



CTU's Obrenski Selected as Teacher Rep

State Senators Form Panel to Review PARCC

State Senators Peggy Lehner (R-6), head of the Senate Education Committee, and Keith Faber (R-12), Senate President, announced creation of the Senate Advisory Committee on Testing March 4. The panel includes teachers, superintendents, state school board members, and other educational personnel.

Opposition to Ohio's high-stakes testing is growing, and lawmakers in Columbus "want to hear from educators about how much testing Ohio has and whether the new PARCC tests are what Ohio needs." Finally.

The panel will study testing-related issues of concern, including time spent on testing and the controversial PARCC tests. Several other states have already decided to use versions of the ACT instead of PARCC, or have dropped out of PARCC to write their own state assessments.

The Senators felt a statewide panel could help gather information from various parts of the state and help the legislature understand important testing issues, considering that Ohio has "tremendous variation" in its school districts. The panel is scheduled to meet every other week for six months.

After Ohio Superintendent Richard Ross issued a report in January showing Ohio students spend 20 hours a year taking standardized tests, Governor John Kasich proposed some reductions in testing. State Rep. Andrew Brenner (R-Delaware), through House Bill 74, is also trying to limit time spent on testing.

Since Ohio's testing program is linked to its teacher evaluation system, any changes in the testing schedule will also affect teacher evaluations and possibly related compensation and job security for educators.

"The problem is bigger than specific issues we are facing with PARCC testing," said President David Quolke. "We need to focus on the big picture: the problems and unfairness inherent in the whole high-stakes testing process as it is being implemented."

Capably representing CTU and OFT interests will be Shari Obrenski (CTU 3rd Vice President, Senior High/Special, CTU Director of Negotiations and history teacher at Jane Addams), and OFT President Melissa Cropper, who were selected to serve on the panel.

Ms. Obrenski was looking forward to sharing CTU members' viewpoints and actual experiences regarding the



Shari Obrenski



Melissa Cropper

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CTU Calls for

Pause on PARCC

Amid much controversy, about 100,000 Ohio students began taking the PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) tests in mid-February.

While many states including Ohio originally supported the Common Core, the new online assessments are being met with frustration, confusion

and controversy. Some parents have refused to let their children take the tests. Although

dollars to Pearson in the first three years. Pearson made national news in January 2013 when they tried to recruit people to score essays on standardized tests through ads on Craigslist.

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this year's scores are meant to be used as a starting benchmark, the plan has been called using kids as "testing guinea pigs."

Pearson, the world's largest testing company, is responsible for PARCC tests. The PARCC contract alone is estimated to be worth over a billion

CTU members sent hundreds of "Put A Pause on PARCC" postcards to Ohio legislators. The test has not been proven to be reliable, valid, or fair, but its results will be used for high-stakes decisions affecting students and teachers.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP



DIFFERENTIATED COMPENSATION

by Shari Obrenski

Teachers as school leaders — sounds good in theory, and in reality, teachers are already unofficial leaders in every school. The AFT and CTU are looking at ways to codify this, to use it to benefit students and increase academic success, and write it into policy through the Cleveland Differentiated Compensation System.

In a recent conversation with Rob Weil, Deputy Director at the AFT Educational Issues Department, our discussion centered around how teacher leadership is leading to improvement in schools, but it requires a big culture shift. Right now, we are still working with a top-down model of leadership in CMSD, and it doesn't appear to be shifting soon.

While some District officials have shown interest in the possibilities of teacher leadership, it does not appear to be a priority of the District, as evidenced by the plethora of consultants they continue to bring in, along with

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THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN



THUMBS UP to those **CTU MEMBERS WHO SHOW UP**. Whether it's to Board Meetings, CTU meetings in your school, political activities and lobbying requests by your Union leaders, or other "asks," your presence and participation are the keys to CTU strength and solidarity. Inconvenient, out of your comfort zone, time-consuming? Yes, sometimes. Essential for CTU power and influence? Yes, always. Thank you.



THUMBS DOWN to the latest Ohio chapter in America's high-stakes testing obsession, the **PARCC** tests. Battelle for Kids insists it can compare apples to oranges through its secret-sauce formula, and accurately calculate and report the state's consequential teacher effectiveness ratings using OAA and PARCC data. There's just too much wrong here.



THUMBS UP to the numerous **SNOW DAYS** this winter, some common-sense decisions from 1111 Superior Avenue. The safety of children and staff should always be number one. And another **THUMBS UP** to the end of this frigid winter and the arrival of spring. Finally.



THUMBS DOWN to **CMSD** for canceling (without notice) two meetings with CTU and the Federal Mediator. Even CEO Eric Gordon was not informed in advance. The teams were supposed to meet with the Mediator to discuss several DiffComp and TDES issues. And as we enter the last year of the current CBA, we're left wondering, is CMSD's team ready to negotiate? As President Quolke keeps saying, "These negotiations will be brutal. Start saving your money now."



THUMBS UP to the **I CAN CHARTER SCHOOL TEACHERS** who are staying strong in their efforts to organize, and to the AFT for their assistance in this process. Teachers were seeking to reduce turnover, improve curriculum, be sure special needs students had necessary supports, and give parents a voice in the schools. Seven teachers who were instrumental in the union organizing campaign were fired unfairly last spring, but I CAN teachers are standing strong. Solidarity!



THUMBS DOWN again to **MARSHALL EMERSON III, CEO OF I CAN SCHOOLS**, for intimidating teachers and staff who want to have a voice in the schools, and firing teachers who support a union. I CAN has schools in Cleveland, Maple Heights, Akron and Canton, and received over \$15 million in state money in the last two years. Last October, the National Labor Relations Board, Region 8, filed a formal complaint against I CAN schools. They found probable cause that teachers were fired illegally because of their union organizing activities, and for speaking out for their students' needs. They also found that I CAN conducted illegal surveillance of teachers, and retaliated against those who participated in union activities leading up to the union election. And they get millions of our taxpayer dollars each year — shameful.



THUMBS UP to Akron *Beacon Journal* writer **DOUG LIVINGSTON** for his March 8 article on the effort of teacher unions to organize some of Ohio's top-performing charter schools. The article presented an informative, well-researched, balanced view of the organizing campaign and its history.



THUMBS DOWN to the **DEMEANING, CONDESCENDING ATTENDANCE LETTER** sent by CMSD's Lora Cover and Irene Scherzer to all CTU members, regardless of their actual attendance, regardless of any personal situations. If you're going to send a blanket form letter to everyone, at least make it positive. Or maybe take the time to find out what an employee's actual attendance is, and if they have missed what you deem to be a significant number of days, maybe use your resources to find out why before assuming the worst. And CMSD just celebrated its one-year anniversary of "Communicating with Heart" in February. Wow. Really?



THUMBS UP to **DAVID YOST, OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE**, for sending people out of his office to make surprise visits to many of Ohio's charter schools. They compared actual student attendance to the student attendance numbers that these schools reported, and surprise, they found cases of rampant fraud and abuse regarding attendance reporting! Considering the huge amount of taxpayer funds Ohio sends to these schools, some based on these fraudulent numbers, maybe the State Legislature will soon see the light and act accordingly. One can always hope.



THUMBS UP to **CHUCK HOVEN**, *Cleveland's Plain Press* writer, for his excellent, in-depth coverage of the ongoing breakfast meetings organized by Common Good Ohio and CTU. These breakfast club meetings, growing in popularity and attendance, are a forum for President David Quolke and 1st Vice President Tracy Radich to meet with parents and other community members to discuss school issues and parent concerns, and a way to develop a stronger connection between the CTU and the Cleveland community. CTU members are welcome to attend. And . . .



THUMBS UP to **COMMON GOOD OHIO**, and CGO staff members **ROWENA VENTURA AND PASTOR AARON PHILLIPS**, for their vital work to organize and assist members of the Cleveland community, as they fight for social, economic, and environmental justice. CTU is proud to work with this outstanding organization.



THUMBS UP to **ELISA KAZEK** and the **LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE** who mailed copies of all the tests Ohio students are required to take in a school year to Ohio legislators. Hopefully, the sizeable stack of tests — and the



THUMBS UP to **CTU EDUCATORS** who do whatever they can to make the high-stakes testing process as humane and stress-free as possible for their students. The over-the-top national testing obsession continues to take its toll. Parents and lawmakers may finally be listening.



THUMBS UP to **CTU COMMITTEE CHAIRS** and their hard-working Committee members who provide a variety of professional development workshops, information fairs on important topics, and much-needed social gatherings for CTU members throughout the school year. A lot of time, effort, planning and hard work takes place behind the scenes, so the CTU can bring these popular events to our members. If you haven't attended any CTU-sponsored events this year, check your mailbox or the CTU website to see what's coming, and join your CTU brothers and sisters for an educational, informational, or collegial opportunity.

accompanying time they take away from teaching and learning — will open some eyes in Columbus.



THUMBS DOWN to the recent wave of **RIGHT-TO-WORK LEGISLATION** in our country. This misnomer is an anti-worker, anti-union sham. Here are some facts about right-to-work: Average median income in RTW states is \$6,568 less than in free-bargaining states. Infant mortality is 14.2% higher in RTW states. In RTW states, only 53.9% of people are likely to have job-based health insurance, compared to 57.1% in free-bargaining states. And not surprisingly, RTW states spend 31.3% less per pupil on elementary and secondary education than other states. We must educate our families, friends, and anyone who will listen about this falsely-named legislation that harms workers and the middle class.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP



DIFFERENTIATED COMPENSATION

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initiative after initiative that have no teacher input or buy-in of any kind.

In the January 21, 2015, issue of *Education Week*, there was an excellent article by Denisa R. Superville called “Shaping Strong School Leaders: School Districts Turn to Teach-

administrators, improving teaching and learning, and helping retain new and veteran educators.

“Effective principals understand that they need to tap into the talents of their most effective teachers to make sure that they have the largest impact on student achievement,” said Lindsay Sobel, the executive direc-

tor for each step. CMSD and CTU had an opportunity to be one of the first places with a career ladder for teachers in the late 1980s. Union and District leaders spent several months developing a career ladder with voluntary levels of additional leadership duties, and corresponding compensation, for qualified teachers. Unfortunately, due to budget constraints, it was never adopted.

The *Education Week* article explained that through the Leadership Initiative For Teachers (LIFT), teachers in D.C.’s system can move to “advanced,” “distinguished,” and “expert” teachers, earning more and qualifying to serve in greater leadership capacities.

“An advanced teacher can serve as an ambassador who helps with teacher recruitment and selection, for example, while a distinguished teacher can apply for a number of prestigious fellowships, including one that allows select educators to work on K-12 policy issues and another for high-performing secondary mathematics teachers.

“In 2013, the district also created Teacher-Leadership Innovation, or TLI, a hybrid teacher-leadership position that allows teachers to spend up to half their time in the classroom and half serving in a leadership role. Some coach and mentor other teachers, lead new approaches to teaching writing,

principals, who were already juggling many other duties.

Another positive outcome from using teacher-leaders was that the resulting model was better accepted by teachers because teachers had devised the framework, the time frame for evaluation, and the tools of evidence that would be used.

Marilyn Boerke, a principal in Camas, said that teachers can also lead professional development in ways that administrators cannot. By relying more on the expertise of their teachers, principals have additional time to observe what is happening in the classrooms and take care of other issues. “More brains are better than one,” she added. “Anytime you collaborate with like-minded people, amazing things can happen.”

CMSD and CTU have a golden opportunity as we work together to refine the Cleveland Differentiated Compensation System. Something all these other teacher leadership scenarios have in common are **trust and respect between teachers and administrators**. These are absolutely necessary for a teacher leadership system to work. Not coincidentally, they are also necessary components for authentic educational reform that will lead to greater academic success.

The phrase that President Quolke

The teacher-leadership concept . . . got a boost last year with the creation of the Teach-to-Lead Initiative, a partnership between the U.S. Department of Education and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Both the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association have signed on, along with the associations representing principals and administrators.

ers to Lead.” She discussed several schools and districts that encourage teachers to serve in leadership roles, actively create opportunities for them to do so, and provide additional compensation for those who qualify and serve in greater leadership capacities.

The article stated that the teacher-leadership concept is not new, and teachers have been leading as long as they have been teaching. But this movement got a boost last year with the creation of the Teach-to-Lead Initiative, a partnership between the U.S. Department of Education and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Both the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association have signed on, along with the associations representing principals and administrators. The initiative is aimed at training and guiding teachers to take on leadership roles in both policy and practice.

With the increased responsibilities falling on principals, including expanding evaluation and testing procedures, as well as other duties, principals are overwhelmed. The only way genuine educational progress will be made in our schools is by entrusting the teachers, who work with students every day and best understand the challenges, to lead each other through changes in curriculum and pedagogy.

The article gave several examples of places that are going to their teachers and creating meaningful leadership roles to address several problems: reducing stress on overwhelmed building

tor of Teach Plus Massachusetts, a chapter of the national organization that trains teacher-leaders to work in challenging urban schools, including in Chicago, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, and Memphis. The group prepares teacher-leaders to work in turnaround schools. “When that’s done in a very thoughtful and structured way, that’s when you see the real change. It’s not just a matter of principals delegating, but [a matter] of a real, thoughtful implementation of teacher leadership.”

Compared with schools in England, the United States is in the beginning stages of the intentional development of teacher-leadership roles. In England, teachers know from the first day on the job the leadership roles they can assume and the training — education, professional development, and practical experiences — that they need to get there, wrote Jonathan A. Supovitz. He is director of the Consortium for Policy Research in Education at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education. In his recent paper, “*Building a Lattice for School Leadership*,” he compared educational leadership development in the United States and England.

Some districts in the United States have been actively working to fix the deficiency that Mr. Supovitz identified. Boston and the District of Columbia have built career ladders into their teachers’ union contracts, and provide additional compensation

or develop positive behavior incentive programs. The TLI fellows receive a \$2,500 annual stipend, which is paid for in part through the federal Teacher Incentive Fund grant, a competitive-grant program to promote teaching initiatives in poor communities.”

The article goes on to explain that “while some see teacher-leadership roles as a steppingstone for future principals, others see them as inherently important roles that should exist at every school and that are critical to building strong, successful schools.”

