. Buff to a like-new shine.
- ⦿ **Ring stuck?** Loosen your ring with a little conditioner, and it'll slip right off your finger.

Food Kept Fresh

- ★ **Chill your bananas.** Most people keep their bananas on the counter. They seem to spoil almost as soon as they ripen. You should store them in your fridge once they are ripe. The skin may turn brown, but the inside lasts longer.
- ★ **Use your own packaging.** Protect your meat from freezer burn. A zip top bag with the air squeezed out is much better than the flimsy package it comes in.

- ★ **Organize fruits and vegetables.** Apples and other fruits give off a gas called ethylene that speeds ripening in vegetables. They must be stored separately, so your vegetables don't ripen too fast.
- ★ **Protect your dry goods.** Flour, corn meal and other grains can attract bugs that make them unusable. Stash them in the refrigerator or freezer where they'll be safe from pests.
- ★ **Shield leftovers from the air.** To prevent leftovers being thrown out, don't cover the top of the bowl with tin foil or plastic wrap. Transfer your leftovers to an airtight food storage container to keep them fresh.
- ★ **Know which fruits and vegetables need room temperatures.** Cold temperatures can actually damage some produce, like squash, tomatoes, and oranges. The fridge could damage some fruits and vegetables. Check first!

Stress Buster — Eat Your Way Calm

- ☛ **Eat Green and Leafy.** Spinach and kale reduce the damage stress inflicts on your cells. One serving will melt stress for hours.
- ☛ **Whole Grains.** Whole grains, peas, beans, nuts and seeds keep you thinking clearly under pressure.
- ☛ **Berries.** Blueberries stimulate your skin to produce more collagen and prevent wrinkles. Less wrinkles, less stress.

Pamper Your Way Through Stress

- ❖ **Keep bliss to yourself.** Get a massage or play hooky, but don't tell anyone how great you feel. Others may over-analyze it.
- ❖ **Take a white wine bath.** Add a glass of white wine to your bathwater and soak for 10 minutes. The antioxidants in white wine ease stress and soothe tired skin and muscles.
- ❖ **Tune out.** Put on your head phones and listen to anything without a noticeable beat. You'll feel less stressed in seconds.
- ❖ **Give yourself the night off.** Snuggling with a loved one for just five minutes a day increases the feel good hormone oxytocin in your blood for hours.

'Enjoy the City 2007' Books Available

The Civil, Democratic and Human Rights (CDHR) Committee is selling "Enjoy the City 2007" books, Greater Cleveland edition, for \$20 each. The books contain coupons for great savings at many area restaurants and other local attractions.

Books can be picked up at the CTU office or at Delegate Assembly. They cannot be sent through school mail.

Proceeds from the books will benefit the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship Fund at Cuyahoga Community College. Contact Barbara Bradley Blamo, CDHR Chairperson, at the CTU office at 216-861-7676 extension 243 for information or to order books. Help some CMSD students go to college: buy your book today!

Test your knowledge: how well do you know the new contract? This quiz was presented by President DeMarco to participants at the CTU Leadership Retreat. It covers several provisions in the new Collective Bargaining Agreement. Answers are found at the end.

Know The Contract — Honor The Contract

1. Teachers may volunteer for lunch duty in lieu of a teaching assignment. ☐ T ☐ F

2. Teachers in grades 6-7-8 will have no more than three (3) preparations. ☐ T ☐ F

3. No secondary teacher shall have more than (3) preparations unless he/she volunteers to take more than three (3). ☐ T ☐ F

4. Beginning with 2007-8 school year the District will begin to phase in a preschool unit into every K-8 building. ☐ T ☐ F

5. Every school, excluding residential and alternative educational program, shall have an in school alternative/suspension intervention program classroom staffed by an instructional aide. ☐ T ☐ F

6. Eliminating the Disparity: In order to eliminate the achievement gap in 3rd grade students in relation to their counterparts across the state, 20:1 student-teacher ratios were implemented in K-3. ☐ T ☐ F

7. Special Education Limits in General Education classes: For the purpose of mainstreaming, the regular education teacher shall not be required to accept more than three (3) special education students during one instructional period (in K-8), and no more than four (4) in 9-12 unless he/she volunteers to do so. ☐ T ☐ F

