



CTU Members to Vote on New Contract

CTU Negotiators Reach TENTATIVE AGREEMENT

Negotiators for the Cleveland Teachers Union and the Cleveland Metropolitan School District reached a tentative agreement on August 30, 2016, after a marathon 21-hour bargaining session that began on August 29. The agreement came just days before CTU members were set to strike at 6:00 p.m. Thursday, September 1, and after over a year of work by negotiators.

Through their chapter chairpersons, on both their personal and CMSD emails, all CTU members received electronic copies of the entire contract, pros and cons about voting on the agreement, and a synopsis of significant changes to the current contract which expired on July 1, 2016. Hard copies of the information were printed and sent to all members at their schools/worksites. Informational meetings for all members were held September 12-13, to explain the proposed contract and answer members' questions

All CTU members will have an opportunity to vote on the Tentative Agreement (TA) Monday, September 19 through Thursday, September 22, 2016. Voting will take place in all school buildings. Members who usually vote by mail were sent a voting

card that entitles them to vote at any CMSD school. Voting will also take place at the CTU Office in the Halle Building downtown.

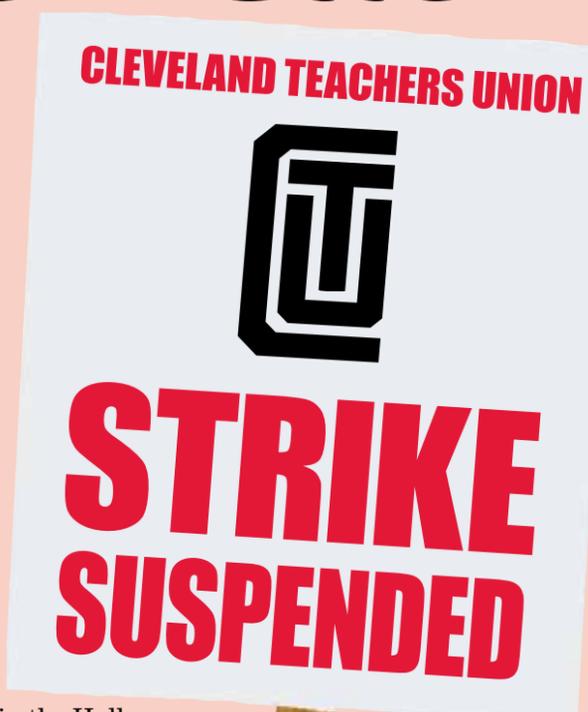
If a member has questions about voting, contact the CTU Nominations and Elections Committee at 216-861-7676 ext. 230.

'Fair for Educators, Good for Kids'

"This is a good agreement," said CTU President David Quolke. "We listened to the concerns

of our members and parents, and kept those concerns in the forefront during these negotiations. We used our collective bargaining rights to address CTU members' concerns, and address the needs of our students and parents. We want to make our schools

■ continued on page 2



Hundreds of CTU members and supporters rallied for a fair contract July 12 at City Hall. Despite the brutally hot weather, CTU members showed up to send a message to the District, the Mayor, and the community about treating educators with dignity and respect, and reaching a settlement that is fair for CTU members and good for the students they serve.



Hillary at Marshall

Hillary Clinton, AFT's endorsed Presidential candidate, visited John Marshall High School August 17. She toured the high school, then spoke about on tax fairness and investing in Ohio. She laid out the difference between Donald Trump's economic vision, that would benefit the wealthiest Americans like himself, and her vision, that would work for everyone, not just those at the top. Read more about the event on page 9.



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CTU Negotiators Reach

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and classrooms better, for students and teachers. This agreement is fair for educators and good for kids.”

Shari Obrenski, 3rd Vice President, Senior/Special, and Director of Negotiations, explained that this agreement is different than others negotiated in the past decade. “This year, there was not a deficit,” she said. “We didn’t have to make difficult concessions to keep class sizes at reasonable levels, or to preserve preschool classes, busing, sports — things that are important

We showed the District and the community that CTU members were willing to fight — and strike if necessary — for better schools, better learning conditions for students, and better working conditions for educators.

to students and families, and provide a strong, well-rounded educational program.”

This TA covers more Articles and Appendices than previous contracts. CTU negotiators tried to address many issues that were determined, through a series of surveys and conversations with CTU members, to be priorities.

The last contract, ratified in 2013, was the first time the CTU negotiated under the constraints of HB 525, known as the Cleveland Plan. “This TA shows the power of collective bargaining to help make a system better,” said President Quolke.

The members of the CTU Negotiating Team acknowledged that the support and action of the CTU membership was a critical factor in getting the District to the table and in reaching this agreement. The presence of CTU members at rallies, Board meetings, and community events was significant. It showed the District and the community that CTU members were willing to fight — and strike if necessary — for better schools, better learning conditions for students, and better working conditions for educators.

Re-Opener Necessary

The duration for much of this TA is three years, until 2019. However, some areas must be re-negotiated beginning in February 2017. These in-

clude: wages; health care; some specific clauses identified in the TA; and up to two additional articles each, chosen by the CTU and CMSD respectively.

The reason for the re-opener is the November levy. CMSD cannot certify the financial aspects of a contract until they know anticipated income, which is contingent on the school renewal levy. According to the Levy Committee, levy revenues provide about 20% of CMSD’s current operating budget. CMSD will suffer a huge loss in revenue and devastating cutbacks if the levy is not renewed.

