



AFT President Visits Cleveland

Randi Weingarten, President of the American Federation of Teachers, paid a visit to Cleveland on November 23, 2015. Along with CTU President David Quolke, she visited two schools, Max S. Hayes Career and Technical High School, and Buhrer Dual Language Academy, and talked with students and staff.

Later that afternoon, President Weingarten attended a reception for CTU members at the Cre-tan Party Center in Cleveland's Kamm's Corners neighborhood. At the reception, she spoke to CTU members and guests about the broken promises that were made to union educators, and said that it was "time to evaluate the evaluation system and the evaluators." She pledged the AFT's continuing support to the CTU, especially during the current negotiations.

After the school visits, President Weingarten penned a Cleveland-version of her regular *New York Times* column "Where We Stand," for this issue of the *Critique*, printed at right.

In Cleveland: Where We Stand

by **Randi Weingarten**
President, American Federation of Teachers

Across the country — as well as here in Cleveland — educators, parents, students and members of the broader community have been raising their voices to demand change. When these voices come together, they create power; as a result, we are beginning to see the tide turning on education policy.

Educators got it first — seeing the fixation on testing as both demoralizing and counterproductive; then parents joined us seeing that high-stakes testing and blaming and shaming teachers were doing nothing more than narrowing the curriculum, creating anxiety, and taking the joy and creativity out of learning.

More and more, this became less anecdotal and more far-reaching. Just look at this fall's PDK/Gallup poll, which showed that Americans want



Lori Kurek, a fourth grade teacher at Buhrer, met with AFT President Randi Weingarten during her visit to Cleveland November 23. President Weingarten spoke about the fixation on high-stakes testing, how it is demoralizing educators and students, and how the tide is turning on this counter-productive education strategy.

less testing; more funding; smaller class sizes; strong curriculum; and more focus on recruiting, retaining and supporting great teachers. Then, later this fall, President Obama issued a mea culpa on testing — he finally acknowledged that the fixation on high-stakes testing hasn't moved the needle on student achievement. And it's clear this test-and-sanction strategy hasn't worked; if it had, we should be closing the achievement gap as we did in the 1960s and '70s, when there was more of a support-and-improve strategy for educators. Now — even though Cleveland is one of the few places that had modest gains on the National Assessment of Educational Progress — we see no progress on closing the achievement gap throughout the country.

So it's refreshing to hear Hillary Clinton tell a group of our own members that teacher evaluation should not be tied to test scores, and that much remains to be done in helping all children reach their potential, including finding the resources to do what works. And it's time for charters — not just traditional public schools — to be accountable.

And speaking of potential: In the next few days, Congress could consider a joint conferees bill that produces a new Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This new bill could put

■ **continued on page 3**



President Weingarten and President Quolke met with staff at Max Hayes High School. The AFT leader discussed the importance of collaboration between educators and management to provide high-quality public education.

NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE

The Contract of ... **BROKEN PROMISES**

Shari Obrenski, CTU Director of Negotiations and 3rd Vice President, Senior/Specials, reported that contract negotiations have begun, and the CTU and CMSD teams have been meeting regularly. The current contract expires on June 30, 2016. CTU negotiators want a new contract proposal ready for the membership vote by the end of March 2016. Negotiations sessions have been scheduled through the end of March.

■ **continued on page 2**

Inside the Critique

Implementing the CBA

A Guide to Grievances 4
Paraprofessional Career Ladder . 8
Special Ed Transition Meeting . 9

CTU Committees

My Voice Matters! 5
Retiree Luncheon 6
Leadership Conference 7

Other CTU News

IPDP Reminder 3
Tamir Rice Healing Project . . . 9
CTU History Part 4 10-11
President's Report 12

THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN

THUMBS UP to CTU members who have the interest (and find the energy) to attend CTU workshops and events, even after a full day of teaching. At a recent event sponsored by the Salary & Benefits Committee, besides the valuable information gained by all attendees, these lucky CTU members also took home door prizes: Bonita Carter, Tonya Castleberg, Claudette Dixon, Angel Grant, Lisa Hewitt, and Joanne Qunie. Congratulations to them, and we hope to see more members at future CTU-sponsored events.

THUMBS DOWN to those CMSD administrators who are creating a culture of “shame and blame.” Instead of listening to teachers, and finding ways to help the teachers who are trying but struggling to meet the challenges and demands they face daily, these supposed “educational leaders” prefer to slap CTU members with 5-day, 10-day, or even 20-day suspensions instead of being true leaders and doing the work to adequately assist struggling educators who need genuine assistance.

THUMBS UP to Carl Monday and the Action 19 News Team for exposing the waste of money by CMSD (over a million dollars) to pay for overages to teachers at John Hay and Max Hayes High Schools. Scheduling issues caused payments for a sixth assignment for many teachers, but this could have been avoided had the District acted promptly when the grievance was first filed in 2013. And thumbs down to CMSD for its wasteful spending of the District’s funds.

THUMBS UP to all CMSD teachers as they write SLOs again this year. And a special thumbs up to all teacher leaders on their school’s TDES team, as they assist their colleagues through the SLO process.

THUMBS DOWN to the District leaders who stick their heads in the sand and ignore the real problems that exist in some buildings. Their continuous search for scapegoats rather than solutions leaves all CTU members in their crosshairs. It doesn’t solve anything, and it doesn’t

help educate a single child. Let’s stop the blaming and instead really work together to fix the issues, for the sake of the students. CTU stands ready.

THUMBS UP to the MD/AU educators who have been patiently waiting for an agreement on their caseload grievance. (See *Grievance* article on page 4.) The CTU Grievance Team has been trying to reach an agreement via the mediation process, but may have to take the case to arbitration. Jillian Ahrens and Mary Moore say **thank you** and an extra **thumbs up** to the teachers and paraprofessionals at several schools who have been very helpful to them as they and the Grievance Team work toward an agreement that is good for kids and fair for CTU members.

THUMBS DOWN to East Clark Principal Lisa Adams for trying to stop CTU President Quolke from visiting classrooms during a recent visit to East Clark School. After Principal Adams cancelled a meeting with President Quolke, she then tried to prohibit him from visiting classrooms because it would “interrupt instructional time.” Really? CTU members who have had President Quolke visit their classrooms welcomed him and understand the positive effect it had for our students . . .

. . . Unlike CMSD network leaders who get a **DOUBLE THUMBS DOWN**: CAO Michelle Pierre-Farid and her goon squads have destroyed classroom integrity with the unprofessional actions of their so-called “instructional walks.” Administrators rifling through desks, disrupting students’ classroom instruction, and bastardizing our profession under the guise of “educational integrity” while shaming and blaming our educators is appalling.

And while we’re at it, let’s give another **THUMBS DOWN** to the CAO and the entire AAP process. Academic Achievement Plans are now a joke. For two years, Michelle Pierre-Farid and her CAO Academic Team have been unable or unwilling to communicate about, approve or reject AAPs in any timely manner for schools to implement them. They haven’t followed any of the AAP process that CMSD agreed to in the last contract! No wonder this negotiations will be brutal; some CMSD administrators just don’t care.



The Contract of Broken Promises

■ continued from page 1

“We know many CTU members have been waiting for a new contract almost since the last one was signed,” said Ms. Obreski. “Much to my chagrin, the current contract has become ‘the contract of broken promises.’ Why? Just take a look: the 200 minutes, investment schools, differentiated compensation, TDES [Teacher Development and Evaluation System], all broken promises by CMSD.”

What began as an opportunity for genuine collaboration and authentic

reform has become a litany of broken promises by District leadership. “CTU members work hard for CMSD kids and their families each and every day,” said Ms. Obreski, “and we deserve better, and so do CMSD students and their families. That’s the focus of your CTU Negotiations Team members: a contract that fixes the broken promises and honors the work CTU members do with students and their families.”

CTU members assisted the Negotiations Team in September when they responded to an online survey, giving

guidance and opinions about issues that members feel are the most important. Another survey in November was delivered to members’ personal, non-CMSD email addresses.