In the Camas, Washington district, teacher-leaders drafted the district’s template for writing and measuring student-growth goals which are required under Washington state’s teacher-evaluation system. Otherwise, the task would have fallen on

uses to accurately describe some recent CMSD/CTU situations, “The beatings will continue until morale improves,” can’t remain standard operating procedure if we are to move forward successfully. And it won’t help CMSD students as we head into negotiations next year.

We know that our members offer the best hope to move our students and this District forward. It is our time, talent, and passion that will ensure Cleveland’s kids the bright futures they deserve.

CTU will continue to lead the charge to see that our members’ voices are heard, and that our members’ leadership skills are not only developed and refined but also valued by our District and our community.

Effective principals understand that they need to tap into the talents of their most effective teachers to make sure that they have the largest impact on student achievement.

Lindsay Sobel, executive director, Teach Plus Massachusetts



TESTING AGENDA INCLUDES

Frustration, Confusion

by Mark Baumgartner

As the latest round of high-stakes testing began across the state in February, confusion, frustration and anger were widespread. And the closing of many school districts due to frigid weather conditions, resulting in rescheduled test days, only added to the problems.

Teachers in CMSD — and all around the state — are confused and frustrated that the Ohio Department of Education is allowing Value-Added to continue uninterrupted as we transition from the OAA to the PARCC assessments. Parents became angry and frustrated as they learned more about the PARCC assessments and the high-stakes decisions attached to these tests. In fact, in several Ohio communities, large numbers of parents had their children opt out of taking these exams. Finally, a nationwide backlash against the massive growth of standardized testing seems to be developing.

But the choice by parents not to have their children take the PARCC tests can have negative consequences. If fewer than 95% of students in a district do not take the test, under federal law, new restrictions could be placed on how the district uses its funds. Also, school districts can lose state funding for students who don't take standardized tests, although so far, no money has been withheld. When that statute was enacted to make sure districts made an effort to test all their students, especially those with special needs, Ohio lawmakers likely did not anticipate opting-out being an issue.

Apples to Oranges?

All teachers of fourth grade to ninth grade ELA and Math will have a Value-Added score next fall that will account for 35% of next year's Teacher Effectiveness Rating. This 35% Value-Added rating will be based on a comparison of last year's

ratings, then the next day took those ratings down because their "linkage calculations were wrong." It took another week to send out the "correct" scores.

Without the process being open, there is no way to double-check or verify the accuracy of the Effectiveness Ratings, even when they were making comparisons using the same assessments — apples to apples. But educators are expected to blindly trust the company's ability to accurately, fairly and validly use another secret process to compare apples to oranges — OAA to PARCC — and come up with the right results. **The continued secrecy on which Ohio teachers' consequential Effectiveness Ratings are based is troublesome at least, and possibly detrimental and damaging to educators, students and schools.**

Though the CTU and educators strongly disagree, Battelle for Kids has assured the Ohio Department of Education that these comparisons and ratings will be accurate, and ODE has agreed that Value-Added will continue using these tests. Until ODE or Ohio legislators call for a change, these are the circumstances.

The CTU and other educational groups around the state have called for a pause on PARCC. CTU President David Quolke published a letter to the editor recently explaining

the Union's concerns to the greater Cleveland community, including: the fact that PARCC's validity and reliability have not been proven; not all students are prepared to take a test online; not all schools are technologically ready to administer the online assessment; and accommodations for special education and bilingual students are questionable or non-existent.

A Small Bright Spot in the Testing Jumble

There was one piece of good news regarding state testing.

The original plan was for all third graders to take the reading OAA in October 2014. If a student scored 394 or above, they would take the PARCC reading test in February 2015 for PBA (Performance-Based Assessments) for two sittings, and again in May 2015 for two sittings for End-of-Year Assessments. If the student scored below 394, they would have to retake the reading OAA in April 2015.

Finally, a little common sense about testing came out of Columbus. Instead, all third graders, regardless of their fall OAA scores in reading, will take the spring OAA in April 2015 with one sitting.

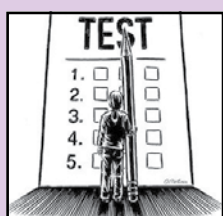
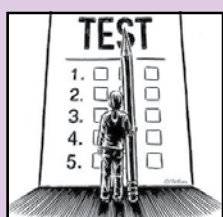
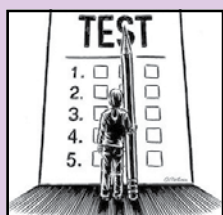
Now if only that common sense could prevail in other areas of Ohio's high-stakes testing/rating tangle.

Choose the best answer:

- ☐ a. test
☒ b. teach

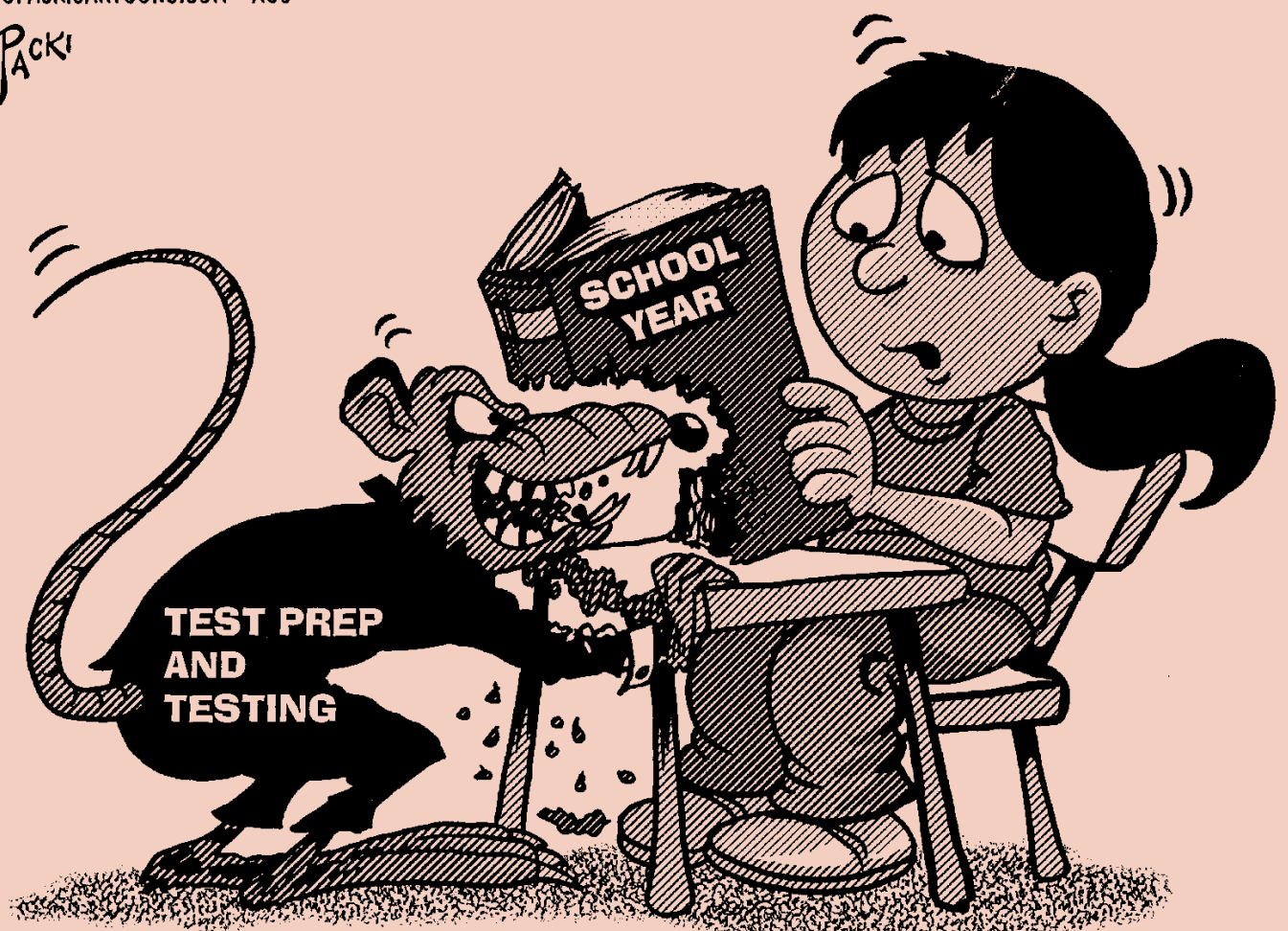
OAA scores to this year's PARCC test scores. Battelle For Kids will be converting scores to NCEs, and aligning the assessments that way.

Teachers around the state are justifiably frustrated and leery of this procedure. Battelle For Kids is the same organization that sent emails last October to teachers across the state delivering their Value-Added



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State Senators Form Panel to Review PARCC

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existing testing program with the panel members and our state legislators. “I am honored to be able to provide the real-world perspective of classroom teachers and how this test obsession impacts our students, our teachers, and the rest of our school community,” she said. “I hope to bring a common-sense approach to assessment to share with the others on our panel.”

“We really value the thoughts of the superintendents and the teachers and other educators across the state,” said Sen. Lehner. The proof of that will be “in the pudding,” but this could be a good first step to get teachers’ voices heard regarding the ongoing obsession with high-stakes testing.

Panel Members

The panel includes teachers, superintendents, curriculum and testing specialists, members of the Ohio Board of Education, and other educational professionals. The committee is composed of the following members.

The teacher representatives are: Dar Borradaile (Miami Valley Career and Technical Center), Melissa Cropper (Georgetown Exempted Village Schools), Amy Holbrook (Mad River Local Schools), Kimberly Jones (Columbus City Schools), Shari Obrenski

(Cleveland City Schools), Billie Sarich (Grandview Heights City Schools), and Kay Wait (Toledo City Schools).

Superintendents are: Adrian Allison (Canton City Schools), Jan Broughton (Fairfield Union Local Schools), April Domine (New Albany Plain Local Schools), John Marschhausen (Hilliard City Schools), Paul Imhoff

(Upper Arlington City Schools), and Keith Millard (Hamilton City Schools).

Curriculum and testing specialists are: Machel Kline (Columbus City Schools), Jim Mahoney (Battelle for Kids), Char Shryock (Bay Village Schools), Julie Sellers (Cincinnati City Schools), and Dr. Cheryl Irish (Miami University).

State Board of Education members are Michael Collins and Todd Jones.

Other educational professionals are: Earl Oremus (Marburn Academy), Andy Boy (United Schools Network), Jessica Voltolini (Ohio Department of Education), and a Catholic schools representative and parent representative, both to be announced later.

Pause on PARCC

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President David Quolke’s letter detailing the union’s concerns with PARCC and its intended uses was published on cleveland.com in February and is reprinted below. Law-

makers may be beginning — finally — to listen to the concerns of educators and parents regarding the waste and damage around high-stakes testing in our schools.

cleveland.com

CTU President’s Letter to the Editor

Beginning February 17, many Ohio students will sit down for the first time and take high-stakes math and reading exams known as PARCC Assessments.

Teachers, parents and the Cleveland Teachers Union have been raising concerns regarding PARCC Assessments. These concerns include:

- The PARCC has not been proven to be a reliable or valid measure of what it is testing.
- Accommodations for special education and bilingual students have been eliminated or are spotty.
- The technology needed has not been proven to be ready for this exam.
- Scores plummet everywhere it is administered.
- Students are not universally prepared to take an online reading or math exam.

When students spend this much time taking assessments, time for instruction and learning is replaced with time for taking tests and preparing for tests. This replacement of learning time is an overwhelming concern for educators and the Cleveland Teachers Union.

School Boards and the Ohio Legislature should stand up for the teachers and students and put a pause on PARCC for high-stakes decisions. It should be prohibited for PARCC results to be used to make high-stakes decisions that impact teachers and students such as graduation, retention, promotion, compensation, lay-off or formal evaluation. A responsible school board and legislature will see the implications of using this unfair data and slam the brakes on the stakes.

— David Quolke, CTU President
Published on [Cleveland.com](http://cleveland.com), on February 17, 2015

TECH BYTES

Interactive resources for the Social Studies Classroom

by L’Taundra Everhart

TDES Alignment: 1c: Setting Instructional Outcomes* and 1d: Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources

DOGO News is an award-winning site that has current events and topics of interest for young readers. Articles are updated daily, simply written, and are for students with a wide range of interests. The site includes all content areas as well as Sports, Entertainment and International news. Most articles feature scans of real-life documents, Common Core standards, vocabulary, comprehension and criti-

cal thinking questions. <http://www.dogonews.com/>

Museumbox allows students to put a number of items into a virtual box. It allows you to build an argument or description of an event, person or historical period by placing items in virtual boxes. You can display anything from a text file to a movie. You can also view the museum boxes submitted by other people and comment on the contents. A trial version is available. <http://museumbox.e2bn.org/>

Access thousands of short videos for the classroom with **WatchKnowLearn**. This video directory is similar to You Tube but is compiled from teacher suggestions. It is searchable by subject and age level. User ratings and comments are also provided. The site features all subject areas, grades K-8, and includes hard-to-find topics such as Vocational, Career Development and Business. The site is also a great resource for meeting Transition or Career Readiness goals for upperclassmen and Special Education students. <http://www.watchknowlearn.org/>

The Renaissance Connection, <http://www.renaissanceconnection.org>, allows students to explore the Renaissance through themes using an interactive timeline, a map, or an alphabetical list. Choose an innovation and trace its history; commission a work of art; or reference lesson plans in different subject areas. Click on lesson plans and browse a breakdown of various sub-topics such as Humanism in the Renaissance and Geography in the Renaissance. This site is hosted by the Allentown, Pennsylvania Art Museum. Requires Flash.