Highlights of the Tentative Agreement

All bargaining unit members (teachers, paraprofessionals, related service providers, and all substitutes) will receive a 2% raise this school year. There will be no changes to the current health care plans.

The assignment and use of the additional 200 minutes was a contentious issue in many schools. Under the TA, 100 minutes — up from 50 minutes — will be teacher-directed, and cannot be assigned by an administrator. TBT, faculty meetings, and all other meetings must be part of the administrator’s 100 minutes.

The Cleveland Differentiated Compensation System (a Cleveland Plan mandate) will be restructured for licensed/certificated staff, and will

not be dependent on ACs. Teachers earning Effectiveness Ratings of Developed, Skilled, or Accomplished will automatically move up on the salary schedule every two years. Each year a teacher earns an Accomplished Rating, they will receive a \$4,000 stipend.

The Teacher Development and Evaluation System (another Cleveland Plan mandate) was a major issue, based on CTU member input on surveys. The guidelines will be adjusted under the proposed contract, lessening the pressure for evaluations. An appeal process for SLOs will be established.

RSPs will be exempt from student growth measures, will have three TDES events, and can receive a rating of Accomplished. Encore teachers must be scheduled for a minimum number of classes in order for student growth measures to apply.

Art, music, physical education, and media are preserved in all schools. Teachers cannot be assigned to classes or assignments for which they are not certified or licensed to teach.

Paraprofessionals who substitute for other paras will be paid for their additional work. Paras will be able to submit grade and subject preference sheets. All paras will be entitled to two breaks, 15 and 10 minutes.

The Paraprofessional Career Ladder Teacher Track VI will help pa-

THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN



THUMBS UP to all CTU members who participated in CTU’s spring and summer events to “encourage” CMSD negotiators to go back to the bargaining table, and negotiate a fair contract. CTU works for its members, students, families, and the community. Your solidarity and strength helped make a difference.



THUMBS UP to the CTU negotiating team for the many hours and days they spent to get to the tentative agreement. Negotiating with CMSD’s team, while under the mandates of the Cleveland Plan, was certainly a challenging task. The proposed agreement is fair for educators and good for students. The Executive Board unanimously recommended ratification.



THUMBS UP to the other CTU officers who were not on the negotiating team, who “held the fort” in the meantime at the CTU office, took on extra duties for the negotiating team members, and handled the questions and concerns of the members.



THUMBS DOWN to Mylan, the maker of Epi-Pens, and other big pharma guilty of predatory drug pricing. Their

actions have prompted five states (not Ohio) to introduce some type of drug price transparency legislation. Unsurprisingly, the drug companies have come out against these measures, arguing that it could lead to drug shortages. While companies deserve to make a profit, they should not be allowed to take advantage of people who are ill, and reap unfathomable profits on the backs of desperate people.



THUMBS UP to the ten Innovation Fund teachers who recently wrote unit lessons in math. Their lessons will be available on the AFT’s Share My Lesson website. Kudos to these teachers: Endora Kight, Jon Ollie, Kelly Hrabak, Laura Kraker, Mohana Aravamudham, Nicole James-Jones, Parthenia Croskey, Sahar Shouman, Singaram Murugappan, and Tamera Zelwin.



THUMBS UP to the active and retired CTU members who have been volunteering at the CTU phone bank, labor walks, and other Election 2016 activities. COPE Chairperson Kurt Richards needs every CTU member to give some time to this crucial election effort. Help support candidates who will support public education, teachers, and labor. **Elections have consequences.**



THUMBS DOWN to the unbearably hot conditions staff and students had to deal with in many Cleveland schools during the recent heat wave. Thankfully, finally, the District did close some schools without air conditioning. The safety of students and staff must always come first.

ON NEW CONTRACT

h Tentative Agreement

CMSD cannot certify the financial aspects of a contract until they know anticipated income, which is contingent on the school renewal levy.

paras pay for completion of a degree or license in education.
Nurses will be paid a prorated daily rate for assignments outside their school day. At CAP schools, activities or events beyond the school day will be paid at the prorated daily rate.

This TA will add stipends for National Board Certification and Step Up to Quality, and raise the testing coordinator stipend to \$3,500. In addition, a classroom resource fund will be established, to reimburse certificated/licensed members and PCIA's up to \$280 annually for instructional and work-related materials.

Classroom integrity was another major topic. Under this TA, there will be new guidelines for all visitors, including District employees and community members, to limit invasive and disruptive classroom visits.

The TA contains other provisions that impact student well-being. They include: a commitment to reducing

testing; a technology survey; vermin eradication; a parent survey for elective options; painting and repair priorities for schools. Four high school libraries will be reopened.

Current reporting practices will remain in effect. This means CTU members, including teachers, paras and RSPs, will not be required to sign in or out daily using the new Workday system. Also, intermittent leave will no longer be subject to the work hour restrictions of the Family Medical Leave Act.

Other Aspects of the TA

“Negotiations is not like a buffet table,” President Quolke and Negotiations Director Obrenski reminded CTU members. “One side doesn’t get to pick everything they want until their plate overflows. Both sides are talking, both sides have issues they want, because each side believes their views will make schools better.” Negotiations is a process, with each side trying to obtain the best that it can.

The TA is only a one-year contract for wages, health care, and other identified parts, plus up to four additional articles. Paraprofessional salary schedule is in the reopener.