The Team plans to follow up with several additional online surveys every few weeks, with more targeted, in-depth questions on various issues. Those surveys will be “live” for about ten days to two weeks. Ms. Obreski stressed the importance of members’ participation in the ongoing surveys. “They will be an important source of detailed, up-to-the-

minute feedback to inform our work at the negotiations table. I ask all members to please take the time to thoughtfully and candidly answer these surveys as they come to you. That’s the best way for us to hear your voices and represent your interests during negotiations. Our best resources are the members’ input and voices.”

As President Quolke has said many times, **these negotiations will be brutal**. “It’s going to be a difficult, long haul,” added Ms. Obreski. “We will rely on your Chapter Chair to bring



AFT President Weingarten and CTU President Quolke observe welding students at Max S. Hayes High School, where she commented on the valuable real-world experience students receive there that helps prepare them for successful futures.

In Cleveland: Where We Stand

■ continued from page 1

us on a path toward a new paradigm in public education, rolling back the test fixation, decoupling testing from teacher evaluation at least on the federal level, and bringing the focus back on the whole child.

This is all happening because of your relentless advocacy, your partnership with parents and community, and your engagement with your members. Because of your work, we are turning the tide and on the verge of a reset in education policy.

But we cannot lose this momentum; we must build on it. And we must remember that to reclaim the promise of public education for all kids, we can't just focus on what's not working; we must provide a vision of what does.

Last week, I visited Max Hayes High School and Buhrer Dual Language Academy — two examples of the good work educators are doing inside Cleveland's classrooms and communities. These schools offer a great educa-

tional opportunity, giving kids real-world experience that prepares them for their lives and for their futures.

In order to build on great models like Max Hayes and Buhrer — offering career and technical education and a bilingual education that caters to the social and emotional needs of children — we must have collaboration between parents and educators, between educators and management. Ultimately, we all want the same for our children — to offer them the highest-quality public education so they can reach their God-given potential. Collaboration is an essential tool in building a culture of trust. It's a way to engender collective responsibility in what we're doing.

We've witnessed how well collaboration can work — unlikely partners in Congress brokered the reset we needed by incorporating feedback from teachers, parents and students. And unfortunately, we've

seen what happens when leaders go it alone, ignoring the people closest to the classrooms and undermining the public trust.

Cleveland's administration has a lot to learn on this front. Yet, as we enter what will be very tough negotiations in Cleveland, there is an opportunity to correct some of the very wrong turns that have been made in the Cleveland plan and, instead, build a new paradigm — starting with real trust in educators and a real collaboration that can deliver on our promise of delivering a high-quality public education to all our children. That is the work we will embark upon — together — as this autumn of great promise turns to winter.

At Buhrer Dual Language Academy, President Weingarten noted the great educational model and good work of the educators. She cited the need to use the current CTU-CMSD negotiations to fix "some of the very wrong turns that have been made in the Cleveland plan."



A Friendly IPDP Reminder

This is a reminder for all CTU teachers: your Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) should be done prior to taking any coursework toward renewing your license(s).

In order to access the eIPDP, go to the District's website at www.clevelandmetroschools.org. Once you are on the website, click on "Departments," then click "Human Resources." On the "Human Resources" home page, scroll down to eIPDP Log in Page and click.

Once on the eIPDP Log in Page, you will need your personal IPDP access ID and Pin number. If you do not know your IPDP information, the CTU's IPDP team will assist in providing this information to you.

Below are our contact numbers and emails so that we can assist you with any questions you may have. Please don't stress yourself out! We are here to help make the IPDP writing experience as easy and painless as possible.

The IPDP team is also available to come to your school, but we do ask that you have at least five people in the building who need assistance. Contact Jim Wagner to set up an IPDP session at your school. We hope that this information will help get you started. Feel free to contact us with any of your IPDP questions or concerns.

The Members of the CTU IPDP Team are: Bonnie Hedges 216-861-7676 ext. 240 or email at bhedges@ctu279.org; Tracy Radich 216-861-7676 ext. 226 or email at tradich@ctu279.org; and Jim Wagner 216-861-7676 ext. 255 or email at jwagner@ctu279.org.

Have a restful and relaxing winter break, and a happy new year in 2016!

additional information that won't be communicated through the surveys. Thank you for your continued input and support. Let's stay strong, stay united, and stay positive as we work together to bring all of us a new contract, a contract that we deserve as professionals and educators."

The members of the CTU Negotiating Team are: Director Shari Obrenski, David Quolke, Tracy Radich, Kurt Richards, Jillian Ahrens, Mary Moore, Michelle Rzuclidlo, Michael Kulcsar, Mark Baumgartner, Cherylane Jones-Williams, and legal counsel Susannah Muskovitz.



Grievance Procedure: A Review

The CTU Grievance Team continues to work to resolve record numbers of grievances, most about TDES, teacher ratings, and compensation issues. Although the CTU and CMSD teams resolved over a hundred old grievances during the summer break and early fall, a handful of unresolved grievances remain.

The Grievance Team reported that the current mediation case regarding MD/AU placements is close to an agreement, but as this issue was going to press, an agreement had not been finalized. This case refers to the District's practice of combining students identified as having multiple disabilities with students identified as having autism. The CBA calls for these groups to be in separate classes, but CMSD chose to combine them, with a class size limit of eight. If the sides cannot come to an agreement, the Union will file for arbitration on this issue.

Despite CTU winning three major arbitration cases with significant implications in September, and a Carl Monday news story in November about additional compensation of over a million dollars to teachers because CBA scheduling guidelines were ignored by principals, CTU members still struggle with administrators who either do not understand the contract or choose to break it. As a consequence, the number of grievances remains high.

At the Leadership Conference and Delegate Assembly, Grievance Co-Chairs Jillian Ahrens and Mary Moore reviewed the Grievance Procedure with chapter chairs. The process does have time limits, so it is important to follow the procedure carefully, or the grievant may run out of time to file a grievance.

Below is a review of the process. All CTU members are encouraged to read it and use the guidelines when filing a grievance, to expedite a successful resolution to their grievance.

Grievance forms are available from your chapter chair, and online at the CTU website, www.ctu-279.org. All completed forms can be hand-delivered to the CTU office or sent via email to Jillian Ahrens at jillian.ahrens@clevelandmetroschools.org or Mary Moore at mary.moore@cleveland-metroschools.org. They can also be faxed to the CTU office at 216-861-4113. It is not recommended to send grievance forms to the CTU office through school mail.

Letter of Inquiry

"A Letter of Inquiry is **not** the first step in a grievance!" Ms. Ahrens reminded CTU members. The letter should be used only if a member is officially requesting **information** about salary, benefits, or working conditions. The Letter of Inquiry is sent to the CTU. It does not have any binding time deadlines. The response to the letter could lead to a grievance, but it does not begin the process.

"When a member files a Letter of Inquiry," explained Ms. Moore, "that's not the same as initiating a grievance. But during that time, the clock is running on the 60-day time limit to file a grievance. If a member believes there was a violation of the CBA, we recom-

mend they begin the grievance process by filing an Initiation of Grievance form, not a Letter of Inquiry."

What Is A Grievance?

The CBA defines a grievance as "any matter concerning the interpretation, application, or alleged violation of any currently effective Agreement between the District and CTU, or which alleges any employee represented by the Union has been discharged or disciplined without just cause, or has been treated unfairly or in a discriminatory manner."

Informal Resolution

The grievance process begins with **informal resolution**. This is a conversation or email correspondence with a supervisor or administrator, such as payroll, in which the grievant tries to resolve the problem. The CTU strongly recommends that the grievant include another union member or union representative in the conversation or email correspondence.

If the dispute is not resolved to the grievant's satisfaction, or if there is no response, the grievant begins the formal grievance process. This must begin within 60 days of discovery of the grievable event.