4Kids produces a weekly issue with three brief articles, each of which directs students to a separate website. Easily access past stories by subject under the Cool Spots link. The site also offers interactive games, videos, surveys and weekly quizzes. The site has a free homework assistant called Ask Amy. The Speak Out section gives students a chance to answer a prompt and have their response featured on the site. <http://www.4kids.org/>

Access online adventures with **ProjectExplorer.org**. Students can visit locations around the globe using multimedia travel blogs and videos. In each blog, students can learn about different and engaging subjects through photos, videos, audio, and downloadable materials. The site is categorized by Upper Elementary, Middle School and High School. To fully utilize the site, teachers must register with the site for free. <http://www.projectexplorer.org/>

No need for a trip to the library with **Scholastic Online Activities and Interactive Learning**, <http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/learn.jsp>. The site offers a wealth of interactive activities organized by grade and subject. Check out Dr. King’s Speech: A Culture and Change Activity for interactive reading. Allow students to work in small groups to analyze the Q&A session Rosa Parks held with students in 1997. <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/activity/dr-king%E2%80%9999s-speech-culture-and-change-activity>. Other activities such as story starters and Lewis and Clark’s adventures are also listed. Comprehensive whiteboard activities can be accessed at <http://teacher.scholastic.com/whiteboards/socialstudies.htm>.

Awesome Stories brings 21st-Century learning to the forefront of Social Studies. The site was launched in 1999 with the goals of giving context to stories and building critical thinking and collaboration skills. Today, more than 100,000 free members use Awesome Stories, according to the site. Stories are projected onto whiteboards for whole class use, collaborative groups, and/or individual use. Teachers can be facilitators of learning with this site while students research and learn independently. Browse through collections like Government, Politics, History, Geography and STEM, to name a few. <https://www.awesomestories.com/collections>.

L’Taundra Everhart is a high school Special Education Science teacher, and self-proclaimed techie. She is also a Master Teacher and Resident Educator Mentor. Share your ideas about education-related articles, tools and techniques: leverhart@ctu279.org



UNION NEWS

Grievances Abound — 541 in 2014

by Mary Moore and Jillian Ahrens

The CTU Grievance Team ended 2014 with 541 grievances. The majority were about TDES/SLO/Teacher Effectiveness Ratings (215) and pay issues (195). The Grievance Team has been scheduling arbitration, mediation and Step III hearings for grievances from 2014.

If 20 working days have passed since you filed your grievance and you have not received a response, please file the Step III appeal. The forms are available on the CTU website. Please complete the form and either email it to Mary Moore and Jillian Ahrens, or fax it to 216-861-4113. You can also drop it off at the CTU office. **We do not recommend using school mail.**

The CTU Team has been successful with many of the pay issues. The payment issues mostly dealt with PD, AAP, overages, class coverages, and sick time. The CTU has been able to get many members the back payment amount, plus 10% for wrongfully withholding payment.



Mary Moore



Jillian Ahrens

The Team continues to work through more of these issues and anticipates payment for even more members within the month. If a member is not

paid within three weeks of the event for which they were supposed to be paid, they should file a grievance. If there are emails that they have used in the attempt to rectify the situation, those should be printed and attached to the grievance.

Review of the Grievance Process

All forms are available on the CTU website ctu-279.org.

Begin at the building level. If you feel your rights have been violated, start with a conversation with your supervisor. The Grievance Team recommends you have another CTU member with you when you have this conversation.

If the issue is not resolved, complete the Initiation of Grievance (Step I) form. The form goes to your supervisor who has three working days to respond. **Make a copy before handing it to them**, because if they do not respond in three days, you continue the grievance process without their answer.

After three days with no response, or if the response you received was not acceptable, you then complete the Appeal of Decision of Principal or Supervisor (Step II). Send that along with the Step I form (or a copy) and any evidence to the CTU. You can fax the forms and evidence to 216-861-4113, or email it to Jillian Ahrens and Mary Moore at the CTU, or drop it off personally at the CTU office. Do not use school mail.

The Grievance Team presents the grievance at the next scheduled grievance meeting with the District. The District then has 20 working days to respond. If they do not respond within 20 working days, you can file the Appeal of Decision or Director of Human Resources (Step III). That form is to be filled out by the member and sent to the CTU.

If you get a response at either level II or III that is not satisfactory, you then can request arbitration or mediation. The Grievance Team will determine whether or not to move forward. If the Grievance Team determines not to move forward with your grievance, you can appeal to the Executive Board for arbitration or mediation.

Regarding Arbitration

When we make the decision to move to arbitration, it is not taken lightly. Arbitration is expensive and the outcome is binding. The process is slow but can result in major benefits for all our members. However, it can also have negative consequences that will affect other members if the arbitrator decides in the District's favor.

The CTU Grievance Team and Executive Board members have seen both outcomes and learn from each experience. If you have requested arbitration, please know that they take every request very seriously before making any decisions about the process.

License Renewal Reminder

Tracy Radich, CTU 1st Vice President, reminded all CTU members that if you have a license/certificate that expires this year, you should be planning to turn in all documents needed for renewal **as soon as possible**. Don't wait until the last minute and jeopardize your job! Remember, the new certificate, license, or permit must be issued and in hand **prior to** the beginning of the next school year.

If you have a certificate, license, or permit that needs to be renewed in 2015, you should have received an email letter from Human Resources regarding this process. The email letter contained detailed information about the renewal. The information was sent via Member Mobilization email and is posted on the CTU website.

If you have questions, contact Tracy Radich at tradich@ctu279.org or Jim Wagner at jwagner@ctu279.org.

Beginning in September 2014, licenses are no longer mailed as hard copies. Once a new license is issued, it is emailed to the district and to the educator. ODE noted that people with Gmail accounts have had some problems; emails from ODE seem to go directly to their SPAM or junk folders.

Ms. Radich also informed members that in January 2015, ODE announced it will waive teacher licensure fees for military members and their spouses. The fee waiver applies to all educator license applicants who are veterans, current service members or spouses of current service members, and members of the National Guard or Reserves.

Ohio has 45 different types of licenses, ranging from a teaching aide



permit at \$25 to any professional license at about \$200. Applicants must provide their DD214 form that indicates they have military credentials.

Don't put yourself in a stressful situation — if your license expires this year, get your renewal information submitted now!

CTU Wins on Overage Pay

As a result of a successful arbitration last school year, many of our Related Service Providers are now eligible for overage pay when their caseload/workload exceeds the standards set in the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

This school year, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Speech Language Pathologists, Psychologists, and Audiologists will be paid for overages. They will also be paid retroactively for any overages they had in the 2013-14 school year.

CTU 3rd Vice Presidents Mary Moore and Shari Obrenski have been working with the RSP Chapter Chairs and with Jessica Baldwin, CMSD Director of Special Education Services, to develop the related Memorandum of

Understanding (MOU) and the process by which CTU members will apply for overage pay.

"This has been a long process," said Mary Moore, CTU Co-Director of Grievances, "but the results have not only helped those RSPs mentioned, they have opened the door for further negotiations regarding overage payment for other groups in CTU."

Congratulations to the CTU Grievance Team and the RSPs who will benefit now and in the future from this arbitration victory. Members of the CTU Grievance Team are: Co-Directors Jillian Ahrens and Mary Moore, L'Taundra Everhart, Cherylane Jones-Williams, Shari Obrenski, Kurt Richards and Jim Wagner.

'Heart'-less Decision

Attendance Letter Sparks Anger

"Once again, in typical CMSD fashion, 'the beatings will continue until morale improves,'" said President David Quolke.

CMSD Chief Talent Officer Lora Cover and Irene Scherzer sent insulting attendance letters to all CTU members on January 26, 2015. President Quolke noted that in the past, the District had sent form letters promoting the virtues and benefits of increased staff attendance, but this letter was different. This letter implied to everyone, even those with perfect attendance, that they should consider contacting the EASE@Work program, the District's employee assistance service.

"Worse yet," President Quolke continued, "by targeting all members with a form letter, it didn't matter if you lost a loved one, or are battling a serious illness, or if you were on an **approved** leave, or if you were on maternity leave. No, their message was clear: **we don't care.**"

The Union was flooded with calls and emails as CTU members reacted with anger, disgust, and outrage. This was even more inappropriate and contradictory considering that CMSD had been touting its "Communicate with Heart" campaign. Really? With "heart?" No one took any time to look into the myriad justified reasons for employee absences.

"No one is arguing about the posi-

tive impact CTU members have when it comes to improving student performance," President Quolke continued. "CTU members are the key to the education of CMSD students, period. No one, including me, will argue about the virtues or benefits of increased staff attendance. In fact, there is a negotiated process in our CBA to deal with absence abuse.

"However, no one should argue that **any** employee on approved leave, or dealing with personal illness, or family illness or death, or on jury duty, or on parental leave, etc., should be subjected to demeaning form letters from HR."

In addition to the tone of the letter, he said it raised many of the same questions from last year about accuracy. Last school year, CEO Eric Gordon sent a letter claiming CTU members' average attendance was 89.3%. The Union pressed the

District on the data, and surprise: the records they shared indicated an average 94.7% staff attendance rate. The 89.3% was a number from the Ohio Department of Education.

There was no clarity or explanation on how either the District or the state arrived at this number.

Soon after that, the anti-teacher-union group NCTQ (National Council on Teacher Quality) reported that CMSD teachers had a 91.5% atten-

dance rate, and that they counted professional development days as an absence in their numbers.

President Quolke surmised that all CMSD employees, not just CTU members, got the letter and probably had similar angry responses. "I can only imagine, with as many out-of-town trips central office takes, and the multiple times they pull principals and assistants out of their buildings, their attendance would 'look' deplorable."

All employees have heard the mantra of how important customer service is to CMSD countless times. Much time and effort were put into CMSD's "Communicate with Heart" campaign, which extolled treating everyone with respect.

"Treating everyone with respect," commented President Quolke, "except for the men and women that are in the schools each day educating, counseling, healing, helping, aiding, growing our students. Talk all you want about autonomy, teacher empowerment, respect. We are two years into the Cleveland Plan, and central office seems to be morphing back to the top-down, business-as-usual way of doing things.

"As we enter a negotiations year, it would be wise to spend your money carefully."



COMMENTARY

Only in CMSD: Protecting Our Students Now Equals Assault?!

by Mary Moore

As a 3rd Vice President, I have spent several hours this year defending teachers who have been accused of "assaulting" students. Although CMSD Network Leader Andrew Koonce wrote that "placing hands on a child is unacceptable behavior for an educator," **the Code of Conduct and Ohio Law do not agree.**

In fact, they state that within the scope of our employment, we may use **"such amount of force and restraint as is reasonable and necessary to quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to others, to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects upon the person or within the control of the pupil for the purpose of self-defense, or for the protection of persons or property."**

As you can see, the statement by

the Network Leader does not match what the law says. Although it goes against common sense and much of what you believe in as an educator who cares about the welfare of students, the District has been **disciplining teachers for stepping in to help students.**

Whatever Happened to the Seclusion and Restraint Policy?

The State of Ohio calls for every school district to have a Seclusion and Restraint Policy. The Board of Education has passed Policy JP which calls for "Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports" (PBIS).

The Board policy states: "The District implements PBIS on a system-wide basis. The Board of Education directs the Chief Executive Officer/designee to develop a PBIS system that is consistent with the components set

forth in the Ohio Board of Education's policy on positive behavior interventions and supports. The district encourages family involvement as an integral part of its PBIS system."

The Training and Professional Development section of Policy JP states: "The district trains an appropriate number of personnel in each building in crisis management and de-escalation techniques. The district maintains written or electronic documentation of provided training and lists of participants in each training session.

"All student personnel, as defined by Ohio Administrative Code 3301-35-15, are trained annually on the Ohio Board of Education's and the Cleveland Municipal School District Board of Education's policies and procedures regarding restraint and seclusion.

"The Board directs the Chief Executive Officer /designee to develop a plan

for any necessary training of student personnel to implement PBIS on a system-wide basis."

Instead of following their own policy and the OAC, some administrators quote the part of the Code of Conduct statement that calls for "trained teachers and school staff" to be able to apply physical restraint. The fact that CMSD has not offered the required training has been cause for some administrators to discipline CTU members for stepping in to quell a disturbance and protect other students from possible harm or injury.

The CTU is grieving these instances of unjustified disciplinary action, and will continue to defend our members when their good deeds are punished.

In the meantime, be careful. Common sense seems to be the exception, not the rule.



Whatever The Reason CTU December

Sponsored by So



CMSD Teacher Takes 'Polar Plunge' for Special Olympics

While most of us were simply trying to stay warm during the coldest February in recorded Cleveland history, Willson School's John Dorotics had other plans: he was jumping into frigid Lake Erie, taking his ninth "Polar Plunge," all for a good cause!

The 16-year CMSD veteran teaches physical education, and is a Special Olympics Coach for several schools. He has done the "Plunge" for the past nine years, most recently on February 28, 2015. The annual event took place at Geneva State Park in Geneva-on-the-Lake, and it's always held on the last Saturday in February.

"You don't feel much after hitting the water," Coach Dorotics insisted, "because you become instantly numb." He claims the worst part is standing

around on the shore waiting to jump in. He said in the nine years he has done the plunge, the temperature has always been in the 30s or below.

So why would someone jump in Lake Erie in February? Coach Dorotics uses the event as fundraiser, taking pledges from donors to help fund students in the Special Olympics Program. "While some people use biking or walking or other activities as fundraisers, I thought this would be something a little different to raise

funds and raise awareness for CMSD's Special Olympics Program," he added.

CMSD has its own Special Olympics Program, and any student with an IEP can participate. It is free to students. Coach Dorotics estimated that over 3,000 students in Cleveland take part annually. He has had about 30-40 students participating. Activities include basketball, bowling, track and field, and swimming, and there is a football celebration event at the Browns Training Camp for participants. The program can always use more adult help, he added.

If you are interested in the District's Special Olympics program, con-

tact Vincent Marquard, Jr., CMSD's Deputy Commissioner of Interscholastic Athletics at 216-838-0265, or Bill Hatfield, Assistant Field Director at Special Olympics Ohio at 440-282-7686 or cpssso@aol.

To make a donation to Coach Dorotics, or get additional information, contact him at Willson School or through CMSD email at John.Dorotics@clevelandmetroschools.org. There is also a link to his donation page on Facebook or through the Special Olympics Ohio website at www.soooh.org.

Congratulations to Coach Dorotics for his unique and continued support for CMSD's Special Olympics Program!



Here's CTU's John Dorotics at the Polar Plunge event, and at work in a much warmer environment, Willson School.

son . . . Tis The Season!