The 200-minutes clause remains,



and administrators can assign 100 minutes. Encore splits were not positively eliminated, and there is no definite increase in elective offerings.

Teachers will still have five TDES events, and Student Growth Measures criteria remain. The college coursework ACs issue from the last contract was not resolved.

The attendance stipend was eliminated. CTU members will have to verify compensation every two weeks through the Workday system (beginning later this school year).

There is no guaranteed reduction in testing in the 2016-2017 school year.

HB 525 AKA The Cleveland Plan

Some aspects of the contract are mandated by the Cleveland Plan, which is part of state law, and cannot be eliminated by negotiations or even a strike. However, the CTU negotiators tried to mitigate some of the mandates, to provide better teaching conditions and learning environments.

“We tried to make respect for what we do every day as educators part of this agreement,” said Ms. Obrenski. “That includes making respect for classroom learning a priority; less

testing and more teaching and learning; and making evaluations for all members fairer.”

Kurt Richards, 2nd Vice President, COPE (Committee on Political Education) Chairperson, and a member of the Negotiating Team, reminded CTU members how important elections are. “We are negotiating under the mandates of HB 525, and living under the ‘Cleveland Plan,’ an amendment to the original mayoral control law. This amendment — the Cleveland Plan — was passed by the current political leadership in Columbus, and signed into law by Governor John Kasich. We can’t pretend that elections don’t matter, or that we don’t have to be involved in politics. We must be politically active, and vote for elected leaders who are friends of public education, workers, and organized labor.

“From SB 5/Issue 2 up to the Cleveland Plan, we are dealing with the consequences of elections. Thankfully, we still have our collective bargaining rights, to negotiate for better teaching and learning conditions. I expect to see all CTU members in the next weeks, working to elect our endorsed candidates, at the phone bank, labor walks, and other activities. Elections have consequences.”

We tried to make respect for what we do every day as educators part of this agreement.

– Shari Obrenski



Executive Board Recommends YES Vote

The CTU Executive Board met August 31 to discuss the TA and voted unanimously to recommend approval. They suggested that all members take the time to read through the TA to see the changes and additions to the current CBA, and read the pros and cons. They believe it will continue to make our schools better. It is fair for educators and good for kids.

The CTU Executive Board strongly urges CTU members to VOTE YES to ratify this tentative agreement.



It's ALWAYS IPDP Time!

Make sure that you always have an Approved IPDP (Individual Professional Development Plan) on file. When should you write a new IPDP? As soon as you have your newly-renewed license! Do not wait until it's time to renew your license. Remember, an approved IPDP is needed before taking any classes or earning CEUs.

An IPDP Help Guide is available on the CTU and CMSD websites. It is the same step-by-step guide the IPDP team uses when they go to schools to help write IPDPs.

If you have questions about the IPDP process, or need your username and/or password, please contact Jim Wagner (jwagner@ctu279.org), Bonnie Hedges (bhedges@ctu279.org), or Tracy Radich (tradich@ctu279.org).

All teachers, paraprofessionals, and RSPs must have a valid license, certificate, or permit on the first day of school. The license, certificate, or permit renewal process is part of your professional responsibilities. Be sure the classes you take will count toward your license renewal. Get a new IPDP approved as soon as you renew your license, every time.



OFT Airs ESSA TV Ad

Did you see OFT's TV ad about ESSA, the Every Student Succeeds Act? It starred real OFT teachers — Lisa Arraj from Cleveland, Dan Reinhart from Toledo, and Paulette Simpson from Cincinnati. ESSA is a new federal law that offers states the opportunity to redefine and improve education. The ad asked educators, parents and community members to work together to push Ohio's decision makers to make changes that genuinely benefit students, including a drastic change in the testing culture.

"A true education is much more than just what can be shown on a test score," said David Quolke, CTU President. "A true education makes sure children have access to a well-rounded curriculum and that they have the supports they need to be safe, healthy, and ready to learn."

Although testing is still required, how testing is used must be open for discussion. "OFT members — experienced educators in classrooms across Ohio — are partnering with parents and community members to raise our voices about the kinds of improvements that would benefit students . . . because the status quo is failing our children," said OFT President Melissa Cropper.

To view the ad in case you missed it, and to find out more, visit www.ESSAopportunity.org.

UNION NEWS

Have You Checked Clutter Lately?

Please check your CMSD email Clutter file regularly! When Outlook on the CMSD email system believes that emails being sent to your CMSD email address are not important, it automatically moves those emails to Clutter. Tracy Radich, CTU 1st Vice President, said she has had several important emails sent to Clutter. She recommends all CTU members get in the habit of checking Clutter on a regular basis, so you don't miss something you need.

Also, when you check Clutter or your inbox, be sure to look for the CMSD Curriculum Newsletter. It will be either in your regular email, or the Clutter file. The CMSD Curriculum Newsletter includes sign-up notices for upcoming Professional Development sessions, and details on how to sign up. SpringBoard training, Fusion training, and PE Standards training were all advertised in past CMSD Curriculum Newsletters. Professional Development news and other important information from the Curriculum Department is sent out regularly to your CMSD email. Check the Curriculum Newsletter to be sure you don't miss future PD opportunities.

CTU Text Alerts

Stay informed with the latest CTU news and updates! A text service is available for CTU members. You can sign up — right now — to receive mobile text message alerts from AFT and CTU. You will receive updates, notices, and reminders.