Step 1: Initiation of Grievance

The first step in the formal grievance process is the Step 1 **Initiation of Grievance**. If the issue happened at the chapter/building level, the grievant completes the yellow Initiation of Grievance form and presents it to the supervisor or principal. The grievant should always make a copy of the completed form before presenting it to the administrator.

When completing the form, the CTU advises that after the grievant lists the applicable CBA Article number(s), they also write "**and any other articles that may apply.**" When the grievant completes the Relief Sought

section, add "**and any other remedy to make the grievant whole.**"

These two additions allow for some leeway when the Union is moving forward in the grievance process, the Grievance Team explained, and can result in better, more complete resolutions to grievances.

The principal/supervisor has three working days to respond to the Initiation of Grievance. If there is no response after three working days, or if the response is not satisfactory, the process moves to Step 2.

Step 2: Appeal of Decision of Supervisor or Principal

After three days with no response, or an unsatisfactory response, the grievance proceeds to the second step. The grievant completes the blue Step 2 **Appeal of Decision of Supervisor or Principal** form. The grievant sends the completed Step 2 form, and the original Initiation of Grievance form with the administrator's reply (or a copy of the Initiation of Grievance form, if the administrator did not reply within three days), and any evidence supporting the grievance, **to the CTU office within 20 days** of receiving the Step 1 Response.

At this time, the Executive Director of Human Resources is Lora Cover.

The CTU Grievance Team presents Step 2 Appeals to the District, and the grievance is assigned a number. The grievant will get a letter from the CTU with the grievance number, to use for future reference.

The District has 20 working days to respond to the Step 2 Appeal. If they do not respond within 20 working days, or the response is unsatisfactory, the grievant can choose to proceed to Step 3.

Step 3: Appeal of Decision of Executive Director of Human Resources

After 20 working days with no response, or an unsatisfactory response, the grievant can choose to move to Step 3. The grievant completes the pink Step 3 **Appeal of Decision of Executive Director of Human Resources**. The information is the same as on the first two grievance forms. For Statement of Appeal, the grievant would write, "Grievance not resolved at Step 2." At this time, the CEO is Eric Gordon. The Step 3 Appeal is sent **to the CTU office**.

When the CTU informs the District that a grievant has requested Step 3 in the process, the grievant will receive a letter from the Union. The grievant will be invited to attend the Step 3 hearing, so they and a CTU 3rd Vice President can share the evidence with the hearing officer. The hearing will be scheduled during the grievant's work day.

The District has 20 working days to respond. If the response is unacceptable to the grievant, or if there is no response in 20 days, the grievant has

75 working days to **request Step 4 Arbitration or Mediation**.

Step 4: Arbitration or Mediation

To request Step 4 **Arbitration or Mediation**, within 75 days of either no response to a Step 3 Appeal or an unacceptable response, the grievant would email either Jillian Ahrens or Mary Moore at the CTU to ask for either Arbitration or Mediation.

The Grievance Team will vote on whether or not to take the grievance to Arbitration or Mediation. The grievant will receive a letter stating the decision of the Grievance Team.

If the Team decides **not** to take the grievance further, the grievant has the right to appeal to the CTU Executive Board. The grievant presents their argument to the Executive Board, and the Board votes on whether or not to proceed to Arbitration or Mediation.

If the Grievance Team and/or Executive Board vote to take the grievance to Arbitration or Mediation, the grievant will be informed of the date and time, and may be required to testify at the hearing.

CTU members may question why there is a vote required to proceed to Step 4. It is not an automatic next step in the grievance process. Instead, the Grievance Team and Executive Board have the authority to decide to take cases to arbitration or not.

The reality is that arbitration can be risky and expensive, and have unintended negative consequences that may affect other CTU members, the Grievance Co-Directors explained. Because arbitration is binding, potential ramifications must always be considered carefully. The costs of losing an arbitration case can be more than financial. A decision can impact more CTU members than just the grievant, for better or worse.

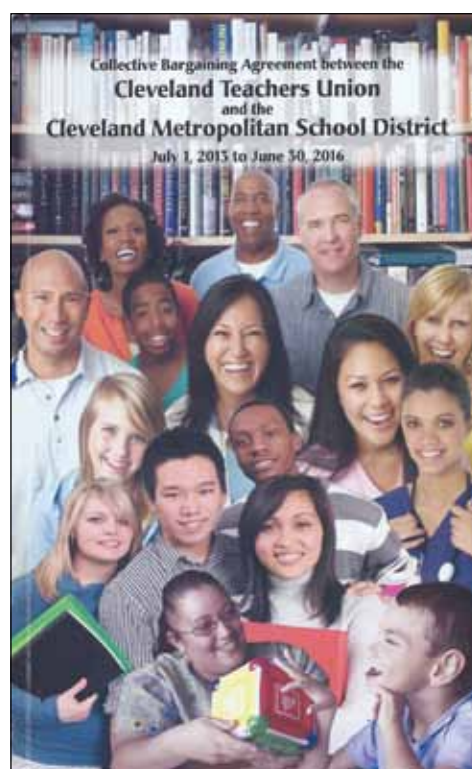
Read the CBA, Call the CTU, and Use the Process!

If a member has a question regarding grievances, they are urged to read the Collective Bargaining Agreement that applies to the issue in question, and check Article 6 (Problem Resolution, Grievance Procedure and Time Limits, pages 15-20 in the CBA) for grievance procedure guidelines.

Ms. Ahrens and Ms. Moore recommend that if the member still has questions, talk to their chapter chair, or call the CTU office and ask to speak to a member of the Grievance Team.

"If a member feels they have been wronged, or the contract has been violated, start the grievance process by filing an Initiation of Grievance form," Ms. Ahrens recommended. "Don't let the time run out."

"The grievance process can feel frustrating and slow," added Ms. Moore, "especially when the District drags its feet, does not respond within the agreed-upon time limits, or sustains a grievance but doesn't act to implement the remedy in a timely fashion. But it is the strongest and most effective way we have to enforce our contract."





My Voice Matters Too!

While too many so-called “experts” want to silence the voices of union educators, we know our voices matter in many ways to the success of our students. How does your unique voice matter for Cleveland students?

Send us your comments, along with your grade/subject/school information, to crorick@ctu279.org.

Tell us about your work in CMSD, and why your voice matters as a CTU member. Your comments will be considered for publication in future issues.



My voice matters because...

“As Speech/Language Pathologists, we advocate for all students to have a ‘voice’ to express meaningful information during daily communication opportunities.”

— Mary Dahler, MA/CCC/SLP

My voice matters because...

“Teaching middle school children can be challenging for a teacher as well as a parent! But I like the challenge of getting the students interested in school again. I make connections to their world with the adult world. They respond very well, and I love the challenge. I can ‘feel’ the climate change in my classroom, and I know I have connected to an otherwise disinterested student. That tells me I do make a difference!”

— Debbie Schmidt
Orchard STEM School

My voice matters because...

“My voice matters to the children of Cleveland. I know this because last year’s class already told their third grade teacher, ‘Mrs. Oriti taught us that, Mrs. Oriti says that.’ I really struggled with a new grade level last year, and hearing from their next grade teacher that they are repeating things I said or taught meant that I was listened to and that great minds think alike!”

— Ann Oriti
Orchard STEM School



My voice matters because...

“It is a great tool for learning, and it also helps to build bridges between me, my students and their families.”

— Tanya Hawthorne
Intervention Specialist, Miles Park

Who will benefit from a higher minimum wage?

As union employees, we are part of a fortunate 11.1% of unionized American workers who enjoy higher wages, more benefits, and better working conditions, thanks to the power of collective bargaining.

But not all our brothers and sisters in labor are as fortunate. While the precipitous drop in union membership for American workers over the past 50 years coincides with attacks on unions and collective bargaining rights, expanding right-to-work and anti-worker laws, a shrinking middle class, and increasing income inequality, the movement to raise the federal minimum wage is gaining popularity.

Its opponents would have people think most minimum wage workers are entry-level workers with few or no skills, and young people simply earning some extra spending money.

The facts from the Economic Policy Institute tell a different story. We must remember, we are all part of labor.