Holiday Party

December 12, 2014

Special Committee • Cassandra Carter, Chairperson



Photos by Tanichia Britton of Photography by Britton

THE CLEVELAND TEACHERS UNION — A HISTORY

Part One of a Series: In The Beginning

by Pamela Hummer

CTU members are fortunate to enjoy collective bargaining rights, a strong union, due process protections, the right to grieve, and a collective bargaining agreement that protects wages, benefits, and working conditions. It certainly wasn't always that way for teachers and other workers, in Cleveland and across the country.

Not so long ago, courageous educators made great sacrifices to win those rights. Not all members may be aware of the CTU's remarkable history, its place with other union teachers and working people in the national labor movement, and the depth of its decades-long (and still continuing) struggle for better working conditions for its teachers and better learning conditions for Cleveland students.

This is part one of a series. The intent of this series is to inform current members of the CTU's proud Union history, to make them aware of the heroic efforts of their previous union brothers and sisters, to explain the enormous sacrifices made by many ordinary members in difficult times, and to show CTU members their important place in the great American labor movement.



An Excerpt from *The Teacher Wars: A History of America's Most Embattled Profession*

Why are American teachers both resented and idealized, when teachers in other nations are much more universally respected?

I suspected that the key to understanding the American view of teachers lay in our history, and perhaps had something to do with the tension between our sky-high hopes for public education as the vehicle of meritocracy and our perennial unwillingness to fully invest in our public sector, teachers and schools included. For two hundred years, the American public has asked teachers to close troubling social gaps — between Catholics and Protestants; new immigrants and the American mainstream; blacks and whites; poor and rich.

Every new era of education reform has been characterized by a political and media war on the existing teachers.

Yet every new era of education reform has been characterized by a political and media war on the existing teachers upon whom we rely to do this difficult work, often in the absence of the social supports for families that make teaching and learning most effective for kids, like stable jobs and affordable housing, child care, and

health care.

The nineteenth-century common school reformers depicted male teachers — 90% of the classroom workforce in 1800 — as sadistic, lash-wielding drunks who ought to be replaced by kinder, purer (and cheaper) women. During the Progressive Era, it was working-class female teachers who were attacked, for lacking the masculine “starch” supposedly necessary to preside over 60-student classrooms of former child laborers.

In the South during the civil rights era, *Brown v. Board of Education* prompted the racially motivated firings of tens of thousands of black teachers, as the Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations looked the other way. Then, at the height of the Black Power movement in the 1960s and 1970s, it was inner city white teachers who were vilified, for failing to embrace parental control of schools and Afrocentric pedagogical theories.

Teachers have been embattled by politicians, philanthropists, intellectuals, business leaders, social scientists, activists on both the Right and Left, parents, and even one another. (Some of the critiques were fair, others less so.) Americans have debated who should teach public school; what should get taught; and how teachers should be educated, trained, hired, paid, evaluated, and fired. Though we've been arguing about these questions for two centuries, very little consensus has developed.

Amid these teacher wars, many extraordinary men and women worked in public school classrooms and offered powerful, grassroots ideas for how to improve American education. Henry David Thoreau, Susan B. Anthony, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Lyndon B. Johnson are just a few of the famous Americans who taught. They resisted the fantasy of educators as saints or saviors, and understood teaching as a job in which the potential for children's intellectual transcendence and social mobility, though always present, is limited by real-world concerns such as poor training, low pay, inadequate supplies, inept administration, and impoverished students and families. [Their] stories, and those of less well-known teachers, propel this history forward and help us understand why American teaching has evolved into such a peculiar profession, one attacked and admired in equal proportion . . .

What I do believe is that education reformers today should learn from the mistakes of history. We must focus less on how to rank and fire teachers and more on how to make day-to-day teaching an attractive, challenging job that intelligent, creative, and ambi-

tious people will gravitate toward. We must quiet the teacher wars and support ordinary teachers in improving their skills, what economist Jonah Rockoff, who studies teacher quality, calls “moving the big middle” of the profession.

Education reformers today should learn from the mistakes of history.

While the ingenuity and fortitude of exemplary teachers throughout history are inspiring, many of their stories . . . shed light on the political irrationality of focusing obsessively on rating teachers, while paying far less attention to the design of the larger public education and social welfare systems in which they work.

— Dana Goldstein



Beginnings of the AFT

America's teachers' unions have faced difficulties since their inception. The National Education Association (NEA) was the first national teachers' union, founded in 1857. This labor association was recognized more as an educational organization that encouraged “professionalism” among its members, but discouraged striking and collective bargaining.

The Chicago Teachers Federation, independent of the NEA, was founded in 1897. It became Local #1 of the American Federation of Teachers. The AFT was established in 1916, and was thought of as a more militant, activist labor organization.

Before World War I, several prominent members of the AFT opposed the entry of the U.S. into the war. This was viewed as “anti-patriotism,” to the point that the American Legion targeted many union teachers as being disloyal to America, even pressing for their dismissal. They pressured schools to add lessons on “dutiful patriotism” to their curriculum.

Chicago School Board President Jacob Loeb was afraid that teachers who belonged to teachers' unions “known for ‘contemptuous and rebellious’ attitudes toward authorities” would pass these unsavory characteristics onto their impressionable young students. In 1917, the infamous Loeb Rule passed, prohibiting Chicago teachers from joining trade unions.

In 1800, 90% of classroom teachers were men. In 1870, 59% of urban teachers were women; by 1920, the number of women teaching in urban schools had risen to 86%. Despite their large numbers in the profession, women teachers faced unequal pay and working conditions. In some districts into the 1900s, women teachers were not allowed to marry. Some

districts suspended teachers while they were pregnant. Women teachers usually made less money than men.

The salary gender inequity seems to have been built into the teacher pay system. Massachusetts State Senator Horace Mann left his position as Senator to become his state's Secretary of Education in 1837, the first such position in the country. He took his new position seriously, and studied what was then a new and important educational theory in the world regarding teacher training, the Prussian teacher training system. The Prussian monarchy had established teacher training schools called “normal schools” to improve teacher quality, and create unified, educated and “morally superior” citizens. Prussia's normal schools accepted male and female applicants 16-18 years of age, who spent two years studying subject matter and pedagogy, and one year as a teacher apprentice in a school.

Mann followed their model, and opened three normal schools in Massachusetts by 1840. In the next 30 years, 22 other states had opened their own teacher training schools, based on this model.

However, Mann's schools only accepted women. He claimed this was a bargain for the state's taxpayers, since by replacing male teachers with female teachers (and paying much lower salaries to women), he was able to save the state “double the expense” of the states' three normal schools.

While using the economic reasoning to sell his ideas to his fellow citizens, Mann really believed that teaching was a woman's true calling because it made use of her natural inclination to be a nurturer. He saw female educators not as academics, but as “celestial” public servants, motivated by innate moral purity and Christian values.

One of the reasons used to justify paying women less than men was that men needed to be paid a salary big enough to support a family, but a woman did not. The first salary schedule was established in 1920 in the Denver, Colorado schools, providing set salary increments based on years of experience and educational degrees. However, women continued to be paid less than men.



The Gilded Age and Income Inequality

The so-called Gilded Age before the stock market crash in 1929 was a time of Dickensian differences between rich and poor (similar to the immense economic divide growing in America today). People were either very rich or very poor; there was no middle class. The rich held both economic power and political power, and unions were often demonized.

The 1929 stock market crash and the depression that followed changed many Americans' opinions of big business. More people began to see unions

as an essential security against the arbitrary power of employers. Unions were also fighting for social changes and benefits to workers, such as health insurance, workers' compensation, and secure pensions, that had become very important in the wake of the depression.

During the 1930s, President Franklin D. Roosevelt helped to change labor's image. He used the terms "economic royalists" and "industrial dictatorship" to describe wealthy employers and big business, potent words after the stock market crash, and when fascist dictators were rising in power in Germany, Italy, and Spain. Thanks to his support of labor unions, Unionism was seen more favorably by Americans during the New Deal, thanks to the President's strong support of workers and labor.

One millworker in the South noted that Roosevelt was "the first man in the White House to understand that my boss is a son of a b---h." Labor historian Nelson Lichtenstein wrote, "Unions would never again enjoy a political environment as favorable as that which transformed American work life during the years between 1934 and 1937."

In 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Wagner Act into law. This guaranteed American workers the right to unionize. FDR also raised taxes on America's wealthiest multi-millionaires — the 1% of that time — to 90%. That's not a typo — 90%. The economy did not collapse when the supposed "job creators" of that time were taxed more; instead, the New Deal was funded, America's great infrastructure was built, and the first true American middle class was created.

Although the country slowly pulled itself out of the depression thanks to the New Deal, most teacher salaries still stagnated through the 1930s. Many state governments slashed school budgets, while teachers' workloads and class sizes increased. Despite poor working conditions, teacher strikes were rare in the 1930s, although some Chicago teachers led a protest in 1936 in front of the Board of Education building when the Board defaulted on paying their salaries.



1930s: Cleveland Teachers Union Chartered

According to historical records, teacher unionism in Cleveland goes back to Samuel Gompers coming to Cleveland and organizing a union in 1913. But the CTU was not chartered until two decades later.

In 1933, the Cleveland Board of Education cut its operating budget by over \$2 million, an enormous sum. Along with the nation, Cleveland schools struggled through what was called then the most economically difficult 12 months in Cleveland history. CBOE teachers and other employees bore a large part of the financial burden. In an all-too-familiar scenario, PTA members complained about overcrowded classrooms and asked for better teacher pay. Teacher salaries in Cleveland schools were cut 40% between 1932 and 1933, and they

were sometimes paid in scrip (a form of IOU), or not at all.

In May of 1933, Charles H. Lake was elected Superintendent of Schools with his term beginning on September 1, 1933. Robinson G. Jones was elected the schools' Director of Public Relations.

In response to worsening conditions during the Depression, including transfers, layoffs, long hours, large class sizes, and low wages, Cleveland teachers formed the Union. The CTU was officially chartered in 1934 as the "American Federation of Teachers Local 279." In 1940, its name was changed to the Cleveland Teachers Union.

In response to worsening conditions, including transfers, layoffs, long hours, large class sizes, and low wages, Cleveland teachers formed the Union.

Although the Cleveland Board of Education had an unfavorable view of union membership, about 150 teachers joined the Union, Local 279. At that time, it was not the "sole representative" or bargaining agent of the teachers. Some teachers belonged to an affiliate of the NEA, or did not belong to any union.

In the CTU's first effort in what would be a long history of activism in the Cleveland community, the 150 members of the new AFT Local 279 made 1,000 voluntary calls on delinquent taxpayers. These Union teachers were considered directly responsible for bringing \$350,000 into the county treasury, money that went to the Cleveland Schools.

The CTU also worked diligently to restore the salary cuts from the Depression years. Not until 1941 did Cleveland teachers return to 100% of their former pre-Depression salaries.



War, Strikes and Union-Busting

While the war economy of World War II helped most American workers, teachers did not fare as well. According to historian Marjorie Murphy, the average real income of industrial workers rose 80% during the war years. Teachers' real income during the same years fell about 20%.

The inflation that followed the war resulted in more economic hardship for teachers across the country. Teachers in Norwalk, Connecticut were the first to go on strike in September 1946. They won pay raises and recognition of their union.

New Jersey teachers also went on a short strike in 1946. "Post-war strike fever" paid dividends; average teacher salary increased 13% since the end of the war as teachers, especially in ur-

ban areas, became more militant. In November 1946, teachers in St. Paul, Minnesota staged the biggest and most successful strike of that year, a five-week job action that led to pay raises beginning the following April.

Not everyone supported the teachers' right to collective bargaining and strikes. In 1947, the New York State lawmakers passed the Condon-Waldin Act. This egregious anti-labor law called for the immediate firing of employees who went on strike, prohibition from reinstatement, three-year pay freeze and five-year probation.

Teachers in Buffalo, New York, went on strike anyway in 1946-1947. Other labor unions went out on strike in support of the teachers, and thanks to the united effort, the teachers won major concessions. Teachers in Minneapolis struck in 1948 and despite the school board's efforts to lock them out, won a pay raise. Teachers in AFT locals in San Francisco, California, and Jersey City, New Jersey, struck in 1948 and received raises.

State legislatures continued to try to curb teachers' and other public employees' rights to collective bargaining with severe anti-strike legislation. For example, Delaware passed a harsh law imposing a \$500 fine (a significant amount at that time) and one year in prison for any public employee that struck.

Wealthy conservatives who wanted cheap labor fought back against the growth of labor unions. In 1946, Democrats lost the House and Senate. In 1947, the Taft-Hartley Act, authored by Senator Robert Taft of Ohio and Representative Fred Hartley of New Jersey, "reflected the ebbing of union political influence and the corresponding rise of business influence in the first Republican Congress since 1930," according to labor historian Jack Barbash. The law allowed states to opt out of parts of the Wagner Act. "It outlawed the closed shop, jurisdictional strikes, and secondary boycotts. Union power in emergency disputes, political contributions, and negotiated health and welfare funds were curtailed. Union officials were required to file non-communist affidavits. States were allowed to enact 'right-to-work' laws . . . The injunction was reinstated to restrain boycotts, jurisdictional strikes, and national emergency walkouts. The National Labor Relations Board was bifurcated into separate prosecuting and judicial arms [weakening the NLRB]. Taft-Hartley established a new legal equilibrium in the union-management relationship [that was] less favorable to unions."

In 1947, before Taft-Hartley began weakening American labor, about 35% of American workers were unionized. Union writer Thom Hartman theorized that "for every union job, there was a non-union job in the private sector with nearly identical pay and benefits, because labor unions had set the floor for labor costs, and employers had to compete for workers."

Extrapolating these numbers, that means before Taft-Hartley, about 70% of American workers enjoyed a middle class salary, on which one working person could support a family. During that time, there were also reasonable — not obscenely exorbitant — differ-

ences between CEOs and workers. On average, CEOs earned 30-35 times what their lowest employee earned. Compare that to today's numbers: according to the AFL-CIO report on pay gaps, the CEOs of S&P 500 index companies made, on average, 354 times the average wages of rank-and-file U.S. workers in 2012. American CEOs also make far more than CEOs of comparably-sized companies in other developed countries.