8. Inclusion: An inclusion classroom is staffed with a teaching team consisting of one full-time special education and one full-time regular education teacher. ☐ T ☐ F
9. Written Mutual Agreements: Beginning with the 07-08 school year all previous Written Mutual Agreements (WMAs) that are not specifically authorized (i.e. attendance reporting procedures, voluntary professional development, etc.) by the CBA (Collective Bargaining Agreement) were declared null and void). ☐ T ☐ F

10. High School Schedule: Beginning in the 2007-08 school year, all high schools will be on a consistent schedule of modified traditional block. ☐ T ☐ F

11. Health Care/Benefits: The only change in health care coverage is a working spouse provision: if a bargaining unit member's spouse is eligible to participate in group health insurance and/or prescription drug insurance sponsored by his/her employer or retirement plan provider, the spouse must enroll in such employer or retirement plan sponsored group insurance coverage(s). ☐ T ☐ F

12. During the open enrollment period, the District shall have the right to conduct a hard audit. ☐ T ☐ F

13. Peer Assistance and Review (PAR): The 2007-2010 contract reinstates the Peer Review Program limited to struggling teachers and teacher intervention cases. ☐ T ☐ F
14. Assault: Language has been added to clarify procedures when an employee is assaulted and/or battered. Assault is defined as:
1. Actual threat of serious physical, psychological or emotional harm to a bargaining unit member or,
2. Any deliberate inappropriate touching by a student or object that was under the control of a student, that causes serious physical, psychological or emotional harm or,
3. Reckless conduct that causes serious physical, psychological or emotional harm. ☐ T ☐ F

15. New Evaluation Forms: The assessment instrument for Bargaining Unit Members has been replaced to more effectively reflect the specific jobs performed by each bargaining unit member. ☐ T ☐ F

ANSWERS (All page numbers are from the new Tentative Agreement, except #3 which is from the old contract book.)
1. T Art. 11, p. 17-18. 2. F Art. 10, p. 13. 3. T Art. 15, p. 23. 4. T Art. 25, p. 29. 5. T Art. 15, p. 23. 6. T Art. 10, p. 11. 7. T Art. 10, p. 15. 8. T Art. 10, p. 15. 9. T Art. 2, p. 5 and Appendix Q. 10. T Art. 9, p. 10 and p. 48-50 Appendix K. 11. T Art. 29, p. 31. 12. T Art. 29, p. 33. 13. T Art. 8, p. 9 and Appendix F, p. 52. 14. T Art. 15, p. 19. 15. T Art. 8, Appendix M, p. 50-52.

If you have an adjustable rate mortgage . . .

Act Now! Don't Let Your Home Get Away From You

by Meryl Johnson

Millions of homeowners today are facing "payment shock" as subprime adjustable rate mortgages (ARMs) reset. Homeowners often have fall-

en victim to predatory lending practices, lured into deals that are too good to be true. The recent surge in foreclosures means that many working families

are being put out of their homes. Don't let it happen to you! To help union members in these troubled times, the Union Plus Save My Home Hotline has been created

to provide information and advice. Whether you are looking to stay ahead of the game, falling behind on your payments, or in foreclosure, we can help.

Call the Save My Home Hotline at 1-866-490-5361

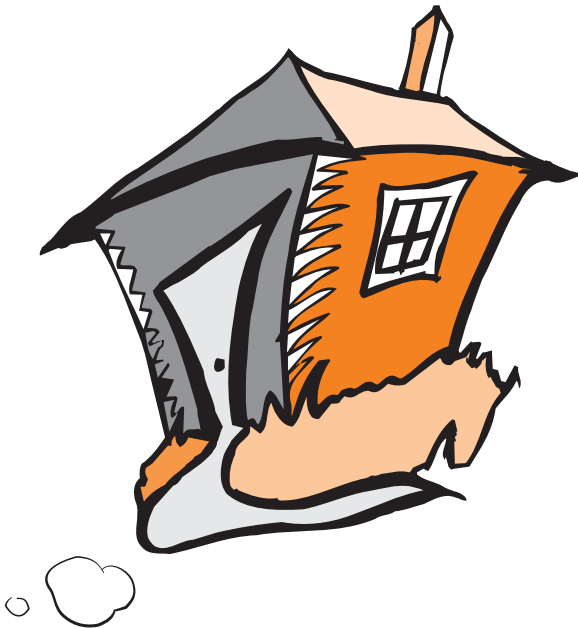
Free, confidential telephone counseling is available 24 hours a day. Face-to-face counseling is available at more than 100 local offices in 22 states and the District of Columbia.