Statistics in chart at right describe civilian workers, age 16+, who would be affected by an increase in the federal minimum wage to \$12/hour by 2020.

[Source: Economic Policy Institute]

U.S. MINIMUM WAGE WORKERS

What People Think

- Teenager
- Works part-time after school
- Lives with parents
- Earning extra spending money

The Reality

- Average Age: 36 years old
- 89% are not teens, they’re 20 or older
- 37% are 40 or older
- 56% are women

- 28% have children
- 57% work full-time

On average, they earn more than half of their family’s total income.

My Question for the Next President



Dorothy Fair (far left), CTU Trustee, Senior/Special, participated in an AFT-sponsored Roundtable with Secretary Hillary Clinton in Nashua, NH in November. She won one of only 25 seats by entering a contest and submitting the question she would most like to ask Secretary Clinton. Ms. Fair is an Intervention Specialist/ED at Promise Academy, one of the CMSD-sponsored charter schools. Her question was, what would President Hillary Clinton do to hold charter schools to the same standards, testing and accountability as regular public schools? For Secretary Clinton’s response, and the entire Roundtable discussion, go to the AFT website at www.aft.org.





CTU

Retirees Honored at Luncheon



The Annual CTU Retirement Luncheon, held September 12, 2015, at Windows on the River, celebrated 110 CTU retirees and their guests. The event is sponsored by the CTU Social Committee under the leadership of Chairperson Cassandra Carter. Ms. Carter, who also serves as CTU Member-at-Large, graciously welcomed all guests to the event, and congratulated the recent retirees, who were among over 200 CTU retirees in 2014-2015.

President David Quolke cited a popular quote from the late AFT President Albert Shanker, "Public education is the glue that has held this country together." He added, "Thank you for your years of incredible service to the children of Cleveland. You and your colleagues have delivered on the promise, and have been the glue that has held our District together."

President Quolke spoke about the difficulties public educators faced when he first took office as President in 2008, and how seven years later, the attacks continue. After listing some examples (No Child Left Behind and the testing obsession, privatization of public education through vouchers and charter schools, Senate Bill 5/Issue 2, and the Cleveland Plan, to name a few), he added, "No matter what, Cleveland students and their families could count on CTU members. You have always gone the extra mile and been professional advocates for kids."

"You have also been there for and with the CTU, to fight back and fight forward, for public education and public employees. Thank you." He also urged retirees to remain lifelong union members, and stay active in efforts to support unions, public education, and especially students.

After the invocation by Pat Forrai-Gunter, CTU Nurses Chapter Chair, and the luncheon, retirees were officially welcomed and "inducted" into 279-R, the AFT's Northeastern Ohio Retirees Chapter, by 279-R President Teresa M. Green.

President Green warned that public pensions and benefits are under attack across the nation, but retirees are fighting back. "There is strength in numbers, and retirees are becoming one of the largest — and most active — voting blocks in the country." She urged retirees to become active in 279-R, and reiterated the retiree chapter's key word for 2015-16: **participate**.

Committee members assisted President Quolke and Ms. Carter with presentation of a token gift, an engraved picture frame, for all retirees in attendance. The Committee members are: Cassandra Carter, Chairperson, Tom Bedell, Hazel Hicks, Rita Leskovec, Tom Luvison, Joanne Qunnie, and Cheryl West.

Thank you to the CTU Social Committee and Executive Board members for their support and hard work each year for this luncheon, the only district-wide event that recognizes CTU retirees and their significant contributions to Cleveland children. And congratulations and best wishes to the CTU Retiree Class of 2015!



Leadership Conference 2015 Theme:

The Chapter Chairpersons are the first line of union representation in the schools, and the CTU takes the job of training them for this responsibility very seriously. Included in the Collective Bargaining Agreement is release time during the school year for workshops that help them do their jobs as union reps.



Two days each fall are designated for the Annual CTU Leadership Conference. This year's conference, held October 8-9 at the Sheraton Suites in Cuyahoga Falls, focused on getting ready for negotiations. Attendees were welcomed by CTU President David Quolke, Treasurer Michael Kulcsar and Secretary Michelle Rzucidlo, who also serve as Co-Chairs of the Leadership Committee.

Workshops attended by all chairpersons included a Negotiations overview presented by President Quolke and Shari Obrenski, CTU 3rd Vice President, Senior/Special and Director of Negotiations, a session on Community Mapping presented by Julie Serfass from the AFT, and a "Potpourri Session" of various CTU Issues presented by Kurt Richards, 2nd Vice President and Director of Political Action/C.O.P.E.; Mark Baumgartner, Trustee-at-Large and Professional Issues Director; Mary Moore, 3rd Vice President K-8 and Co-Director of Grievances; Debbie Paden, Educational Issues Chairperson and AFT/CTU Innovation Fund; and Jim Wagner, K-8 Trustee and Grievance Team.

Get Ready!

Cassandra Carter, Social Committee Chairperson, organized the hospitality suite after the first day's agenda. CTU thanked the financial organizations AXA, NTA and VALIC, who provided door prizes and other support for this event.

Information on the Parent/Teacher Home Visit Project was presented by Sarah Woxland, St. Paul Federation of Teachers, on the second day. She discussed how the St. Paul teachers have a very successful voluntary parent visitation project for which teachers are paid at an hourly rate.

Bill Kitson, President and CEO of United Way of Cleveland, also spoke on Friday morning. He explained how crucial the relationship between United Way and CTU is to the overall campaign.

Michael Kulcsar and Michelle Rzucidlo introduced the CTU Executive Board by displaying pictures drawn by a student in each Executive Board Member's classroom.

The conference ended with divisional meetings led by the 3rd Vice Presidents: Shari Obrenski of Senior High and Specials, and Mary Moore of the Pre-K-8 schools.

Kudos to the CTU Leadership Committee for their ongoing efforts in helping to educate CTU chapter chairs, so they can better represent our members and provide competent Union leadership in the schools. The 2015 Leadership Committee members are: Michael Kulcsar and Michelle Rzucidlo, Co-Chairs; Tom Bedell, Melissa Hardy, Wendi Kral, Christian Osterland, Christy Rorick, Kathi Vogler, Julie Wheeler and Pat Woods.



Excerpts from Randi Weingarten's Comments on America's Progress in Racial Justice – October 2, 2015, at the AFT Civil, Human and Women's Rights Conference in New Orleans, LA



Dorothy Fair meets with Trayvon Martin's mother, Sybrina Fulton.

"We must do more than say we marched in the 1963 March on Washington, or that we helped fight for civil rights laws, or that we fund causes. **It's not enough to be against discrimination, to carry the card of the ACLU or the NAACP . . . We must do more.**"

"We have made progress . . . But – Trayvon Martin, Tamir Rice, Sandra Bland, Mike Brown, Eric Garner, Rekia Boyd, Walter Scott. Their memories tell us we haven't made enough progress."

"When you are one of those minorities, you kind of get it . . . And **as uncomfortable as this history is – and in many ways, our complicity with it** – our charge is to help change it, to act, as the focus of this conference reminds us, to advance racial justice. This is our fight – all of us."

"How can we move forward if those of us who have enjoyed privilege our whole lives don't at least try to understand the reality of those who have not, and try to address it? We can change laws. We can change policies. **But there is another frontier we must get to – we must change hearts and minds. And that starts with truly understanding racial realities in America.**"

"There is a saying from the Talmud: **'Silence is akin to consent . . .'** We must not be silent. We must act . . . as if our lives depend on it."



Pat Forrai-Gunter, OFT President Melissa Crioopper, Dorothy Fair, Cheryl Neylon and Stephanie Hendersion attended the AFT conference.

(Read the whole address on the AFT [website, www.aft.org](http://www.aft.org).)

PARA CAREER LADDER

More Opportunities for Paras to Advance, Students to Succeed

The Cleveland Paraprofessional Career Ladder (PCL) is a system of career options that gives paraprofessionals opportunities for professional growth and upward mobility in order to improve learning opportunities for CMSD students. The PCL Committee determines the guidelines for the program, and CMSD funds the PCL at \$100,000 per year.