Prior to Taft-Hartley, there were also senior management-to-employee ratio caps of 20:1 in civil service jobs, military, and most colleges.



Cold War and McCarthyism

Despite laws against it, teachers and other public employees continued to stand up for their rights to bargain and to strike. In 1950, Providence, Rhode Island teachers won a historic "basic contract" after a one-week strike. With established salary and working conditions, it was one of the first basic teacher contracts in the country.

The 1950s brought America's Cold War against the Soviet Union, widespread fear of communism, and the rise of "McCarthyism." Anticommunism was a national mania, and unions were targeted.

Union demands for better social programs and a bigger share of profits sounded too "socialist" to some Americans, and some important labor leaders had in fact been members of socialist or communist organizations in previous decades. Business leaders successfully played the "red" card against unions. The magazine *Nation's Business* declared, "Whoever stirs up needless strikes in American trade unions advances the cause of Communism."

The Cold War also stirred dissension within the labor movement. In 1949, the CIO had expelled nine unions and almost a million members for refusing to "purge leaders with ties to communism," as called for in the Taft-Hartley Act. By the mid-1950s, many unions had rules barring communists as officers or in some cases as members.

Radicalism was a two-edged sword for labor. From the late 1800s into the middle of the twentieth century, socialists and communists had been active in the labor movement, often bringing commitment and energy to the workers' fight for fair wages and decent treatment by employers. Opponents of labor regularly used them as an excuse to turn public opinion against labor in general. But after McCarthyism, their role in labor ended. Historian Ronald Felippelli noted that "for the first time in history, the radical voice was gone from the mainstream of organized labor."

The man leading the charge of anticommunism was Senator Joseph McCarthy (R-Wisc.), from whom the movement got its name. He led reckless, widespread, anticommunist pursuits, in which thousands of Americans were subject to investigations and interrogations by government committees and panels.

From approximately 1950 to 1956,

the primary targets of these modern-day witch hunts, as legislators tried to ferret out “communists and communist sympathizers,” were primarily American entertainers, government employees, educators, and union activists. Many people lost careers or were jailed over fraudulent accusations with questionable evidence. Some examples of government overreach during these years were Senator McCarthy’s hearings and the hearings of the House Un-American Activities Committee, the creation of the “Hollywood blacklist” that destroyed the lives of many innocent people in the entertainment industry, and questionable FBI anti-communist activities under its secretive Director, J. Edgar Hoover.

With the scare of McCarthyism hanging over them, teacher militancy and activism were practically non-existent during the 1950s. One of few exceptions was the state of New Jersey, which saw nine strikes in that decade. And by 1959, Wisconsin was the only state with collective bargaining legislation protecting its workers — a biting quirk of fate, considering its recent battles with anti-labor Gov. Scott Walker around right-to-work and anti-union laws.

The 1950s brought the merger of the two giant national labor unions, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). The AFL had represented the crafts unions, and the CIO the industrial unions. Divisions between the labor giants had grown and were exacerbated by leaders from both sides. In the 1930s and 1940s, the two national unions were able to grow concurrently, but in the 1950s, expansion of one was understood to be at the expense of the other. Also, both unions regarded the administration of then-President Dwight Eisenhower as antagonistic to organized labor. Each union had a new President at that time, Walter Reuther for the CIO and George Meany for the AFL, and for the first time in the unity negotiations, the AFL offered the CIO “partnership instead of absorption.” The two unions officially merged on December 5, 1955, and the labor movement became a national power.



Late 1950s: Ohio Voters Crush Right-to-Work

One of the great labor victories of the twentieth century happened right here in Ohio in 1958. Ohio politicians and industrialists wrote a union-busting right-to-work amendment into the State Constitution. Labor author (laborfightback.org) Jerry Gordon wrote, “Don’t underestimate the workers! Ohio workers closed ranks, organized and led a massive political crusade that defeated the measure by a margin of almost a million votes.”

Gordon said that nobody but the workers could claim credit for the victory. Final election returns from the state’s 12,960 polling places showed the vote on the Right-to-Work Amendment, which was coincidentally Issue 2 on the ballot, was defeated on November 4, 1958, with 2,007,291 NO votes versus 1,080,266 YES votes, a margin of victory for labor of 927,025 votes.

The Democratic candidates for Governor and U.S. Senator who were also on that ballot, won their races, but they won by much closer margins than the defeat of Issue 2: the margin for the defeat of “Right-to-Work” was more than double the margin of victory for Governor DiSalle and six times the margin of victory for Senator Young. In summary, opposing right-to-work enjoyed far greater support than did either of the Democratic politicians.

Mr. Gordon claims, “The victorious campaign to defeat right-to-work was conducted under the clear-cut leadership of labor — united in its own independent political arm, United Organized Labor of Ohio (UOLO) and completely separate from the Democratic and Republican Parties. The workers did not depend on ‘friends’ in these parties in the fight to defend their union conditions.

“Thousands of rank-and-file workers participated actively in the campaign. They distributed literature, organized debates, voted contributions to UOLO from union funds, and took up voluntary collections. They went to the unemployed at the Unemployment Compensation Offices and offset the attempts of the bosses to pit jobless workers against the unions. They went to the farmers and explained how agricultural income is dependent on the standard of living won by organized labor. They went to African-American workers and pointed out that right-to-work was being pushed by the same forces opposing fair employment practices legislation.”

The *Cleveland Plain Dealer* had spearheaded the drive of the business interests and politicians who were right-to-work supporters. Anthony J. DiSantis, who was the paper’s Labor Editor, wrote after the election in the November 6, 1958 issue, “Ohio voters rejected the ‘right-to-work’ proposal by the biggest margin ever recorded on an issue on the ballot in the state’s history.”

The *Cleveland Plain Dealer* asserted in a November 5, 1958 editorial its confidence that “compulsory membership in labor unions [right-to-work] will be outlawed in Ohio.” But they admitted that “it is evident from yesterday’s balloting that if this issue is to succeed the initiative for it will have to come from the workers themselves, rather than from business organizations which have been hostile to labor unions in the past.”

Ohio would have two more significant challenges to unions and workers that also both happened to be Issue 2 on their ballots: the 1997 challenge to workers’ compensation, and the 2011 attack on collective bargaining rights. But as Mr. Gordon wrote, “Many times, employers have decided that the U.S. labor movement is too weak, too divided and too passive to defend itself and its members from the blows which the bosses seek to deliver. When the smoke clears and the battle is over, it is the workers and their unions which have often come out on top, demonstrating how much strength and power the working class has, once it decides to use its muscle and mobilize its forces.”



CTU Becomes Sole Representative of Cleveland Teachers

After its establishment in 1934, and its first battles with basic wages and working conditions, the CTU worked for the next several decades for the right of married women to teach (that’s right, only single women were allowed to be teachers), for salary gains, for better benefits including hospitalization, maternity and paternity leave, and for basic due process rights for non-tenured teachers. Teachers could decide whether to belong to the CTU which was chartered by the AFT, to another group affiliated with the NEA, or to no union at all.

In 1964, an election was held to decide which labor union would be the sole and official bargaining agent, and have the right to represent all Cleveland Public Schools teachers. The debate was between NEA representation, with the NEA seen as a more professional, less militant union, and the AFT, viewed as more aggressive and activist. At the time, teachers in most of the large urban school districts were affiliating with the AFT. Cleveland educators voted that their official bargaining agent would be the AFT’s Cleveland Teachers Union. The CTU has fulfilled that duty ever since for the classroom personnel of Cleveland Public Schools, including teachers, substitutes, paraprofessionals, nurses, and related service providers.

Other districts across the country were fighting for their collective bargaining rights and striking for better wages during the 1960s. New York teachers founded the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) as AFT’s Local 2 in 1960. In November 1960, the UFT’s 50,000 public school teachers held a one-day strike to convince Mayor Robert Wagner and the Board of Education to hold an election giving NY teachers the right to choose their collective bargaining unit. They won that right in June 1961.

After the successful New York strike, there were at least six teacher strikes nationwide between 1961 and 1965. President John F. Kennedy had been elected in 1960. In 1962, he signed Executive Order 10968, giving collective bargaining rights to federal employees. His action opened the door for similar changes in state labor laws, and 22 states passed laws in the 1960s granting collective bargaining rights to state and local employees.

By 1968, AFT locals had become the collective bargaining agents for teachers in these urban districts: Cleveland, New York, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, Kansas City, Boston, Newark, Toledo, St. Louis, New Orleans, Washington, DC, and other cities.

In May of 1969, Chicago teachers went on strike for the first time in city history. The strike lasted one day. Teachers agreed to a salary increase of \$100 a month. Annual starting salary for teachers was raised to \$8,400. The contract also established a maximum class size, guaranteed that no educational programs would be eliminated, and guaranteed that regularly assigned teachers would not be cut.

In the next Critique: 1960s and 1970s, including race and unions; teacher militancy; the increase of collective bargaining agreements and teacher voices in educational policy; desegregation arrives in Cleveland; Cleveland Public Schools, payless paydays, and two major strikes.

The decline of labor (fueled in part by anti-union government policies, such as right-to-work) has had a large effect on income inequality. Union density peaked in 1954 at about 40% of the private sector workforce.

Today union density is about 7% of the private sector workforce — the same level as in 1933.

It’s as if the New Deal never happened.



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AFT Launch

From grass-roots lobbying on Capitol Hill to a telephone town hall meeting, the AFT focused intense activity and energy in the first days of March on the all-important reauthorization of the keystone federal law for K-12 education, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

More than 40 AFT leaders from 19 states traveled to Washington, D.C., on March 10 and urged their senators to preserve essential ingredients and advocate for necessary changes in ESEA (known in its current version as the No Child Left Behind Act). The next day, ESEA reauthorization commanded major consideration at the regular meeting of the AFT Teachers program and policy council and, later that evening, was the focus of a telephone town hall meeting that drew more than 4,000 activists and

ESEA Reauthorization

Leveling the Playing Field for Our Kids

by **Randi Weingarten**

President, American Federation of Teachers

A high-quality public education can build much-needed skills and knowledge. It can help children reach their God-given potential. It can stabilize communities and democracies. It can strengthen economies. It can combat the kind of fear and despair that evolves into hatred.

On my recent visit to Israel, the West Bank and Auschwitz, I was reminded how public education, by bringing children together — regardless of race, religion or creed — can promote pluralism. Public education can also provide the safe harbors our children need, especially in tough times. In December in Ferguson, Mo., I saw how public schools gave kids the space they needed to process what was happening in their community, while instilling hope for their future.

And we are all constantly reminded of how a high-quality public education, one that enables kids to learn teamwork, critical thinking and problem solving — skills they need to compete in the 21st century — can lead to good jobs and a more robust economy.

Just last week, a new study was published that found if we eliminate the achievement gap in the United States, we can grow our gross domestic product by 10% and raise the lifetime earnings of low-wage workers by 22%. This study by the Washington Center for Equitable Growth describes strategies that have worked in other countries to bridge the achievement gap.

We narrow that gap through supporting, not sanctioning, kids, teachers and schools. We narrow that gap through teaching kids how to work with their hands, to work in teams, to

solve problems — not just how to ace a test. We narrow that gap by providing early childhood education and helping all third-graders read at grade level. We narrow that gap when we give all kids, not just kids from wealthier families, access to art and music, librarians and nurses. We narrow that gap by focusing on high-poverty schools that struggle and helping these schools through interventions like wraparound services that combat the impact of poverty.

The good news is that pretty much everyone agrees NCLB has to go. The law allowed high-stakes testing to eclipse all else, it failed to close the achievement gap or reach its intended goals, and it must be fixed.

There's a debate stirring now around the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, a law signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson as part of his War on Poverty that, at its root, was about leveling the playing field for kids. The law's most recent iteration, No Child Left Behind, in emphasizing testing, pulled us away from the focus on kids, especially those who

are poor — as are half of public school students in the United States.

The good news is that pretty much everyone agrees NCLB has to go. The law allowed high-stakes testing to eclipse all else, it failed to close the achievement gap or reach its intended goals, and it must be fixed. More than 18,000 members of the American Federation of Teachers submitted comments on how to fix NCLB.

One teacher talked about the number of pre- and post-tests her students take. She noted that even third-graders attend a Saturday Test-Prep Academy to learn test-taking skills. Her plea? "We need thinkers, not test takers, for our future growth as a nation."

But even more compelling are

my school's neighborhood."

The current House Republican bill does just the opposite. While it would make some needed improvements to accountability, it would also lock in recession-driven cuts to education. It would allow state and local governments to walk away from their responsibility to maintain funding from year to year. And it would divert money meant to go to public schools that teach poor kids and give it to better-off schools.

A report released this week from the White House found that this bill would cap "spending for the next six years at \$800 million lower than it was in 2012." This would happen at a time when child poverty rates are alarmingly high and when Title I — the biggest federal education program — has failed to see any increase since 2012.

The report also found that high-poverty districts could lose \$700 million, while more affluent districts could gain \$470 million. Make no mistake: The House bill will further harm our most disadvantaged kids.

We need a law that gives kids the resources they need, including computers, lower class sizes, nurses and counselors, even when their communities can't afford them.

A high-quality public education can unlock our children's potential. It can bring communities together. It can ensure a top-notch workforce for our economy and an engaged citizenry for our democracy.

We have an opportunity with the ESEA reauthorization to help reclaim the promise of public education. Now, let's work across the aisle to reclaim it.

es Full-Court Press on ESEA Reauthorization

classroom educators from states across the nation.

In all of these actions, union leaders and activists highlighted the need for ESEA to stay true to its basic mission — leveling the playing field for all children in public schools, particularly those living in poverty — while providing educators with the conditions and resources necessary to meet that great challenge.

The visits connected the face and voice of classroom educators with AFT priorities for ESEA reauthorization. Among those goals: to relieve the pressure of high-stakes tests, ensure that struggling schools receive the interventions that will allow them to succeed, maintain paraprofessional qualification requirements in the law, and embrace strategies that don't turn the federal government into the human resources

department for every school district. The AFT activists also urged lawmakers to expand access to high-quality early education and to maintain ESEA's original purpose of fiscal equity — keeping resources focused on schools with high concentrations of student poverty and maintaining support for key subgroups, such as English language learners.