HUD-certified counselors from the nation's largest nonprofit credit counseling service provide past due mortgage assistance, including foreclosure prevention services.

The counselors can also help **BEFORE** you get in trouble by working with you to develop a budget and an action plan to manage your debt, including credit cards, student loans, tax debt, etc.

Don't Risk Losing Your Home to Foreclosure

The Save My Home Hotline is dedicated to educating homeowners about their loans. Don't wait until trouble comes knocking at your door. Call now to find out where you stand with your mortgage.



THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY JOANNE DEMARCO

Heroes Among Us

As we begin the holiday season, I am reminded of how grateful I am to represent this Union as your President. It is a difficult job that can challenge and humble you. But it also gives me unique opportunities to see the strength, dedication, and excellence of CTU members, as we work to educate and care for Cleveland's children in the noble profession of teaching.

The SuccessTech tragedy was an example of singularly heroic actions by Cleveland educators. Their courage and concern for students and each other, in the face of grave

danger, still brings tears to my eyes. But I am reminded of the words of math teacher and CTU Chairperson David Kachadourian, one of the recovering SuccessTech victims. He told us at the October Delegate Assembly to remember and appreciate the heroism displayed daily in

CMSD classrooms all over the city. Working to educate children, to rescue them from a future of poverty and ignorance by providing a quality education, is also heroic work. It generally doesn't get the attention or gratitude it deserves. These efforts, multiplied in many situations and



classrooms across Cleveland, are examples of grace and heroism that occur every day, usually without recognition or notice. Let me recognize your work today, and say thank you. I am proud to represent you to the Cleveland community. While it may not get the attention of many others, your efforts on behalf of CMSD students make you heroes to Cleveland children.

**Take
President DeMarco's latest
"Know the Contract"
Quiz on page 11.**

Heroes All Around

by Dave Kachadourian

The past month has been a difficult, chaotic, exhausting journey from tragedy to healing. Through this time, the outpouring of prayers, hugs, cards, and messages of love and caring has been profoundly moving and life-giving. The thing I needed most for my own recovery was to connect with others, colleagues, students, family and friends. I have also found that connecting with colleagues and students in other schools, and with parents and people in the community has been the most comforting and healing experience of the past month.

Cards and banners from different schools are displayed around SuccessTech. I frequently see students stop and quietly read the cards and letters from Adlai Stevenson that are on the wall by my room. I know that those con-

crete, personal expressions of solidarity and compassion are deeply meaningful to the students and staff at SuccessTech. I hope that people know how much their caring and concern means to us and how grateful we are for it.

For me it feels strange to be treated like a hero. At first it seemed undeserved, but as I thought about it I realized that I am a hero. My heroic effort did not occur on the afternoon of October 10, it was something that I have done day after day when I worked so hard, and gave so much to be the best teacher I



President Joanne DeMarco and Para Chapter Chairperson Cherylane Jones Williams present Dave Kachadourian (center) with a card signed by CTU delegates.

could be, and often did it with little sense that it was appreciated or supported or even very effective. So I have started to think of myself as a hero and I have also come to realize that our schools house many heroes: teachers, students, administrators, and parents. It took getting shot for me to recognize the hero in me. I hope that all Cleveland teachers will recognize the heroes within themselves and the heroes all around.

CTU Survey

Give Us Your 2 Cents — Please!

Have you completed the CTU survey yet? If you have not returned your survey bubble sheet to your chapter chairperson or to the CTU office, please do it now!

This CTU survey will help Union leadership assess how well some provisions of new contract are being implemented throughout the district. Without participation from a large percentage of the membership, there won't be an accurate picture of the successes and weak areas regarding contract implementation.

If you have completed and returned the survey, thank you. If not, please do it now. Your thoughts and concerns are important, and your voice will be heard.

THE CRITIQUE

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