"This is a valuable program that is a win-win for the District and paraprofessionals, and especially a win for the students," said Cherylane Jones-Williams, CTU Paraprofessional Chapter Chairperson. "It provides assistance to paraprofessionals who want to become teachers. They already know the ins and outs of the school district. They understand how to work successfully with our students. They have built relationships with the families and the communities they work in. They bring the knowledge and experience they have already gained by working successfully in our classrooms, and use that to help students succeed."

Origins of Cleveland's Para Career Ladder

In March of 1988, as part of the new contract reached after a five-day strike, the District and Union reached an agreement for a joint committee to establish a career ladder for paraprofessionals. The goals were to attract, retain, encourage and motivate the best qualified and most capable paras; to recognize and reward excellence; to provide additional professional development, growth, and upward mobility opportunities for paras, including becoming teachers; and most important, to improve the delivery of educational services to children.

At that time, there were almost 800 paras in the District, up from only a small number a few decades earlier. Their roles as integral parts of the educational team were recognized, and both CTU and CMSD saw the PCL as a way to improve the productivity and quality of this valuable segment of the workforce. The job description of the paraprofessional was changing, as they took on more important roles working with students, supporting teachers, and contributing to students' academic success.

Cleveland's Para Career Ladder was developed in 1989-1990 under then-CTU Para Chapter Chair Marian Ceasor, who later worked for the AFT in Washington, D.C. She and the committee researched existing career ladders in Toledo, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Rochester, Newark and Denver. They also reviewed the Cleveland schools' Cadet Teacher Program, which existed in the 1960s, that helped paras become certified teachers.

Projections for the 1990s indicated a critical shortage of minority teachers. At that

time, less than 5% of all new teachers graduating from colleges and universities were minorities. The Cleveland PCL program was seen as a way to assist some of the District's paraprofessionals, many of which were minority, to become teachers who would stay and bring their expertise to Cleveland students.

Career Tracks Allowed for Options

The original PCL was — and it still is — a voluntary program. The original program was unique in that it had three distinct tracks: a Teacher track for paras who wanted to become teachers; a Combination track for those who wanted to accumulate some college credits but not necessarily pursue a degree; and an Enrichment track for paras who wanted to enhance their level of performance and professionalism on the job, but did not want to enroll in college.

Each track had different levels of achievement. Those at the top level of Teacher track were able to use a paid Leave of Absence, either for the time of their student teaching, for a semester, or for a school year, within certain requirements. Their fringe benefits remained in effect for the time of their leave. Paras on the Combination and Enrichment tracks received additional compensation for successfully completing specific individual job targets and requirements at various levels. Paras could also receive additional compensation for college credits and attending monthly PD workshops. There were specific eligibility and performance requirements for each track and level.

Dorothy Fair, CTU Trustee, Senior/Special, is an Intervention Specialist/ED at Promise Academy, and was in the first "graduating class" of the original Para Career Ladder program. "The Career Ladder really helped to expedite my transition from para to teacher. Paras didn't make a lot of money, and the extra compensation, though not great, gave me the incentive to go back to get my teaching degree. In our cohort, we helped each other out too, and it made the work easier. Being on the Career Ladder is like the best of both worlds, being able to get a teaching degree without having to quit your job to do it. And paras are able to bring their valuable CMSD experience right back to the District, in a new capacity as a teacher."

The original PCL program was very successful. Dozens of paraprofessionals became teachers and administrators through the original program. Other paras improved their skill levels and job performance through the additional training. But like many good ideas in CMSD, despite its success, it became a casualty of budget cuts in the late 1990s.

PCL Returned in 2000

In August 2000, the PCL was re-negotiated back into the Collective Bargaining Agreement, where it remains, at a funding level of \$100,000 per school year. Interviews for applicants resumed in April of 2001, and 60 applicants were accepted that year into the new PCL program.

Through the years of its existence, the program has helped hundreds of paras obtain their teaching certificates/licenses, many now working as teachers, principals and administrators in CMSD as well as other districts.

Cheryl Neylon, CTU Sergeant-at-Arms and chapter chair at Charles Mooney K-8 School, has high praise for the program. "I have seen several paras in the Career Ladder program doing their student teaching in my school. They demonstrated skill and success even as student teachers, thanks to the hands-on experience they gained as paras in Cleveland classrooms. They already know how to connect with our students, and how to relate to parents, staff and administrators, because they've done it before. They know and love our students and the District, and they want to stay and continue to be part of it, as teachers. And the Career Ladder helps them achieve that."

"The paras I see in my job as a Math Intervention teacher, especially with the special education classes, really know and understand their kids. The cost of funding the Para Career Ladder, compared with

all the programs in the District, is minimal. Especially when you consider the huge rewards it brings, in the form of successful, CMSD-experienced teachers, to the District."

Current Para Career Ladder

The current PCL also has three tracks, with different levels (and additional requirements) as paras move up



CHERYLANE JONES-WILLIAMS
Paraprofessional Chapter Chair

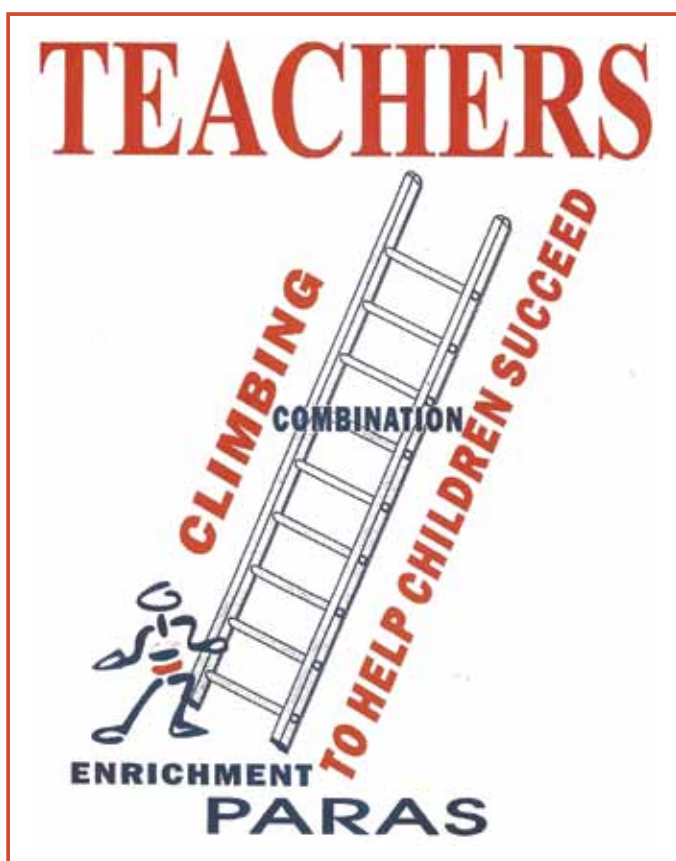
each level and track. Approximately 300 total paraprofessionals participate each year on all three levels combined. And the program "graduates" an average of about 25 teachers each year.

Paras still must apply and be accepted into the program, and there are requirements at each level. They must submit evidence that they have successfully completed the requirements, explained Ms. Jones-Williams, before they are considered for a higher level or track.

Paras no longer receive extra compensation for college credits or monthly PD workshops related to the career ladder. Instead, at this time, the funding is mainly used to pay for 15 weeks of leave, to pay for a substitute while the regular paraprofessional is student teaching. The regular para continues to be paid their full salary, with benefits, during this time. This allows them to finish the last requirement, student teaching, without having to lose their pay or job security.

Eric Douglas, Intervention Specialist/Cross Categorical at Michael R. White School, was in the Career Ladder program, but completed his student teaching while the PCL was suspended due to budget cuts. "I wish it had been there when I did my student teaching. It is a great help financially for a student teacher. Being in the program before student teaching was helpful too, to give me additional support to succeed. It's a great program that really helps you reach your goal of becoming a teacher."