Paraprofessionals and school-related personnel were well-represented in the lobby day activities. They explained the necessity of preserving ESEA language requiring that all paraprofessionals be highly qualified and attain certain levels of professional development and certification, such as college credits or equivalent exams.

Follow-up Is Critical

These visits, combined with follow-up both in Washington, D.C., and back home, will be critical in the weeks ahead. Leaders in the Senate are expected to propose a bipartisan draft of the bill early next month, while the House of Representatives could vote any day on a draft. Differences between the two bills would then need to be ironed out in joint committee before a bill is offered to the White House — making a critical window of opportunity for classroom educators to communicate with lawmakers not just at the Capitol but back home in early April, when Congress is in recess.

The telephone town hall provided thousands of activists with breaking news on ESEA reauthorization and then allowed them to put that information to

work immediately. At the conclusion of the event, many of the participants took a moment to patch their phone connection into the offices of their senators — leaving messages that highlight what public schools' front line demands from a new ESEA for the profession and the students they serve.

These types of calls, letters, emails and visits have a big impact on Capitol Hill, AFT President Randi Weingarten told the town hall crowd. They can help the union seize this opportunity to fashion a good new law and escape the arbitrary and punitive climate that has been driven by NCLB waivers and Race to the Top incentives. "I thank you for wanting to make a difference in the lives of children and for standing up for the respect and dignity you deserve," she told the audience.

Breakfast with the President Draws Crowd

The CTU and Common Good Ohio held the second “Breakfast with the President” meeting at the Walz Library on Detroit Avenue January 24. Common Good Ohio did a remarkable job informing parents and faith-based leaders about this community meeting. There were over 50 people in attendance, almost tripling the audience that attended the first meeting. The CTU, Common Good Ohio’s Rowena Ventura and Pastor Aaron Phillips organized the meeting. Organizers hope the attendance at the ongoing breakfast meetings keeps growing.

Similar to the first meeting, CTU 1st Vice President Tracy Radich informed the audience about the excess of testing in public school districts. She told about the stress many students experience due to the sheer number of



high-stakes tests they are required to take. She explained the Common Core, the set of standards that the Ohio legislature has mandated. While she felt its high standards will help students, she believes the state-mandated PARCC tests that go with the Common Core are excessive and unfair.

Expanding on the discussion from the first meeting, President Quolke told the interactive audience about past and future trips to Columbus to speak with key Democratic and Republican legislators about the over-testing of our students. He spoke about the readiness of CMSD students to take the high-stakes tests, and an

effort to get the legislature to enact a three-year moratorium on the PARCC tests.

President Quolke also discussed the importance of charter school accountability and the fact that many of the charter schools throughout Ohio are taking away valuable resources from public school districts. Discussing CMSD’s budget as it relates to charter schools, he said charter schools receive about \$6,000 per student from the state allocation that would otherwise go to CMSD, amounting to about \$130 million out of \$400 million CMSD gets in state funds.

He talked about an audit by Repub-



lican State Auditor David Yost on how charter schools count their students, explaining that state funding is based on the number of students. As part of the audit, personnel from the Auditor’s office randomly visited Ohio charter schools and counted the students, then



compared that number to the number of students the charter school claimed to have. In one school, they claimed to have 95 students on the day of the audit, when there were actually zero students in attendance that day. Some



Cleveland charter schools had only 30% of their students in attendance.

The CTU President explained how many students return to their public school after leaving a charter school, but the funding stays with the charter school. He also told the audience about teachers trying to organize a union at two local charter schools last year that were fired on the last day of school. “The teachers’ voices were not welcome in these charter schools,” he said, calling for teachers and parents to be united on issues regarding chil-

dren’s education.

Larry Bresler of Organize Ohio spoke about the state budget and Northeast Ohioans for Budget Legislation Equality (NOBLE). He talked about the critical need for increasing funding for public education in Ohio, and the need to change the state policy that leaves state funds at charter schools even though students have returned to their public schools. He encouraged parents, community members and Common Good Ohio supporters to join in NOBLE’s effort to lobby the state legislature.

Parents and other community members had opportunities to ask questions of both President Quolke and 1st Vice President Radich. At both meetings, parents asked about ways to help their children and the schools. Ms. Radich gave parents, grandparents, and other community members the opportunity to “opt in” to a texting service that she developed. This texting service sends a reminder to parents several times a week with helpful suggestions, including reading to their children, asking questions, and providing reminders about important upcoming tests.

President Quolke said he hopes these meetings will build a coalition to “make sure all schools are held accountable.” He said in the past, CTU had reached out to parents and community members during a crisis, or when a levy was on the ballot. Through these breakfast conversations, he wants to create an ongoing, regularly-occurring dialogue with parents and community members about issues of common concern.

“If parents or community members are seeking help about a problem in the schools,” he said, “through these ongoing conversations, I can at least point them in the right direction toward reaching a solution.” The AFT is also working to unite its local chapters with communities across the country in a collaborative effort to improve public education.

For more information about upcoming breakfast meetings, contact Common Good Ohio at 216-795-5375 or email rventura@commongoodohio.org.



Student Loan Debt Scams On the Rise

As wages for young workers fall, economic inequity grows, and student loan debt tops \$1.3 trillion, overwhelmed students are being targeted by student loan relief scams.

Like the mortgage relief scam companies that sprang up after the housing bust, these unscrupulous companies target distressed borrowers through online ads and official-looking letters. Instead of getting debt relief, the borrowers are charged massive fees only to be enrolled in government programs that are free, and end up with further damaged credit and additional debt.

The AFL-CIO reminded borrowers that the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), created by the Dodd-Frank Act to protect consumers from bad financial products, recently announced actions it has taken to shut down or sue these scam companies, and issued a consumer advisory with things to look out for. The warning signs that a student debt relief company might be trying to rip you off are:

1. Pressure to pay up-front fees, sign a contract or provide your credit card or bank account number before even explaining how they’ll help you.
2. Promises of immediate loan forgiveness or debt cancellation.
3. Demands that you pay them directly instead of your servicer or sign a “third-party authorization” or “power

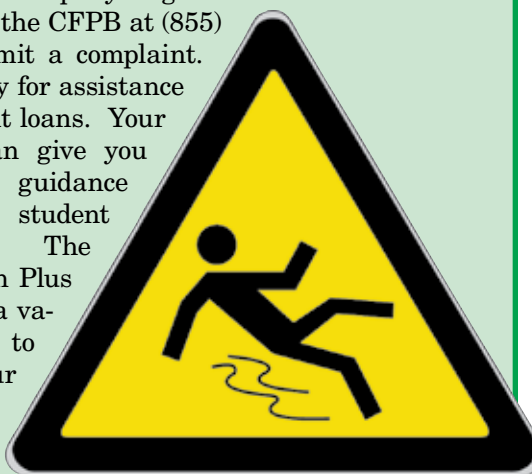
of attorney” to give them permission to talk to your student loan servicer and make decisions for you.

4. Requests for your Federal Student Aid PIN.

If you think a company might be a rip-off, contact the CFPB at (855) 411-2372 or submit a complaint. You shouldn’t pay for assistance with your student loans. Your loan servicer can give you information and guidance about existing student debt programs. The AFL-CIO’s Union Plus program offers a variety of services to help finance your education.

Want to help shut the scammers down? If you see a suspicious ad, email or website, take a screenshot and send it to the AFL-CIO. They are partnering with other working families’ advocates to help stop the scams, and will pass your submissions along to federal enforcement agencies.

(Source: www.aflcio.org)



'Families That Lead' Program Builds Communities

Families That Lead, an eight-week workshop series for Cleveland parents and community members, is helping to develop leadership and advocacy skills. Along with the Cleveland Parent Support Network and other programs, the Families That Lead program is part of the Neighborhood Leadership Institute, under the direction of Executive Director Don Slocum, MSW.

"This program helps educate parents and other family members, empowering them to be strong, effective advocates for their children, their families, and their communities," said President David Quolke. "Parent input and involvement are essential, and their activism makes a positive difference in our schools and neighborhoods. Programs like this help parents learn to use their voices effectively to support their children and their neighborhoods."

In the eight-week Families That Lead series, classes are held for two-and-a-half hours one day a week. The goal is to create knowledgeable parent leaders to advocate for their families, and for other families in need. Key class components include: change and the family; child development; finding your voice; understanding systems; the home/school educational partnership; and developing partnerships.

Six sites were available for the Families That Lead series: Artemus Ward School, Cleveland Public Library/Rice Branch, Collinwood High School, James Ford Rhodes High School, John Adams High School, and Lincoln-West High School. The Families That Lead class series are scheduled twice a year, spring and fall. New classes will resume in the fall.

To participate, parents must complete an application and obtain a

letter of recommendation. Interested parents can contact Robbin Hudson, Director of Family Engagement, at 216-658-1359 or at family@neighborhoodleadership.org for information on the next session.

The Families That Lead program will "give more voice to Cleveland citizens," said Mr. Slocum. "We acknowledge that parents are already leaders, but this training will give them additional leadership skills, opportunities to connect with other parents, and ways to build support for each other."

Mr. Slocum asked CTU members to encourage parents and other adult family members of their students to look into this and other programs at the Institute. He added, "Our goal is to help parents, families, teachers, the community, and children to work together," for the success of students, neighborhoods, and the city of Cleveland.

The Cleveland Parent Support Network (CPSN) is dedicated to developing the leadership capacity of parents in the greater Cleveland area, empowering them to lead themselves and their families, and to build and sustain flourishing communities. It



brings together parents, guardians, and family support professionals for learning opportunities, support, and exploration of critical family issues.

CPSN also offers enrichment workshops to meet specific needs and interests. It supports interest-based groups, book clubs, and access to educational, cultural and entertainment events. There is a leadership pathway for interested parents, to build their leadership capacity, become effective trainers, and learn the fundamentals of grassroots organizing.

About the Neighborhood Leadership Institute

The Neighborhood Leadership Institute was the creation of graduates of early classes of Neighborhood Leadership Cleveland (NLC), which began in 1994 as a program of the Neighborhood Centers Association, under the direction of Don Slocum, MSW.

They came together to form the Greater Cleveland Neighborhood Forum to continue networking and discussions around building community. In 1998, several of them worked with Mr. Slocum to develop a plan for a new organization with a more com-

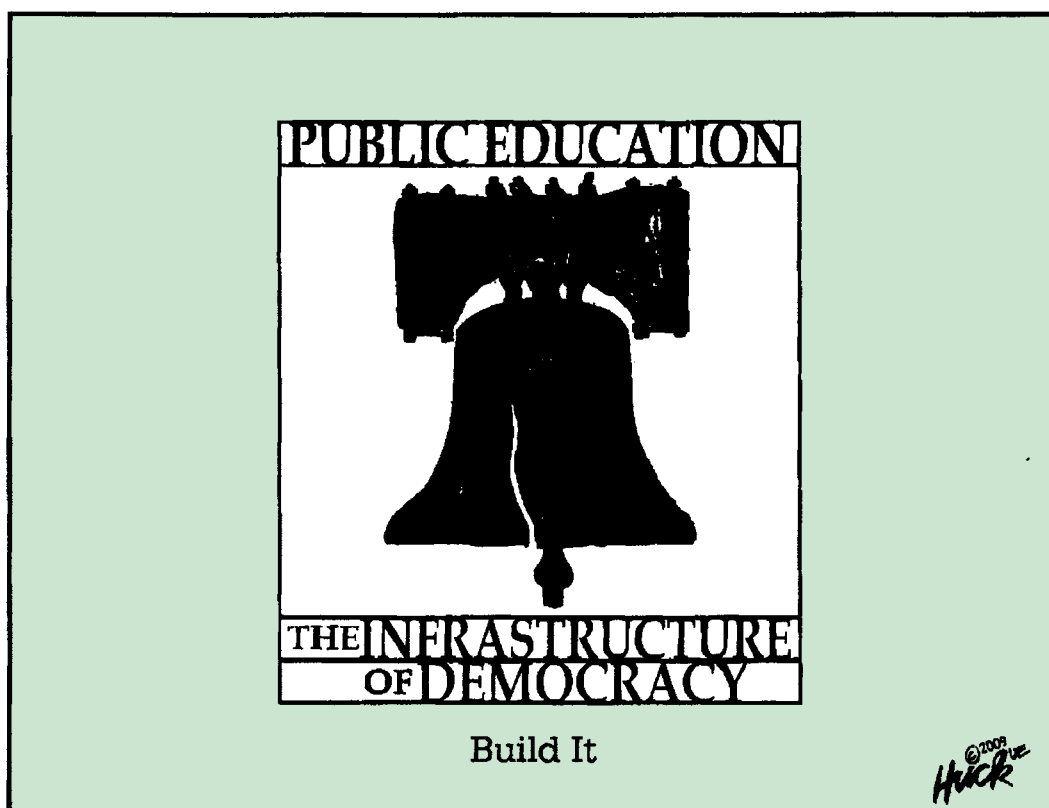
prehensive vision and organizational structure to foster grassroots leadership.

The Neighborhood Leadership Institute was incorporated in 2001. In the next years, the NCA underwent changes and decided to end their sponsorship of any programs not directly connected to one of their member settlement houses. Some of their programs were transferred to the Institute, which opened for business in January 2003, with Mr. Slocum as its executive director.

Since that time, the Institute has grown. It operates afterschool and summer SNR sites, and graduated leaders from 29 classes of Neighborhood Leadership Cleveland, plus numerous neighborhood and special-focus sessions.

"The CTU needs parents as partners, as we work together to improve education for all CMSD students," President Quolke added. "Programs like these are important to empower parents, and help them use the substantial power they have to advocate for the things their kids and communities need."

To learn more about the Institute, or the programs it offers, go to their website neighborhoodleadership.org, and encourage parents in your school to become more effective leaders through these programs.



Measles Is Back!!!

AFT Urges Vaccinations for Children

The AFT joined the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), state and local leaders, and public health care advocates last month in calling for parents to vaccinate themselves and their children amid a new outbreak of measles earlier this year.

“We need to keep our kids, our families, and our communities safe,” said AFT President Randi Weingarten. “That means staying current with childhood immunizations according to CDC recommendations.”

