



EDUCATION FIRST

A Publication of the Cleveland Teachers Union Local 279

March 2013

All School Edition

Powerful Partnerships:

In the Mount Pleasant Area, Parents, Community and Teachers Collaborate to Help Increase Ohio Graduation Test Scores



Collinwood and John Adams Host OGT Nights for Parents

John Adams High School and Collinwood High School both hosted OGT Parent nights, Feb. 20 and 28 respectively. The events were filled with informational sessions, OGT computer games, raffles and a book fair. About 70 parents and caregivers attended the John Adams night while 40 parents and caregivers attended Collinwood's event. Although neither school attracted as many parents as they had hoped, school leaders say the events were impactful. Members of the Mount Pleasant community even joined forces to continue their support of John Adams High by forming a coalition of business, social and political leaders, teachers and parents. The group will meet soon to discuss future goals as they relate to student attendance and achievement.

Are You Planning A Community Forum?

Through funding from the federal Race to the Top (RttT) grant, the Communications Assurance Area can offer assistance to schools that have a plan for an upcoming community forum. Goals of the event should include parent and community engagement and improving academic achievement.

We are experts in the field of Educational Communication and can offer tips on developing community partnerships, obtaining incentives for students and reaching out to political and business allies.

Contact Dr. Roseann Canfora or L'Taundra Everhart, RttT Assurance Area A Co-Leads, if you would like to discuss how we can support your school!



In Other Parts of the City, Supporters Sound Off On School Funding, Safety

By L'Taundra Everhart

Common minds recently came together for the common good of Cleveland's students. About 200 parents, community members and other supporters of education attended the Town Hall on Public Education at the Centers for Family and Children Services in Cleveland on January 29. The event was hosted by the Cleveland Teachers Union (CTU) and the non-profit organization [Common Good Ohio](#).

The purpose of this community forum was to guide dialogue be-

tween Cleveland teachers and the community.

"Tonight, we had engaged conversation about where we go from here when it comes to education," said Scherhera Shearer, president of Common Good Ohio. "I'm looking forward to the next step, which is having committees come together to continue their hard work."

Shearer said she was excited about the turnout and some of the themes she heard in breakout sessions.

Most participants, it appears, were there to get information about

Cleveland schools and to express concerns about issues like safety and security, and school funding.

CTU Executive Board member Tracy Radich was part of the steering committee that helped create the event. She anticipates volunteers will be "ready to roll up their sleeves and get to the hard work of implementing a plan of action by May 2013."

To continue the momentum from that night, about 30 community members met in mid-February to plan action steps for the steering committee.

"Our parents and community recognize there is a need for better school funding and they want what we want — smaller class sizes and functional schools," said CTU Executive Board member Kurt Richards. The steering committee is also planning discussion and mobilization efforts focused on the governor's budget, said Richards.

Members of the CTU steering committee are: Cheryl Neylon, Trustee, K-8; Tracy Radich, Sergeant-at-Arms; Kurt Richards, 2nd Vice President; and David Quolke, President.



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Photo by L'Taundra Everhart

'We Want To Negotiate'

Tuesday morning I waited behind a Strongsville school bus that was turning into Zellers Elementary. The bus was packed with young students. When the little ones saw their teachers on the picket line they all stood to their feet, waving and trying to stick their hands out of bus windows. The teachers frantically waved back.

"Be good for the subs today," one teacher yelled.

I thought to myself, "Wow, those students really love their teachers; And those teachers love their students." But that's the story that hasn't been told in the media. Nor has the media made a clear case for why Strongsville teachers are on strike.

Strongsville teachers said they want others to know that they simply want a fair contract. They want to sit at the table with administration. To negotiate in good faith.

So on Wednesday morning, 386 teachers headed to various school sites to strike for the third day in a row. They said they were thankful the weather had spared them, and that they had support from other teachers and neighbors. Some brought them hot coffee and food. Others, hugs and words of encouragement. What will you do?

Note: Last Thursday, CTU delegates voted to provide \$1,000 to the Strongsville Education Association, if they indeed walked the line.

Helping Students Prepare for Life After High School

Find out what you need to do now to prepare for life after high school. **The 2nd Annual Cuyahoga County Transition Expo** is a free event to be held Saturday, March 16, 2013 from 8:30 am - 3:00 pm. Participants will be able to speak with community agencies that provide support services and activities for persons with disabilities, and have the option to attend break-out sessions addressing transition topics throughout the day.

SCHEDULE FOR THE DAY

8:30-3:00 Visit with Exhibitors (Note: If you like, bring your smart phones, pads, and pods to see a product that work with these devices.)

9:30 & 10:30 Accessing Adult Services (same session offered both times)

9:30 & 10:30 Sexuality and Relationships (same session offered both times)

9:30 AM "My Kid's in Transition?"

9:30 AM Preparing for College: College perspective

10:30 AM: Preparing for College: Student/parent perspective
10:30 AM Self-determination/self-advocacy

12:00 PM Maximizing Your Emotional Health

12:00 PM Where Are you Going to Live?

12:00 & 1:00 PM: Protecting Your Child's Financial Future (same session offered both times)

12:00 & 1:00 PM Guardianship and Age of Majority (same session offered both times)

1:00 PM Overview of Social Security Benefits (2 hour presentation)

1:00 PM Creating a Social Network

ALL DAY: CSU Campus Tours; One-on-one visits with providers of services.

REGISTRATION: Register on BrownPaperTicket.com.

Rally To Support Strongsville Teachers

There will be a rally to support the striking teachers in Strongsville on Friday, March 8th.

The rally will start at 4 p.m. at the gazebo in the center of town on the corner of Route 82 and Route 42. (The same location we held the SB5 rally two years ago).

They need us there.