Mr. Douglas believes the program is good for the District too: "I had already worked for six years in Cleveland schools, I knew the District, and I knew what I wanted to teach. I already had years of CMSD experience by the time I taught my first class."



Tamir Rice Butterfly Garden Part of Healing Project

The greater Cleveland community is familiar with the story of Tamir Rice, the 12-year-old boy and CMSD student shot by police last November at Cudell Recreation Center on the city's West side while holding a toy gun. At the time, Tamir was a sixth-grade student at Marion C. Seltzer School.

In April 2015, the Seltzer staff, with the encouragement and support of the CTU Executive Board, began a healing project for the school community that included the recently-completed butterfly garden pictured here. While the entire Cleveland community has been shaken by this tragic event, the Seltzer community was closely affected since Tamir was one of their own.

"The garden is a community healing piece," said Elisa Kazek, Chapter Chair at Seltzer and a member of the CTU Executive Board, "but the healing project, called the Butterfly Project, is ongoing. We began working on this in April. Shelly Gracon, community organizer, Cleveland City Council intern [with Matt Zone's office], and a graduate student in social work at Case Western Reserve University, was the brains and planner behind this whole project." She approached Ms. Kazek with the original healing project idea, and with the support and coordination of Cleveland City Councilman Matt Zone and his office, the school staff began the difficult work of healing their community.

"In June, students had a summer camp of sorts, partnering with Cudell's fine arts department," Ms. Kazek explained. The children had experiences with poets, drummers, and artist Dave Smith, who is working on the sculpture for the garden. Activities also included yoga instruction, and training on community activism

to effect change, presented by CTU Legislative Assistant Chairperson Stephanie Chiariello.

Participating students went on several field trips, including to the MetroParks and Cornerstone of Hope Hospice, where they had an excellent program for the children to begin the discussion of healing. "They also had a fantastic tree house they visited [at the Hospice]," added Ms. Kazek. "I could live in it!" The children also made clay tiles impressed with natural objects to be used in the sculpture for the butterfly garden.

The butterfly garden is located at Cudell Commons, in the school's neighborhood. Its most impressive feature is the cobb wall. The memorial garden will be open for students and community as a place for healing and meditation.

The community engagement piece of this project includes an ongoing dialog one Saturday a month; the most recent was November 21 at Cudell Recreation Center. These dialog sessions are facilitated by Case Western Reserve University social work graduate students.

"All of this would not have been possible without the hard-working teachers at Marion C. Seltzer, especially Carletta Goodwin, Jimmy Johnson, and Patty Young, who along with myself were Tamir's teachers," said Ms. Kazek. "The CTU Executive Board has also been extremely supportive of this healing project for the Seltzer community."



Special Education

8th to 9th Grade Transition Meeting

The Joint Special Education Committee (JSEC) held a Professional Development for eighth and ninth grade Intervention Specialists November 3, 2015, at East Professional Center. JSEC invited one eighth-grade intervention specialist from each elementary school, and one ninth-grade intervention specialist from each high school. This was the second time JSEC members met with intervention specialists, to improve students' transition from elementary (K-8) to high school.

The first meeting in May focused on the eighth-grade teachers sharing information about their students with the ninth-grade teachers at each student's high school of choice. The November meeting focused more on what programs different high schools offer, so the eighth-grade teachers can better help their students to make decisions on their high school of choice.

Eighth-grade teachers who attended completed a questionnaire about their experiences and opinions on transitioning to high schools and the IEP process. Teachers had many questions, and it was very helpful that the transition coordinators were there to clarify some issues. The idea of a transition IEP was introduced to all attendees.

"There was a lot of good conversation between the teachers," said CTU 3rd Vice President K-8 (and special ed-

ucation teacher) Mary Moore, Co-Chair of JSEC, "and we collected important data from our eighth-grade teachers. We also had the transition coordinators in attendance, and they were able to answer a lot of questions that will help to prepare our students for high school. We also shared a power point that led to a question and answer session that was very informative."

Ms. Moore reported that some of the

eighth-grade intervention specialists were disappointed by the low number of high schools that were represented at the meeting. The committee heard from some schools (both elementary and high school) that their schools' intervention specialists were "not allowed to attend."

JSEC is working to get the Network Leaders and principals to understand the importance and benefits of these

meetings. Please watch for notifications of the next meeting, and contact one of the CTU JSEC members if your building administration is refusing to allow anyone to attend.

The CTU JSEC members are: Mary Moore, Co-Chair, Ellen Abraham, Dorothy Fair, and Jim Wagner. CMSD's JSEC members are: Jessica Baldwin, Co-Chair, Alice Krost, Linda Neiheiser, Jennifer Rhone, and Illus Taylor.

CTU MEMBERS FLAUNT THEIR ORANGE AND BROWN at the Cleveland Browns "Dawg Pound Dash" 5K race at FirstEnergy Stadium October 17, 2015. The race helped support the Cleveland Browns Foundation's Adapted Football League, in partnership with Achievement Centers for Children. This program, the first of its kind in Ohio, provides children and young adults with disabilities the opportunity to participate in an organized, competitive and developmental sport. What a great — and healthy — way to represent CTU!



THE CLEVELAND TEACHERS UNION — A HISTORY

Part Four of a Series: The 1978 Strike Continues

by Pamela Hummer

About 10,000 of Cleveland Public Schools non-administrative employees struck on what would have been the first day of school, September 7, 1978, leaving 100,000 students out of school. This strike was dubbed the "Unity Strike" because it included employees in all unions in the District.



In the District: Chaos Reigns

After the first few days of mostly for-show attempts to open the buildings, the newspapers (*The Plain Dealer* and *Cleveland Press*) reported on Sunday, September 10, that school officials were still trying to get accurate figures on how many schools were open or closed, and how many students and employees had reported to schools on Thursday and Friday.

Earlier that weekend, school officials had issued an order to parents and students that schools would be open on Monday, September 11, but by Sunday they were backing off that order. The strike lockout had been so effective that only about 200 employees (mostly principals and a few scabs) out of almost 10,000 had been able to get into the schools.

The level of chaos in the District was staggering. The paper noted that within the first full week of September — only one week, Cleveland Public Schools had to deal with the strike involving all employee unions; a plan to close 19 schools and desegregate 11,000 pupils later that month; various ongoing and crippling

fiscal challenges; and the reluctant dismissal by Dr. Charles Leftwich (in charge of desegregation in the District) of most of 80-person staff, because the CBOE had failed to renew their contracts for the 1978-79 school year at the Board's August meeting.

The State Controlling Board had approved a \$20.7 million loan to the school district, which would keep the schools open through December 1978. But the loan came with conditions: the Board had to make cuts to help balance the budget, requiring \$5 million in cuts for 1978 and again in 1979; they had to have a plan to pay back the loan; and it could not be used for raises to settle the strike.

The CBOE had twice requested a back-to-work order be issued for the strikers, but instead Common Pleas Judge Harry A. Hanna rejected their requests, and ordered both sides back to negotiate.

"No one could anticipate the extent of the chaos that surrounds the opening, or attempted opening, of the Cleveland schools," reported the media. Parents were angry, frustrated and confused. Most supported the teachers and other employees, and agreed that they deserved a raise, since teachers were the lowest-paid in the county at that time. The only

other educational choices they had at the time were private or parochial schools — there were no voucher or charter school options available.

Letters-to-the-editor columns printed both supportive and damning letters, and some questioned the state's role in not adequately funding education, especially in poor urban districts.



On the Picket Lines: Calm but Steadfast

While the Board appeared in chaos, news reports of the picket lines said the picketers were "calm and well-behaved," and appeared resigned to stay out "as long as it takes." Strikers interviewed by the *Press* said the walkout was necessary. To make a living wage, to

regain their self-esteem, to make the public care about educating children as much as they do, were some of the reasons they gave for striking.