As part of its efforts to keep the public safe, the AFT has issued “Stopping Measles in its Tracks,” a fact sheet about the current outbreak and the importance of vaccinations.

“Our hands are tied,” said Patricia Forrai-Gunter, a school nurse and CTU Executive Board member. “We cannot provide adequate healthcare to our students and keep the school environment healthy when families decide not to get their kids vaccinated. What we need more than anything else is support from state and local leaders to make sure families are educated about the importance of immunizations for their children, our school systems and communities nationwide.”

“As frontline healthcare providers, we play an important role in maintaining the health and safety of our community,” said Stephen Rooney, National Federation of Nurses president and an AFT vice-president. “We believe that vaccinations are an essential weapon in deterring the spread of communicable diseases. With so much at stake for the health of our country, we strongly urge parents and families to keep their kids’ vaccinations up to date.”

Vaccines and Autism: No Link Exists!

In the 1990s, autism diagnoses in young children were increasing. Parents and some medical professionals began to raise concerns about pediatric vaccinations, and specifically about thimerosal, a preservative in some childhood vaccinations. The link between preservatives, vaccinations, and autism can be traced to a 1998 study published by a British scientist. However, the study was later proven to be erroneous, unscientific, and fraudulent, and the doctor subsequently lost his medical license. In fact, his study is now being called “the most dangerous

Measles is not a benign disease.

Of the [recent] cases in California, one in four sickened have had to be hospitalized.

I’d say that a disease that causes one in four of the people who get it to require hospitalization is not a “benign” disease. We don’t hospitalize people lightly these days anymore, given how insurance companies, HMOs, and other entities have been trying to crack down on cost and medicine has moved to treating as many cases as possible without hospitalization. Yet one in four measles victims in this outbreak required hospitalization.

Far from always having been viewed as a benign childhood disease that most children get and recover from without incident, . . . measles was actually feared as a scourge in the 1800s, and even into the 1900s physicians recognized that it could cause serious complications. Even today, with all the modern medical care and supposed fantastic nutrition children in the U.S. now enjoy, it can cause one quarter of those who contract it to need hospitalization.

Thanks to the antivaccine movement, I fear we will be forced to learn old lessons again.

— Dr. David Gorski, surgeon and scientist, on Orac

ous medical hoax in 100 years.”

Unfortunately, the damage was done, and the belief in the vaccine-autism link still exists. Based on this fraudulent data, some parents do not vaccinate their children, putting their and others’ children at risk for serious, debilitating, even life-threatening diseases.

Further, due to concerns about thimerosal, it was removed in 2001 from every vaccine except one, a type of influenza vaccine. Today there are thimerosal-free alternatives that can be chosen instead of that influenza vaccine.

And notably, even after thimerosal was removed from childhood vaccines, incidences of autism have continued to increase, making this dubious causal claim between the two even more questionable.

CMSD, CTU Nurses and Vaccinations

CMSD school nurses are responsible for tracking the immunization rates at their schools. This entails: assessing students’ immunization records to ensure that they meet all requirements for the grade level and for correct spacing of doses; documenting the immunization records of any student new to the district; and updating shot records when students receive booster shots. Every October, the nurses are required to submit an immunization

report to the Ohio Department of Health (ODH).

ODH conducts random audits of schools and districts around the state to ensure that students are being correctly immunized and records are being kept.

parents are requested to submit an immunization record when enrolling their children, these records don’t always make it to the nurses’ desks. Nurses often spent time during the early fall trying to get a copy of the shot record from parents.

Ohio’s state immunization registry, Impactsiis, has helped nurses locate many missing immunization records online. Ohio law does allow for exemption from receiving immunizations for religious, medical, and personal reasons, with a written statement from parents for religious or personal reasons, and a statement from a medical professional in case of a medical exemption. In CMSD, the rate at which parents choose exemption is very low, so most CMSD students have been immunized in accordance with Ohio law.

The current spread of measles has highlighted the dangers that not vaccinating students can cause. “We have tried to fix this problem for years by excluding children that weren’t in compliance,” said Ms. Forrai-Gunter, “but really our hands are tied by legislation.” She sympathizes with parents of children who for serious medical reasons cannot be vaccinated: they are counting on the healthy children around them to be vaccinated.

Dawn Delmoro, a school nurse in another Ohio district, concurred. “Until Ohio law changes or unfortunately, a serious outbreak occurs in a school district, we must allow unvaccinated children into school. In Ohio, a superintendent cannot override Ohio

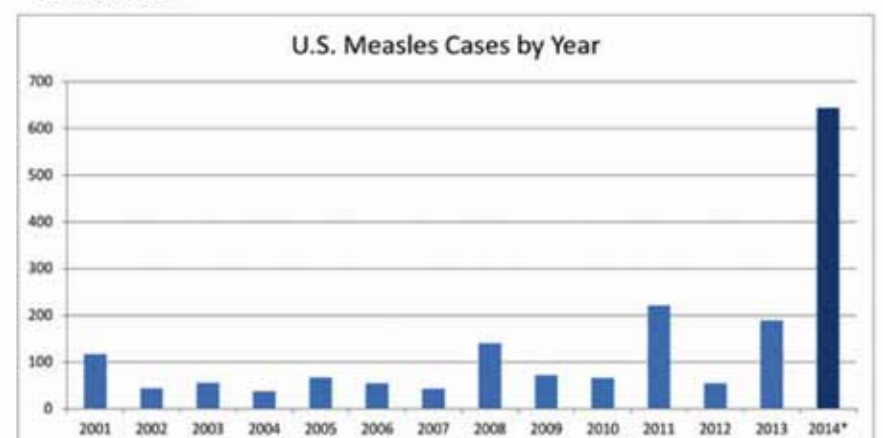
Ohio’s eSchoolPlus system has greatly improved the nurses’ ability to track immunizations. The records used to be handwritten on health cards which had to be sent between schools when students transferred from one to another. While

Measles Cases and Outbreaks During 2014*

644
Cases
23
Outbreaks

reported in 27 states: Alabama, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin

representing 89% of reported cases this year



*Provisional data reported to CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases





Law, unless it is a private school that does not receive state funding. Please support school nurses, as this issue is addressed with Ohio's lawmakers every year by us during Nurse's Day in Columbus."

An Excerpt from AFT's *Stopping Measles in its Tracks*

The AFT supports public health efforts to keep children and communities safe. A new measles outbreak is a stark reminder that childhood immunizations are essential to spare children from serious infectious diseases.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state health departments have issued a health advisory for the multistate outbreak of measles associated with travel to Disneyland in California. Educators and school staff can play an important role in stopping this outbreak if it spreads to their communities.

See more at: <http://www.aft.org/health-safety-all/linking-childrens-health-education/stopping-measles-its-tracks#sthash.SuyD6LuE.dpuf>

What does it mean to have the measles?

- Measles is a highly contagious acute viral respiratory illness. It is characterized by fever (with temperatures as high as 105 degrees Fahrenheit) and malaise, cough, runny nose and conjunctivitis (pink eye), followed by a rash.
- The rash usually appears about 14 days after a person is exposed; however, the incubation period ranges from seven to 21 days.
- The rash spreads from the head to the trunk to the lower extremities.
- Infected people are contagious from four days before their rash starts through four days afterward.
- Measles can cause severe health complications, including pneumonia, encephalitis and death.
- Measles is transmitted by contact with an infected person through coughing and sneezing.
- After an infected person leaves a location, the virus remains viable for

up to two hours on surfaces and in the air.

Should we be worried?

A measles outbreak started in California in December 2014. Fifty-one total cases have been reported to the CDC, with an eastward-moving spread from Disneyland to six states and Mexico, including Utah (three cases), Washington (two), Oregon (one), Colorado (one), Nebraska (one) and Arizona (one). In 2014, cases related to different sources were reported in 22 other states.

This disease was declared eliminated from the United States in 2000 because Americans achieved incredibly high immunity by adhering to recommendations to get the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine. However, it is still common in other countries. The virus is highly contagious and can spread rapidly in areas where people are not vaccinated. The number of cases and outbreaks identified in 2014 is much higher than in recent previous years.

Tax Information

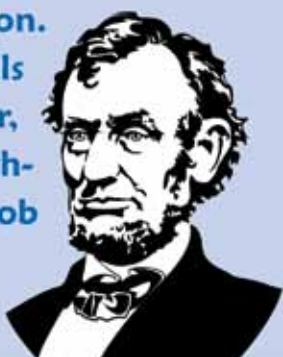
In case you have not filed your 2014 taxes yet, here are the numbers you will need for union dues totals for 2014. Thank you to Michael Kulcsar, CTU Treasurer, for providing these figures for CTU members.

These figures should match any bargaining unit member's year-to-date total under "ctu-sal" on their CMSD check stub dated December 19, 2014, providing they worked from January to June and August through December of 2014.

Full-Time Certified (Teachers)	\$839.60
Contract or Hourly Employees	\$650.44
Part-Time Professional Employees	\$524.56
Instructional Aides	\$662.24
Attendance Specialists	\$603.84
Educational Aides, Instructional Assistants, Community Aides . .	\$518.76
Day Care Technicians	\$540.16
Certified Substitutes (teachers)	\$3.28 per day
Classified Substitutes (paraprofessionals)	\$2.15 per day

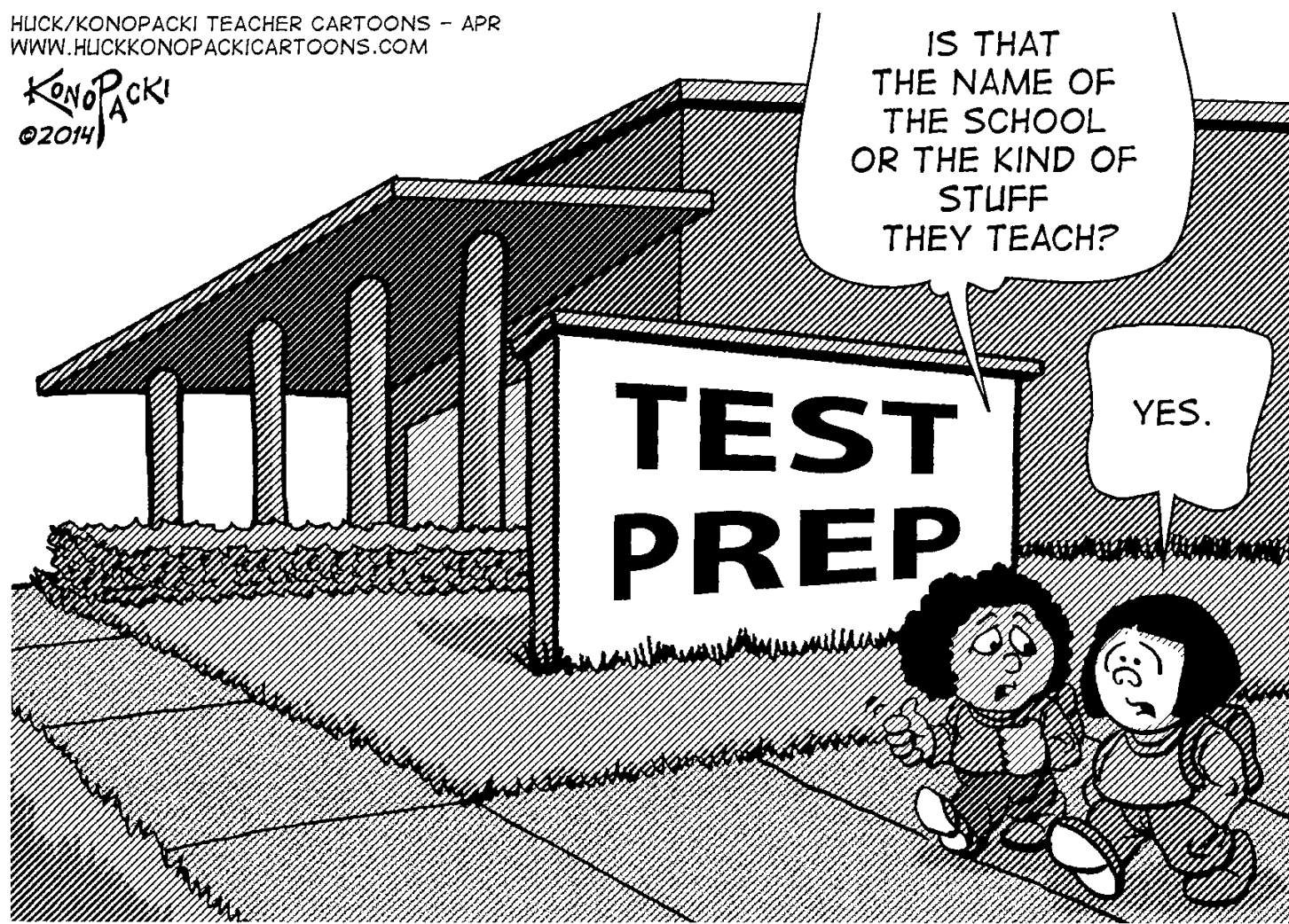
"All that serves labor serves the nation. All that harms is treason. If a man tells you he trusts America, yet fears labor, he is a fool. There is no America without labor, and to fleece the one is to rob the other."

— Abraham Lincoln



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CTU Income Tax Service

The CTU provides a free or nominal cost income tax preparation service for its members from February through early April. The 40-minute appointments are made through the CTU office. Filing the 1040A short form or the 1040 long form with Schedule A deductions is free. There is a charge for preparing the following forms: Schedule C (business), Schedule D (capital gains), Schedule E (rental property), Form 2106 (auto expenses), depreciation, and other detailed forms.

This popular service is provided annually for CTU members. The tax preparation service is coordinated by the Trustees: Andrea Dockery-Murray, Trustee Chairperson and Tax Service Coordinator; Mark Baumgartner, Trustee-at-Large; Dorothy Fair, Trustee, Senior/Special; Bonnie Hedges, Trustee, K-8; and James Wagner, Trustee, K-8.

Sen. Sherrod Brown Introduces Federal Bills on Testing, Achievement Gap

Seeking to improve public education, Ohio's Senator Sherrod Brown recently introduced the SMART Act to streamline and improve testing practices, and the CORE Act to bridge the student achievement gap.