If you aren't already signed up, get your phone out now! Send a text message with the word `ctu279` (lowercase, no spaces) in your message box. Send it to the phone number 69238.

AFT-CTU will never charge you for text messages, but your carrier's message and data rates may apply.

CTU Workshops

Save These Dates!

Stay up-to-date and informed with information from two busy CTU Committees!

The Salary and Benefits Committee, under the direction of Chairperson Cindy Antonio and Assistant Chairperson Rita Leskovec, has three additional workshops planned for CTU members. Their committee provides workshops related to finances, health, and benefits topics. The Committee held its first event, a Back-to-School Fair, August 30.

The Civil, Democratic, and Human Rights (CDHR) Committee is led by Chairperson Stephanie Henderson and Assistant Chairperson R.J. Catledge-Smith. Along with their committee, they provide monthly workshops on a variety of timely topics related to education, civil rights, and related topics.

Check the CTU website regularly and your CTU mail, for details about these events and information on how to register, if attendance is limited.

2016-2017 Salary & Benefits

(All Salary & Benefits events are scheduled for the East Professional Center.)

October 18, 2016 – Health & Wellness Fair

January 24, 2017 – Money Management Workshop

April 25, 2017 – Stress Relief Workshop

2016-2017 CDHR Workshop Dates

October 12, 2016 **November 9, 2016** **December 14, 2016**

No January Workshop **February 8, 2017** **March 8, 2017**

April 12, 2017 **May 10, 2017**

Council for Exceptional Children Award

CMSD Teacher Named 2016 Intervention Specialist of the Year

Malena Roche, a dedicated CMSD Intervention Specialist, was honored for her hard work and devotion with students. In May, she accepted an award from The Council for Exceptional Children as 2016 Intervention Specialist of the Year.

Malena has been teaching for the past 18 years in the area of Special Education. She teaches students with disabilities in the Cross Categorical setting. Over the years, she has serviced a variety of grade levels. She is currently an Intervention Specialist at Louis Agassiz, where the nomination for this award originated.

Malena was nominated in January by a colleague, Rene Leutz, along with two student nominations. The students were not Malena's current students, but middle school students to whom she had provided support throughout the years.

When Malena read the students' nominations, she was moved by their focus on the social-emotional growth they acquired from their relationship with her. "I believe now more than ever that forming strong relation-



ships with students and colleagues is an important key to the learning process," said Malena.

She expressed that she could not have accepted, and cannot even discuss this opportunity, without acknowledging the tremendous support of her colleagues at Louis Agassiz.

Congratulations to Malena and her colleagues at Louis Agassiz, for the ongoing, positive difference that they make in the lives of CMSD students!

Grievances Are Now Online!

The CTU has updated its grievance forms, and grievances that go to the CTU will now be filed online. The email address for grievances only is grievances@ctu279.org.

"Filing grievances online will be faster, easier, and more efficient," explained Grievance Co-Director Mary Moore. "It also creates a paper trail and sets the timeline for all the parties involved," she added, making it a more secure method than faxing or sending through school mail.

The grievance forms for each step have also been updated, and instructions and timelines applicable to the various steps will now be printed on the grievance forms. The forms are available on the CTU website, and can be completed in the online format. Principal can also add their responses online.

As CTU members transition to the new procedure, the Grievance Team will also accept grievances on the old forms. Packets of the new forms have been sent to all chapter chairpersons, but in the meantime, CTU members can use the old paper forms. Even if they use the old grievance form, they are encouraged to scan and email it, once it is completed.

Initiation of Grievance forms must have the principal's response (or note that the principal did not respond within the allotted time), and any related documents. Include this with the completed Step II Appeal form. Lori Ward is Executive Director of Human Resources. Step II grievances are addressed to her at the top of the form, but sent to the CTU mailbox. Please scan and email them to grievances@ctu279.org, rather than sending through school mail. Again, this helps to establish a paper trail and timeline.

Grievance Team Summer Meetings

The members of the Grievance Team met regularly during the summer break, and reported that CMSD's Grievance Team was answering grievances in a more timely manner. All TDES appeals have been heard and decided. Seven TDES arbitrations, and outstanding grievances from the 2013-2014 school year, were settled. The last meeting regarding the Sign Language Interpreters arbitration was held July 25, and the Team was waiting for a decision at press time.

The coaches' payment arbitration was settled. Coaches who filed a grievance and asked for 10% should have been paid on July 1, 2016. If not, contact Jillian Ahrens or Mary Moore immediately at jahrens@ctu279.org or mmoore@ctu279.org.

There is another arbitration regarding 10% for late payments, as the CBA states.

This is a separate arbitration, and the Grievance Team is in the middle of settling these on a case-by-case basis, in ongoing meetings with the District.

The CTU Grievance Team

Who serves on the CTU Grievance Team? By CTU Constitution, the three 3rd Vice Presidents are automatically members of the Grievance Team. The CTU President selects the other members of the team from the Executive Board members.

The CTU Grievance Team members are: Co-Directors Jillian Ahrens and Mary Moore, 3rd Vice Presidents, K-8; Cherylane Jones-Williams, Paraprofessional Chapter Chairperson; Cheryl Neylon, Sergeant-at-Arms; Shari Obrenski, 3rd Vice President, Senior/Special; Kurt Richards, 2nd Vice President; and Jim Wagner, K-8 Trustee.