A teacher at Glenville said, "Last year we were stripped of our self-esteem [when employees endured the 'payless paydays' and were not paid on time for weeks]. Students would ask us, 'Why are you teaching when you aren't getting paid?' To continue our dedication and to continue to be professional, we have to get our self-esteem back." Teachers spoke about state officials not putting a priority on education, and voters wanting more services without wanting to pay for them.

When asked why they didn't look for jobs elsewhere, several teachers who went to Cleveland schools explained that they wanted to give something back to the children of Cleveland. A few said they had too many years in Cleveland Public Schools to look elsewhere. Most said they truly enjoyed their jobs and CPS students, and wanted to stay in the district for the children. And they all agreed that they would rather be back in the classrooms, teaching and doing their jobs.



COOKS ON THE PICKET LINE — Striking Cleveland Teachers at Adlai Stevenson Elementary School cook their way through picket duty. Kneeling are Janey King (left), Mary Quinlan and Carolyn Wynne. Behind them are Jo Borchers (left), Emma Burdette, Billie Brown and Judy Black. Stevenson is at 3928 JoAnn Dr. on the Southeast Side. (Press photo by Tim Culek)

Teacher answers pupil

I would like to explain to Stacey Pacula, the pupil whose letter *The Plain Dealer* published Sept. 18 ("Pupil takes dim view of strike") about fairness and the strike of Cleveland school employees. I am a teacher at Woodland Hills School in Cleveland and I would say to her:

"I am glad you know the concept of 'fairness.' I would like you to know how fairness relates to the school strike.

"First of all, we all want you to have all your days in school this year and hope the board of education will allow this when the strike is over.

"But we do not think it is fair that Cleveland's schools are not as well financed as schools in the suburbs. You are worth as much as any suburban child.

"We do not think it is fair that school employees all over Ohio are paid more than Cleveland's school employees.

"We do not think it is fair that prices keep rising year after year and our wages do not rise so we can keep up.

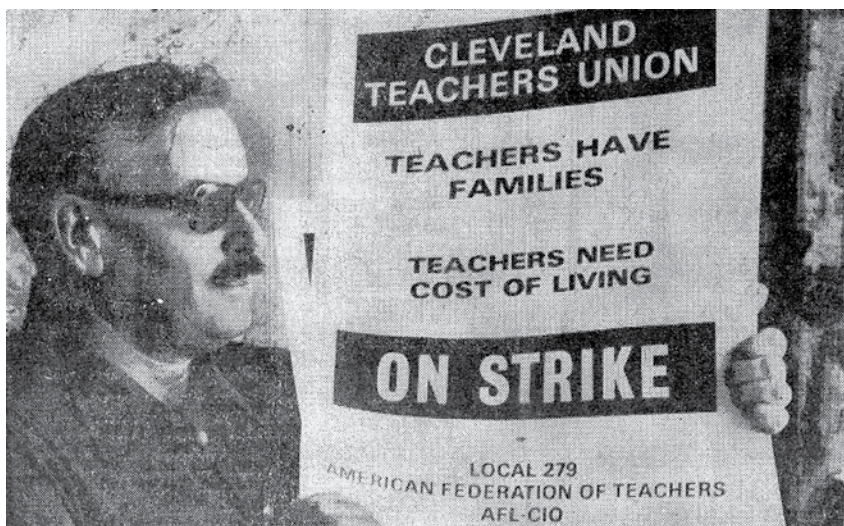
"We do not think it is fair that, although we worked and waited patiently all last year, no one cared enough about us or your school to solve the money problems.

"Many of us have children, too.

We do not think it is fair that we can't have a raise to provide for our children as other parents do."

As for the letter about small boy who was ready to donate money from his savings account so classes might begin, his concern should be noted by school board members, legislators and State Controlling Board members who stand in the way of a just settlement. As we fight to take care of our families, many of our children do not have the luxury of savings accounts.

ALICE GILL
South Euclid



James S. Sullivan, treasurer of the Cleveland Teachers Union, gets ready for today's picketing by 10,000 employees of the school system.

The Plain Dealer/Ray Matjasic



CBOE Attempts to Reopen Schools

After ordering schools open on Monday, September 11, then rescinding the order the day before, school leaders tried to organize principals and administrators to deal with the strike. They attempted to hold a “training session” at one of the high schools, but had to relocate to a hotel due to too-strong picket lines. Principals and administrators were supposedly “trained” in security measures during a strike, dealing with picketers, how to unjam locks and unchain doors, and how to hold classes for large groups.

Schools were set to reopen on Wednesday, September 13, but officials reconsidered and again ordered them closed. Despite the Board’s request, for the third time in a week, Judge Hanna refused to issue a back-to-work order. Instead, he ordered both sides back to negotiations, and told them to work together to persuade the state to allow the loan monies to be used for raises.



Cleveland Schools Face State Takeover

Ohio House Bill 1285, the School Management Act, had recently passed in June 1978. It allowed the state to take over a school district that had to borrow money to keep operating. The State School Superintendent or their designee would become the chief operator in charge of the district, under the new law.

On September 11, Cleveland school officials were ordered to present a balanced operating budget to the state by October 9, or face an unprecedented takeover by the Ohio Department of Education, as a “financially distressed school district” under HB 1285.

District officials began to work on the budget. A 3.7 mill school operating levy was already on the November 7 ballot, but it had little chance of

passing. “Raises are only possible if the money is there,” strikers were told. The District warned that since teachers had contracts that went through June 1979, if layoffs were necessary during the school year to balance the budget, they would have to come by cutting non-teaching employees.



Reality Hits: Payday Becomes Food Stamp Day

Friday, September 15, was to be the first payday of the school year, but no work means no pay. Instead, striking employees began signing up for food stamps, with the aid of County Welfare Department workers.

Joanne DeMarco, a teacher at Audubon Junior High, a CTU officer and the union’s Strike Welfare Committee coordinator, explained that the Welfare Committee had arranged for financially pressed CTU members to get loans, food, or medical help.

Striking teachers were eligible to get loans of up to \$250 a week through the Educational Credit Union, with the AFT paying the interest. The United Labor Agency was also helping to find emergency food, or to mediate between creditors and teachers who were unable to pay their bills.

A first-grade teacher said she had to borrow from her friends. “There isn’t enough to pay the bills, and my husband was laid off last month. There’s no money.”

A nurse said, “It’s embarrassing. I never thought I’d be waiting for food stamps. But my little one has to eat.”

Most teachers were happy to sign up for the food stamps, and grateful for the assistance.



Governor Gets Involved

Governor James Rhodes announced that he was planning “to suggest a proposal to refinance education in Ohio,” as a way to deal with the teacher strikes across the state. It was not met with any great anticipation by educators. In his 12 years as Governor [before Ohio enacted term limits], he had not seriously addressed the problem. One writer called his plan reminiscent of the song, “Promises, Promises.” Others saw it as part of a November election strategy.

In the meantime, the strike continued and schools remained closed.

On September 21, representatives from the striking Cleveland unions and other labor organizations met with Governor Rhodes. They wanted him to help persuade the State Controlling Board to ease the restrictions on the loan monies and budget, to allow for raises.



Mismanagement Comes Home to Roost

School Board President Arnold Pinkney had resigned on September 15, 1978. On September 25, CBOE members elected 27-year-old CBOE member John E. Gallagher, Jr., as the new President. He had served as a

Board member for the past five years, the last two as Vice-President. His age and maturity for the demanding job were questioned by some in the news media.

On September 26, the Board said that the strike would likely continue for at least two more weeks, because it would take that amount of time to finish the budget and have it approved by the state. Later the CBOE announced that up to 1,000 non-teaching employees — mostly food service and educational aides — would be laid off that

school year, and some programs would be cut. Administrators were told that some of them would be put back into classrooms.

The papers reported on September 30 that “years of fiscal mismanagement [by Cleveland Public Schools] came home to roost.” And striking CPS employees had gone without pay for the month of September, with no clear end to the strike in sight.