In advance of Senate consideration of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Sen. Brown cosponsored the **Support Making Assessments Reliable and Timely (SMART) Act**, which would help states ensure statewide and local assessments are reliable and timely, while eliminating outdated or duplicative tests.

In a continued effort to address inequities that undermine learning and to help students bridge the achievement gap, Brown introduced the **Core Opportunity Resources for Equity and Excellence (CORE) Act**. The CORE Act would tackle existing disparities in public education by establishing accountability requirements that compel states and school districts to **give all students equitable access to the core resources necessary to achieve college and career readiness by high school graduation**.

"Annual testing can be a useful yard stick to measure student achievement," Sen. Brown said. "But too often our students are inundated with duplicative tests. Excessive testing discourages learning and impedes instruction. That's why the SMART Act is so important. By aligning tests so that instruction is not interrupted, teachers will remain accountable and parents can rest assured that their children are not undergoing duplicative testing."

The SMART Act

The SMART Act, introduced by U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR), is aimed at improving mandatory state assessments to ensure they are efficiently and accurately measuring students' progress and teacher effectiveness.

Specifically, the legislation would update an existing grant formula to assist states and local education agencies in aligning testing materials to college- and career-ready standards. The funding can also be used to speed delivery of test data to educators and parents, providing more time for educators to design instruction based on test results. Additionally, states can undertake audits of existing practices to eliminate unnecessary assessments, design more effective systems, and amplify effectiveness of remaining exams to support educators.

"We are pleased to see that Senator Brown is introducing legislation that will bring common sense to testing," said Melissa Cropper, President of the Ohio Federation of Teachers. "Our students and teachers are overwhelmed by testing. What we need are assessments that inform but allow teachers to teach and students to learn. Senator Brown's bill is an excellent starting point."

In addition to the Ohio Education Association and the Ohio Federation of Teachers, the bill has broad support, including endorsements from the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the Education Trust, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights (LCCR), the Center for American Progress, the National Center for Learning Disabilities, and the National Council of La Raza.

The CORE Act

In a continued effort to address inequities that undermine learning and to help students bridge the achievement gap, Senators Brown and Jack Reed (D-RI) introduced the CORE Act.

"The quality of our children's education shouldn't be determined by their zip code," said Sen. Brown. "But too



many teachers and schools lack the resources to ensure students can grow and succeed. That's why this bill is so important — not just to close the achievement gap but also to raise the bar for all of America's students. The CORE Act would ensure every child receives the opportunities they deserve by improving access to prepared teachers, better curricula, and ultimately, the chance students need to grow and succeed."

In March 2014, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights published data from a comprehensive survey of schools across the nation, which illustrated the magnitude of the educational opportunity gaps that exist for students in the United States. The survey found that Black, Latino, American Indian, and Native Alaskan students, as well as students who are English learners, attend schools with higher concentrations of inexperienced teachers. The survey also found that nationwide, one in five high schools lacks a school counselor, and between 10% and 25% of high schools do not offer more than one of the core courses in high school math and science, such as Algebra I and II, geometry, biology, and chemistry.

The CORE Act has been supported by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education; the American Federation of Teachers; the American Library Association; the National Education Association; Opportunity Action; the First Focus Campaign for Children; the League of United Latin American Citizens; and the Coalition for Community Schools, among others.

The bill will establish accountability standards for states and school districts, requiring that they provide fair and equitable access to the core resources for learning. These resources include: high quality instructional teams, including licensed and profession-ready teachers, principals, school librarians, counselors, and edu-

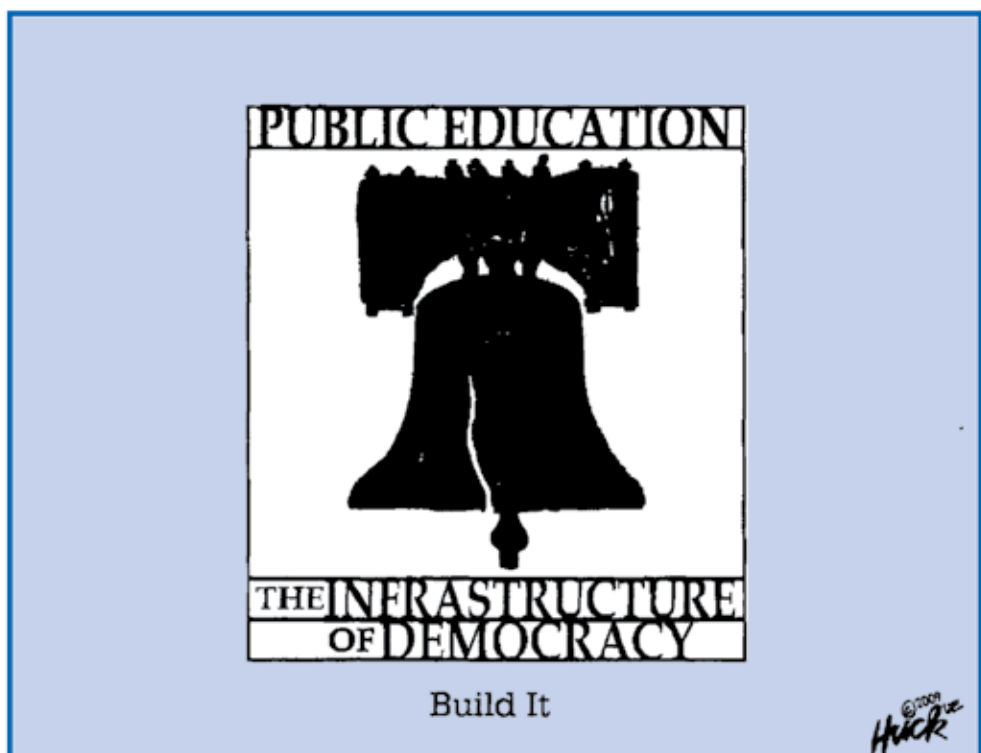
cation support staff; rigorous academic standards and curricula that lead to college and career readiness by high school graduation, and are accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners; equitable and instructionally appropriate class sizes; up-to-date instructional materials, technology, and supplies; effective school library programs; school facilities and technology, including physically and environmentally sound buildings and well-equipped instructional support teams, such as counselors, social workers, nurses, and other qualified professionals; and effective family and community engagement programs.

Under the CORE Act, state accountability systems would be required to include measures of fair and equitable access to the core resources for learning, as well as a plan for identifying and addressing any inequities in access to them. Information about access to these resources would also be reflected on state and district report cards.

States that fail to make progress in eliminating disparities for two or more consecutive years would be ineligible to participate in competitive grant programs authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. For school districts identified for improvement, the state would have to identify gaps in access to the core resources for learning and develop an action plan in partnership with the local school district to address those gaps.

Senators Reed and Brown previously introduced the CORE Act in June 2014 during the 113th Congress. A companion to the legislation will once again be introduced in the House of Representatives by Representative Marcia Fudge (D-OH).

(Source: Ohio Federation of Teachers website, oh.aft.org)



When we talk about negotiations, we have a lot of tough issues and constraints, and we need to face reality. But we also have a lot of power, if we use it wisely.

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY DAVID J. QUOLKE

With Us, Not To Us: Version 2.0

■ continued from page 20

straints, and we need to face reality. But we also have a lot of power, if we use it wisely.

Some factors seem to be moving in our favor. The high-stakes testing mania isn't going away immediately, but as the recent challenges to PARCC

We must educate the community about why conditions that are good for teaching are also good for learning.

show, parents and the community are beginning to see its limitations and the harm it is causing. Teachers in other districts across the state are experiencing issues with OTES, the state evaluation system, and are speaking out. It's not only Cleveland — Ohioans (and people across the country) are finally becoming aware of the flaws with using one-shot test results to make complex, high-stakes decisions about students, teachers, and

schools. Unfortunately, we have to wait for lawmakers to catch up.

Regarding education "reform," it's becoming more obvious and understood that genuine reform is a true collaborative, not a top-down initiative.



August 2009: President David Quolke called for collaboration between CMSD and the CTU in school reform efforts at the Opening Convocation at the Q in August. "With Us, Not To Us!"



With us, not to us. Teachers must buy in and be a part of these efforts. Their voices and expertise are valuable, and must be recognized. Read any recent publication, and you see another story about the once-touted amazing results of a so-called education reform "expert" who went into a school and raised hell and performed educational miracles **being debunked**. Either they tampered with tests, faked results, or the miracle is short-lived and not sustainable. No matter what the snake oil salespeople (consultants) try to sell, authentic reform and sustained improvement don't happen and can't happen without the teachers who actually teach the kids.

As always, one of our strongest allies must be the community. We need them to be our partners as we work to reform and improve our schools. We must educate the community about why conditions that are good for teaching are also good for learning. It's true, a teacher's working conditions are the students' learning conditions; if one is miserable, so will the other be.

We must push for true teacher development, so every teacher can continuously improve their craft, and all students benefit. Punitive use of evaluations diminishes and devalues the entire process.

We must support programs that assist and strengthen our students' parents and families. Our students are the winners when their families are stronger.

We must demonstrate to the community that we are the glue that has held the District together during decades of turmoil and constant changes. CTU members are the stability and continuity in Cleveland's school communities. Community support can turn the tide in negotiations. A fair contract that provides and protects good teaching/learning conditions benefits students, educators, and the community.

We will need solidarity as a Union, and with the community, as we prepare for and engage in the upcoming negotiations. These contract negotia-

They say victory is the child of preparation and determination. Let's be determined and prepared. And save your money.



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tions will be on display for the community, for the state, and for the nation. Our contract will expire just weeks before the Republican National Convention comes to Cleveland, and only a few months before the renewal of the CMSD operating levy.

Let me say again, these negotiations will be brutal. They say victory is the child of preparation and determination. Let's be determined and prepared. And save your money.



THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY DAVID J. QUOLKE

With Us, Not To Us: Version 2.0

Several years ago, in the second year of my first term as CTU President, we were in the middle of a battle with then-CEO Eugene Sanders about negotiations, specifically, their refusal to meet with CTU for 14 months before the contract expired. We were also dealing with the revolving door of high-level CMSD administrators, the Boston Consulting Group's report and "recommendations" for the District, what was happening in CMSD's "Turn-Around Schools," and the ongoing unwillingness of the powers-that-be to involve the CTU meaningfully in any reform efforts.

As some of you remember, at that time the entire CMSD staff and administration gathered at Quicken Loans Arena on one of the opening-of-the-school-year professional days for the CEO's "pep rally," and I was one of the speakers. When we entered the Q that morning, our Union officers had distributed to thousands of CTU members in attendance blue T-shirts with the AFT slogan "With Us, Not to Us."

Initially, I was nervous on that stage. But when I looked out at the crowd, all I saw was a sea of blue shirts: a sea of unity, solidarity and support. When it was my turn to speak, as I approached the podium, thousands of CTU members quietly, in unison and with no signal, stood up and remained standing during my entire speech. It was one of the most moving, compelling displays of solidarity and union strength that I have been privileged to witness.

The CTU's silent but commanding demonstration of power was palpable and formidable; I still remember it like it was yesterday. That impressive show of solidarity was visible to me and to all CTU members. Importantly, it was also very clear to CMSD's administrators, negotiators, Board members, and the community

leaders who were there.

Why am I telling this story? Because we are going to need that level of solidarity and strength of purpose in the coming months as we prepare for and enter negotiations.

The current CMSD/CTU Collective Bargaining Agreement expires on June 30, 2016. Negotiations will commence next school year, to give us enough time to negotiate a fair contract, reach a tentative settlement, and allow members to vote on it.

These negotiations will be brutal.

Let me repeat: These negotiations will be brutal. Our message for these negotiations is "With Us, Not to Us..." version 2.0.

What are we dealing with as we

These negotiations will be brutal. Let me repeat: These negotiations will be brutal.

prepare for negotiations? Many issues are all tied together: grievances, TDES, Differentiated Compensation, job security, working conditions.

The Grievance Team has handled about 600 grievances so far this school year, an unbelievably high number. But the number isn't high because our members are filing frivolous grievances — far from it. The grievances are warranted.

An overwhelming number deal with Differentiated Compensation or evaluation issues, which are often related. We continue to battle with the District to iron out issues related to the DiffComp System fairly and in a

more timely fashion, and to move the decision-making along.

The evaluation process is another major area of contention. Some principals forget the "development" part of the Teacher Evaluation and Development System, and still try to use the process as a gotcha moment, or a reward system for their minions

[I know I need a different word here!] and a punishment for anyone who challenges them. This bastardization of the evaluation and development process hinders the genuine evaluation of teaching skills and stymies valuable opportunities to develop an educator's expertise.

Many of the grievances get to the second and third levels simply because administration does not bother to answer



and fairness of the test and the testing process, and in some districts, large numbers of students are "opting out" of the test. Others are questioning the testing company, which stands to make billions of dollars on the PARCC contract, and some of its procedures. A few states are beginning to back off the standardized test/teacher evaluation connection, but that doesn't look promising in Ohio, based on our current political leadership. How teacher evaluation, compensation, job security and student achievement are related will be a major component of these negotiations, but must be done within the constraints of Ohio law as it currently stands.

The reality is that when we negotiate a contract that deals with these major issues, we must also work

This bastardization of the evaluation and development process hinders the genuine evaluation of teaching skills and stymies valuable opportunities to develop an educator's expertise.

them within contractual time limits, which can be construed as a snub to our — CMSD and CTU — contract. It demonstrates a lack of respect for CTU members on the part of some administrators.

Other problems with the concept of high-stakes testing being tied to teacher evaluations are surfacing, especially around the PARCC testing process. Parents are questioning the validity

within the constraints and parameters of HB 525, the Cleveland Plan. Except for our last Negotiations, no other CTU Negotiating Team in the past has had that situation. And based on the results of the November 2014 elections, nothing is changing in Columbus in the next several years.

When we talk about negotiations, we have a lot of tough issues and con-

■ continued on page 19

The reality is that when we negotiate a contract that deals with these major issues, we must also work within the constraints and parameters of HB 525, the Cleveland Plan. Except for our last Negotiations, no other CTU Negotiating Team in the past has had that situation. And based on the results of the November 2014 elections, nothing is changing in Columbus in the next few years.

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