From the CBA: The Grievance Process

The grievance procedure is defined in the Collective Bargaining Agreement in Article 6, Problem Resolution, Grievance Procedure and Time Limits (pages 15-20 in the CBA). Both the Union and District recognize that "from time to time, problems relating to the application of the Agreement and/or the Administrative Code of the District to an individual employee or employees will arise. Many of these problems are resolved informally, by discussion, in accordance with the 'open door' policy followed by the District. A problem which cannot be resolved informally is called a grievance."

The CBA definition of a grievance is "any matter concerning the interpreta-

tion, application, or alleged violation of any currently effective Agreement between the District and the CTU, or which alleges any employee represented by the Union has been discharged or disciplined without just cause, or has been treated unfairly or in a discriminatory manner." The grievance process has four steps, with timelines attached to each step. If the matter is not settled satisfactorily at the first two steps, or if the agreed-upon remedy is not implemented in a timely fashion, or if the grievance is not answered by the District in the CBA's allotted time frame, the grievant can appeal to the next level.

Also, in the case of a grievance that impacts at least five bargaining unit members, the Union may file an appeal of the Step Two answer with the CEO, or may proceed directly to Step Four. Step Four in the process is regular arbitration.

If an answer to a grievance is not satisfactory, the Union can choose to submit the matter, within 75 days, to arbitration under the Voluntary Labor Arbitration Rules of the American Arbitration Association. A single arbitrator is chosen by both parties, and the expenses of the arbitrator, and costs of arbitration, are shared equally between the District and Union. The arbitrator, after hearing both sides and reviewing the evidence, renders a written decision that is final and binding on CMSD, CTU, and the affected employees.

Arbitration can be risky and expensive. It is not an automatic next step in the grievance process. The CTU Grievance Team and the CTU Executive Board ultimately decide to take specific cases to arbitration or not. The CTU Grievance Team carefully considers all arbitration requests.

Because arbitration is binding, the potential ramifications must always be considered.

The costs of losing an arbitration decision can be more than financial. A decision can impact — for better or worse — more members than the grievant. While the arbitrator is prohibited by law from making any decision or award that would add to, subtract from, or modify the CBA, neither side is guaranteed a win when a case goes to arbitration.

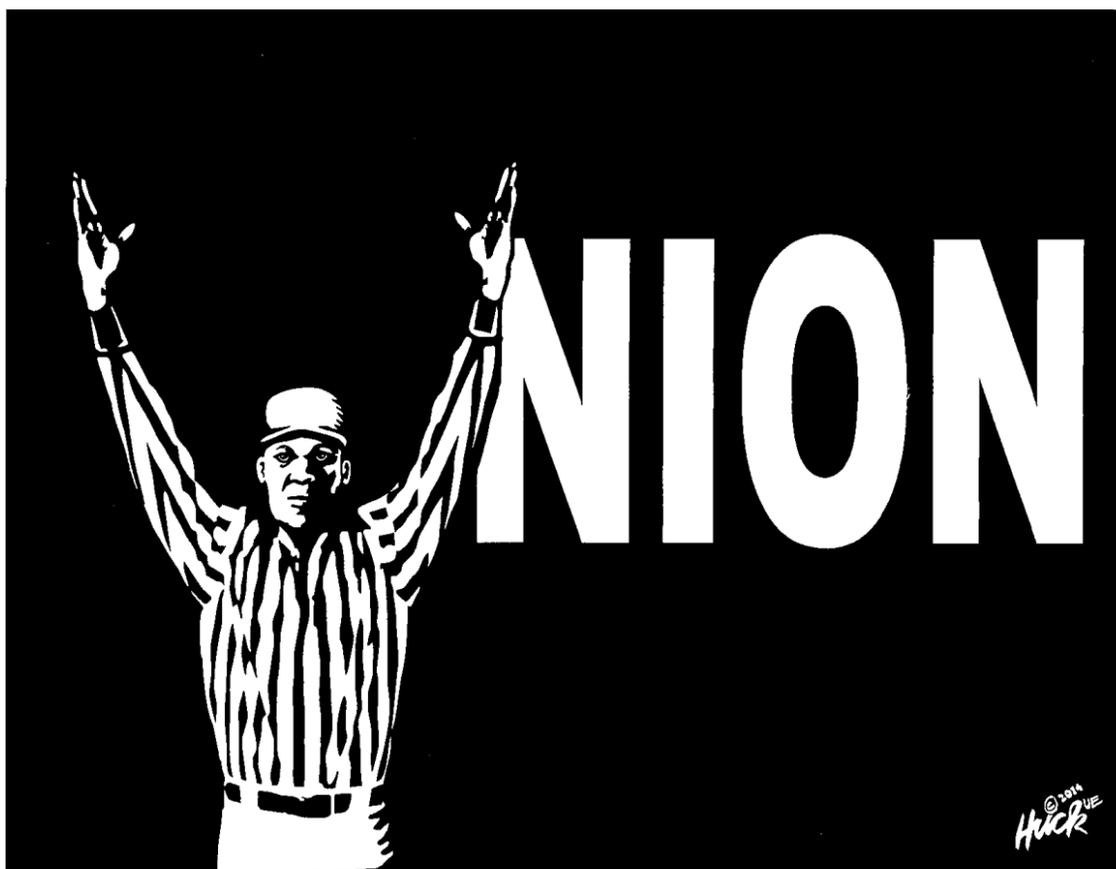
An agreement cannot cover every possible workplace scenario. Therefore, the CBA is a living document that is interpreted and defined as situations (grievances) arise. Arbitrations are expensive. And no matter the outcome, the arbitrator's decision becomes part of the CBA clarification or definition, and is binding on all parties.