Next: Back-to-Work Order Defied, Strikers Vote Down Offer.

13 THINGS Americans Wouldn’t Have If Unions Had Never Existed



If you enjoy these things, thank a union! They were not “gifts” bestowed on workers by benevolent management. They were fought for, bargained for, earned and won by labor unions over the years.

1. Weekends
2. Paid Vacation
3. Sick Leave
4. Social Security
5. Pensions
6. 40-Hour Work Week
7. Unemployment Insurance
8. Child Labor Laws
9. Overtime Pay
10. Wrongful Termination Laws
11. 8-Hour Work Day
12. Workplace Safety Laws
13. Collective Bargaining Rights of Workers

THE PRESIDENT’S REPORT

BY DAVID J. QUOLKE

The De-Profesionalization of Our Profession: ‘The Cleveland Plan’



■ continued from page 12

reality is our members utilize this as a last measure only after the litany of administrators (Principals, Assistant Principals, CIS’s, Barrier Breakers, Action Team Coaches, Network Leaders, HR Partners . . . the list goes on and on) have spent more time creating hostile environments instead of professional working and learning environments. “The beatings will continue until morale improves.”

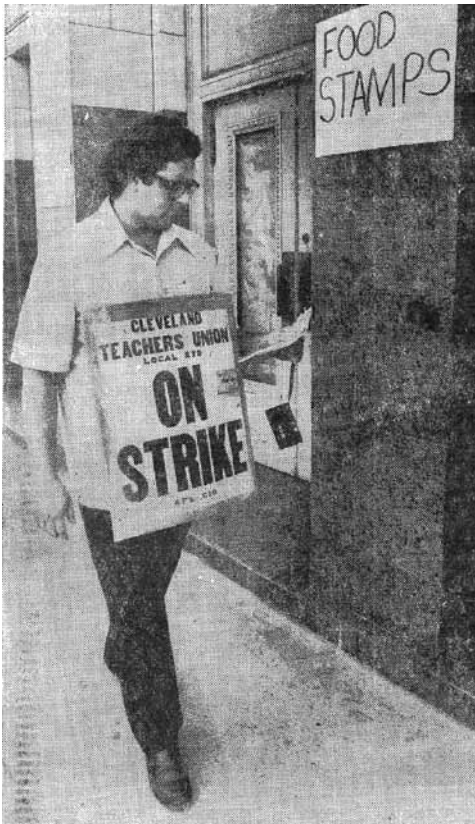
The worst part is these examples of unprofessional treatment hurt not only the staff but also our students. There are finite amounts of time and energy that educators have in a day to give to their jobs of educating CMSD students. When so much of our CTU educators’ time, energy, thoughts and efforts are taken up in dealing with unprofessional, unnecessary nonsense and situations coming from the very people who are there to support, develop and encourage them as professionals, the result is a serious waste of time, talent and resources. **CEO Gordon could stop this waste today.**

When the members of the CTU Negotiating Team and I keep mentioning how brutal the current negotiations

will be, it’s because of this attitude and the constant de-professionalization of our profession. Promises made to us as professional educators, promises made to the families of CMSD kids, and promises made to the Cleveland community in the form of the Cleveland Plan, are being broken every day. CTU members know it by what they deal with in their schools, they are angry, and they should be.

The Negotiating Team will continue to work to get a fair settlement that fixes these broken promises. A CBA that creates an environment in which educators are genuinely empowered and valued. One that holds students to the highest expectations, and stops wasting teachers’ time and energy. A contract that treats educators as the professionals we are. The AFT has been and will continue to be very supportive in these efforts, and we are grateful for their help.

Enjoy the winter break. The CTU leadership wishes you a healthy, happy holiday season, and a wonderful new year. Be prepared and save your money in 2016.



The Plain Dealer/William A. Wynne
Paul Moran, a teacher at John Hay High School, reads food stamp literature while walking along St. Clair Avenue.



THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY DAVID J. QUOLKE



The De-Profesionalization of Our Profession: 'The Cleveland Plan'

I had the privilege of accompanying AFT President Randi Weingarten during her visit to Cleveland on the Monday before Thanksgiving. We visited two schools, Max S. Hayes High School and Buhner Dual Language Academy, where she was warmly welcomed by CTU members, and witnessed CMSD kids getting a “first-rate education” thanks to the hard work of the union educators in those schools.

The truth is, President Weingarten could have visited any CMSD school and found dedicated, competent, professional educators hard at work, giving their best to the children of Cleveland. The problem is, our own District leaders don't value CTU educators as the professionals we are.

Now if you listen to the rhetoric and read some of the statements from CMSD leaders, you'll find some bogus “lip service” about CTU educators being considered professionals, educational partners, etc. However, as the saying goes, actions speak louder than words. And if you want to know what too many administrators and principals sincerely think about our members, all you have to do is watch their actions. Their motto appears to be, “The beatings will continue until morale improves.”

Look no further than the District website and the first paragraph of the Executive Summary of the Cleveland Plan. One of the promises of the Cleveland Plan was: **“It aims to create an environment that empowers and values principals and teachers as professionals and makes certain that our students are held to the highest expectations.”**

Being respected as professionals means our classroom integrity is respected. But there are too many

instances of principals and supervisors walking into classrooms, disrupting lessons, making derogatory remarks in front of students . . . how is this professional treatment? It's not. **It's the de-professionalization of our profession.**

Being respected as professionals means the Teacher Development and Evaluation System — originally meant to assist struggling teachers, recognize outstanding ones, and increase every educator's skills, no matter their level — is used for just that: an objective method to evaluate and develop professionals. Too often it is used as a “gotcha” method to punish teachers for things unrelated to their actual classroom skills, or a threat against those educators who dare to speak truth to power, and speak out for what their students need. How is a principal threatening a teacher with the statement, “I'll TDES your ass out of this building,” professional treatment? It's not. **It's the de-professionalization of our profession.**

Being respected as professionals means principals are creating school environments in which educators want to teach, students want to learn, and parents want to send their children. But in far too many of our schools, discipline is beginning to get out of control, staff assaults are being ignored, staff members are being intimidated from making referrals or completing REI's. When principals focus too much time on the “gotcha” moments of evaluations, walkthroughs, and disruptive visits to classrooms rather than encouraging creative and conducive learning environments . . . how is this professional treatment? It's not. **It's the de-professionalization of our profession.**

* * *

Being respected as professionals means being treated fairly under the CTU and CMSD Collective Bargaining Agreement, and when grievances arise (as they always will), handling those grievances fairly and reasonably, and when the grievances are sustained, implementing corrective measures in a timely manner. Allowing administrators to clearly violate the CBA over and over, often at great

financial cost to the District, ignoring some flagrant violations of the CBA to exist for prolonged periods of time, and taking years (yes, years) to pay CTU members for work already done — after agreeing that the work was done and the educators should be paid — thus costing CMSD extra money due to late payments . . . how is this being respected as professionals?

The most maddening thing about this is CEO Eric Gordon could stop it today. He has the power to put a stop to the waste of employee time and CMSD funds, and the demoralization of the educators whose trust and cooperation he needs for successful school reform. He could tell his administrators to **stop these unprofessional,**

counter-productive practices, now.

Less than half way through this school year, schools are already petitioning the CEO to come to their schools for closed-door meetings with CTU members, to discuss adverse working and learning conditions at their buildings. (See Article 2, Section 8-A. on page 7 of the CBA for details on requesting a meeting with the CEO.) While I know the CEO doesn't enjoy meeting with CTU members, the

■ continued on page 11



Buhner Chapter Chair Donna Hupp (far left) welcomed CTU 3rd Vice President Mary Moore, OFT President Melissa Cropper, AFT President Randi Weingarten, and CTU President David Quolke to the Dual Language Academy. President Weingarten spoke about the need to “evaluate the evaluators,” and pledged the AFT's ongoing support in the CTU's current negotiations.

THE CRITIQUE
CLEVELAND TEACHERS UNION
AFT, OFT Local 279
The Halle Building
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71