Recognizing that some situations need to be resolved more quickly than others, the CBA provides for two types of arbitration, regular and expedited, and also for mediation. Regular arbitration is a longer process. In a non-class action situation (usually affecting five or fewer bargaining unit members), where the time frame is so short that normal arbitration would be untimely, the CTU can demand expedited arbitration. If a certain case warrants it, a class action grievance affecting a large number of members can be expedited by mutual agreement of CMSD and CTU.

If CTU declares an expedited arbitration, the Union and District make arrangements with the American Arbitration Association within 24 hours, and as soon as the AAA can schedule a hearing, it begins. The decision is to come within seven days of the hearing.

CMSD and CTU can also decide, by mutual agreement, to use the grievance mediation process to try to resolve a grievance before going to arbitration. The objective is to find a mutually satisfactory resolution to the problem. Unlike an arbitrator, the mediator does not have the power to compel a resolution. If no settlement of the issue is reached, the mediator can give an advisory opinion. The advisory decision does not constitute a precedent unless both parties agree. If no settlement is reached, the issue can then be taken to arbitration. However, the mediator's decision/opinion cannot be used or mentioned in the arbitration case.

It is highly recommended that all CTU members take the time to actually read the CBA, to become familiar with your rights as a member of the CTU.





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CTU Summer 2016



CTU members, along with their family members, friends, and other supporters, spent much of their summer break at rallies, community events, and other venues to spread the word that CTU wants a contract that is fair for educators and good for kids.

Annual Golf Outing

CTU & Custodians Union Raise \$10,000 for Scholarship Fund

The 8th Annual Charity Golf Outing, co-sponsored by the Cleveland Teachers Union Local #279 and Cleveland Custodians Union Local #777, raised just over \$10,000 for the Tri-C and CCU Scholarship Funds. The event was coordinated by Wendi Kral, CTU Membership Chairperson, Scott Artbauer of CCU, the CTU Membership Committee, and many volunteers. It was held May 21, 2016 at the Bob-O-Link Golf Course in Avon. Team Julius from Lincoln-West won the competition, but all participants enjoyed the day. The entry fee included 18 holes of golf with a cart, lunch and dinner, beverages, free giveaways and prizes, and a raffle.

"I was very pleased to reach our goal," said Ms. Kral. "This event keeps growing each year. And all money raised goes to a great cause, supporting CMSD graduates as they continue their education."

The event had many generous donors, including the financial companies AXA and NTA Life, and CTU attorney Susannah Muscovitz. Other sponsors included: Schwarzwald, McNair & Fusco, LLP; Cleveland Metropolitan School District; The Ohio Education Credit Union; ING; the Verdi group; Valic; Lakeside Supply; Cleveland State University; Pat Zohn; and Northwest Intergenerational School.

"Thank you to all the people who came out to golf, and to those who helped support the cause in a variety of ways," said Ms. Kral. "We hope to see everyone again next spring."

If you are interested in helping to plan or implement next year's outing, contact Wendi Kral at 216-861-7676 ext. 251.



CTU's Wendi Kral and CCU's Scott Artbauer (above) organized the Annual Charity Golf Outing, a popular event that supports scholarships for CMSD students.



Elections have



by Kurt Richards

2nd Vice President and Chairperson, Committee On Political Education

By now, every CTU member should understand the magnitude of elections.

In only the past five years, we worked to defeat Issue 2/Senate Bill 5, which would have destroyed collective bargaining rights for Ohio workers. We helped elect Barack Obama to his second term as President. We helped to pass the first school operating levy in Cleveland in 16 years. We worked with a few legislative friends to soften the original language in the original wording of the state law known as "The Cleveland Plan," even as we dealt with a Republican super-majority in both the Ohio House and Senate who passed it, and a Republican Governor who signed it into law.

We then began living our professional lives under the mandates of the Cleveland Plan, an Ohio law that limits what we can do as we collectively bargain with our employer, an Ohio law that affects **only Cleveland** educators. We recently reached a tentative agreement, our second one under the constraints of the Plan. We are living our professional lives as CTU members and CMSD educators with the consequences of recent elections.

This November, Americans will be electing a new President, and Ohioans will elect one of their U.S. Senators. We must work and vote to protect our interests as public educators. Our

careers, our families, our livelihoods, and our eventual retirement security depend on it. We must act and vote that way.

The CTU needs your help. It's frustrating to hear some members complain about a situation, but do nothing to work to change the lawmakers who created some of those conditions. We need the help of every CTU member in the November 2016 elections.

There are several ways you can help. The CTU phone bank is open and always looking for volunteers. There are several labor walks scheduled, where you can enjoy fresh air and exercise, and spread the word about our candidates and issues. Contact the CTU office or your Chapter Chair for more information on these activities. Plan to donate some time before November.

The COPE fund always needs donations. If you are not a regular payroll-deduction donor to COPE, ask your Chapter Chair or call the CTU office for a blue COPE payroll deduction card. It's an easy way to donate, and even a recurring donation of a few dollars helps. If you are already a COPE donor, consider raising your donation by a dollar or more for this election year.

CTU also needs every member — **that means you** — to be vocal in your home and community. Talk to your family members, friends, neighbors, people at your place of worship, the gym, your social groups, about why labor-friendly candidates help workers and the middle class, and why they deserve our support. These political discussions might be uncomfortable for those who aren't accustomed to having them, but the stakes are too high to be silent. It's time to step out of our comfort zones, and do everything we can to support candidates who will support us, labor, and public education. We've seen what can happen: elections have consequences.

And most important of all, **vote for our endorsed candidates this election!** We have lived under the consequences of elections in which our endorsed, labor-friendly candidates did not win. We need to work to make sure that doesn't happen in 2016.

For President

In the Presidential election, Hillary Clinton is our endorsed candidate. She has a lifetime of service to our nation, and is a Union-friendly supporter of public education.

Hillary Clinton has spent her entire career, both in the private and public sectors, working to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to climb the ladder of success. She has a proven record in leading the fight for high-quality healthcare, including proper staffing levels; for high-quality public education for all, starting with our youngest children; was an original co-sponsor of the Employee Free Choice Act that supports unions; defended public service workers who came to our nation's defense on September 11; and has a deep and long record on economic and social justice issues — from voting rights to im-

AFT Protests Epi-Pen Price Hike

CTU Nurse: Business Has Hijacked Healthcare

Pat Forrai-Gunter, R.N. and CTU Nurses Chapter Chair, represented the AFT Nurses and Health Professionals in New York City August 29. The AFT group was protesting at the offices of John Paulson, a Hedge Fund Manager and top Donald Trump donor, who has invested \$1 billion

in Mylan Pharmaceuticals.

Mylan is the maker of the Epi-Pen, an epinephrine auto-injector, for the emergency treatment of anaphylaxis (swelling and closing of the airways) caused

by a serious allergic reaction. Paulson's sizable investment in the company is believed to be one of the causes of the recent price gouging, in which Mylan raised the price of an Epi-Pen from about \$100 to over \$600.

"We were there to deliver signed petitions to his office, asking him to lower the price," said Ms. Forrai-Gunter. "I explained to the news reporters what it might be like when a child comes in to my office having an allergic reaction. I told them children won't have this life-saving medication, because it's not affordable! In fact, it's become so out-of-reach financially for some of the families I see, it's criminal."

She told about David Spanos, one of her school nurse colleagues, who has a student who is severely allergic to strawberries. The student has an Epi-Pen, but it expired two years ago. When Mr. Spanos brought this to the mother's attention, she said she can't afford to replace it. While they both agreed it was better than nothing, it continues to compromise the child's safety with a false sense of security.

"I don't think it's fair to the family or the nursing profession or the larger community, when families are robbed of their dignity to pay for a potentially life-saving medicine," said Ms. Forrai-Gunter. "By setting the price so high, a message is sent to children at a very early age that their lives are not valued in the business community. Only profit is valued."

She continued, "As school nurses, we are concerned that the business community has hijacked the healthcare community, holding our children's lives hostage." Ms. Forrai-Gunter and other school nurses urged everyone to "search their souls" for an answer to this problem.



Don't Shop Anti-Union Marc's

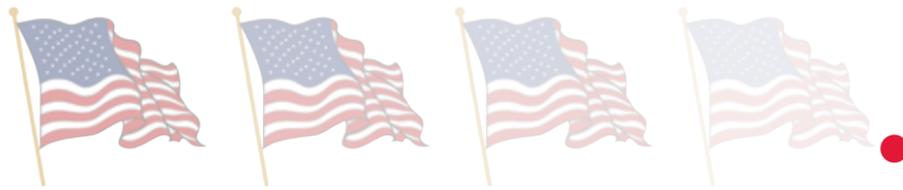
Together we stand, divided we fall!

UNION STRONG!!!

We at Local 880 are asking for you to assist in our efforts of **NOT** shopping at **ANTI-UNION MARC'S** and to help support Union workers in UFCW Local 880 by shopping at these stores...

For a complete list of Union Shops, contact us at UFCW@ufcwlocal880.com or (216) 241-5930.

consequences



migrant rights to women's rights to worker rights — earning a 100% AFT voting record during her time in the U.S. Senate.

Secretary Clinton spoke to AFT members at the convention this summer, pledging to help build an economy that produces good jobs and rising wages. She promised to work with educators, telling the AFT, "It's just dead wrong to make teachers the scapegoats for all of society's problems. Where I come from, teachers are the solution. And I strongly believe that

unions are part of the solution too."

Her opponent, Donald Trump, is grossly unqualified for the office of President. He has demonstrated a lack of self-control, good judgment and temperament, and has shown on numerous instances a lack of knowledge and preparation necessary for the office. He has made derogatory comments against women, minorities, disabled, immigrants, the military . . . the list goes on and on. Let's just focus on education for this article.

His education plan, released at a Cleveland charter school September 8, would make school choice mandatory in every state. He plans to "re-prioritize" \$20 billion — nearly a third of the federal spending on elementary and secondary education — to make universal vouchers available to parents.

Trump is an advocate for right-to-work laws that would outlaw fair share union membership, and cripple unions and collective bargaining rights. He also supports merit pay for teachers to help reform "failing" public

schools. If enacted, his education plan will cut millions of dollars in federal aid to Ohio schools, and result in the loss of thousands of teaching jobs across Ohio. Maybe yours.

Elections have consequences.

More than ever, the stakes this November are critically high. The CTU needs your help. Please give a little of your time before November 8 to support your Union-endorsed candidates, and vote for those candidates this election. Your future depends on it.

Hillary Clinton Visits John Marshall HS

AFT-endorsed Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton visited John Marshall High School August 17. She first toured the new school, which opened last year. Then Kim Greytak, English teacher at Marshall, had the honor of introducing Secretary Clinton to the crowd in the packed gymnasium.

"Americans cannot afford Donald Trump," she said. "Hillary Clinton has been a strong supporter of public education and working people her whole career."

In her address, Secretary Clinton outlined some

key points of her economic plan, including taxing the wealthy and corporations that outsource or move overseas, and using that money to create more jobs and opportunities. Her plans include more preschool opportunities for young children, and more students involved in vocational training programs, such as technical education, computer coding, engineering, and design work.

A recent independent analysis by Moody's confirmed that her plan would create about ten million new jobs. "So what does that mean for Ohio?" asked Secretary Clinton. "If we divide by across the country, by population Ohio would gain 376,000 jobs under my plan, and lose 120,000 under Donald Trump's plan."

The AFT was the first national union to endorse Hillary Clinton in the 2016 primaries. At the AFT Convention in Minneapolis this summer, Secretary Clinton vowed to lift the status of educators through career-long professional development, higher salaries for teachers and PSRPs, and relief from staggering student debt — a refreshing departure at a time when too many educators are ignored and underpaid.

And, the Democratic candidate insisted, these efforts must involve

unions. "If we are serious about supporting educators, we need to support unions." Those seeking to privatize public education, to impose vouchers, and to launch reckless charter school efforts can expect to find an enemy in the White House under any Hillary Clinton administration, she said. "I want to say right from the outset that I'm with you. When I'm President, you will have a partner in the White House, and you will always have a seat at the table."



Mayoral Control and the Cleveland Plan – How Did We Get Here?

In the 1990s, Cleveland Public Schools, as the District was called then, had been under state and/or federal control for almost 25 years, due to budget problems and fiscal issues. CPS had also been under a federal desegregation order since 1977, under the direction of U.S. District Judge Frank Battisti. When Judge Battisti died suddenly in 1994, from complications due to typhus he developed after an insect bite that he got fly-fishing in the Rockies, the desegregation case was left to U.S. District Judge George W. White.

Superintendent Sammie Campbell Parrish had resigned unexpectedly in February 1995, to take another job after only three years with the CPS. In March, Federal Court Judge Robert Krupansky gave control of Cleveland schools to the State Superintendent, citing “internal dissension, lack of leadership, and fiscal irresponsibility.”

That fall, a group of community activists and church leaders began looking at other types of school district leadership, and suggested Mayor Michael R. White take control of the schools.

In September 1996, Ohio lawmakers introduced legislation in Columbus to give the mayor control of the Cleveland schools. In October, the Cleveland schools (already under state control) were declared by State Auditor Jim Petro to be in “fiscal emergency.”

Voters recognized the need for additional funding, and passed a 13.5 mill levy in November 1996.

In July 1997, Ohio lawmakers passed the mayor-control bill. Governor (and former Cleveland mayor) George Voinovich signed the bill into law in August 1997. While this decision returned CPS from federal oversight to a form of local control for the first time in almost 25 years, it effectively by-passed the direct decision-making power of Cleveland voters. The NAACP, CTU, and SEIU opposed the mayoral control decision.

Early in 1998, Judge White dismissed the challenges, and ruled that the decades-long deseg order would be lifted on September 9, 1998. He also ruled that Mayor Michael R. White (no relation), along with a mayor-appointed nine-member school board and a Superintendent of the mayor’s choosing, would then take over the Cleveland schools. Mayor White appointed Barbara Byrd-Bennett as the new CEO in November 1998.

The mayor-control law allowed for a voter referendum after four years. In 2002, both the NAACP and CTU leadership had done an about-face on the issue. While originally opposed to it, then-CTU President Richard A. DeColibus and NAACP leaders now supported continued mayoral control.

In a September 5, 2002, article in the *New York Times*, DeColibus stated: “To our great surprise, this has been a positive change. Barbara Byrd-Bennett has astonishingly high approval from our members, who believe she re-

ally understands them. I guess going back to an elected board would be a form of democracy. But the pure form of democracy didn’t work so well, and the schools are getting better now.”

In the November 2002 referendum, over 70% of Cleveland voters agreed to keep the mayor in charge of the

While touted by Republican leadership as “a unified effort to save Cleveland,” the CTU regarded the situation as, “It’s better to be at the table, because if we aren’t at the table, we will surely be on the menu.”

schools, making mayoral control permanent.

Fast forward ten years to 2012.

The United States is still in the No Child Left Behind test-and-punish craze. After the 2011 defeat of Issue 2 (SB 5), lawmakers have another plan for “reforming” Cleveland schools.

Ohio’s Substitute House Bill 525 was passed by the Republican-controlled legislature and signed into law by Governor John Kasich on July 2, 2012. While touted by Republican leadership as “a unified effort to save Cleveland,” the CTU regarded the situation as, “It’s better to be at the table, because if we aren’t at the table, we will surely be on the menu.”

Substitute HB 525, known as the Cleveland Plan, was a Cleveland-only amendment to the original mayor control bill. According to the Plan, Mayor Frank Jackson, “with the help of Governor

John Kasich, the General Assembly, the Cleveland Teachers Union, and the Cleveland business community, crafted a plan to improve standards, reward, retain and recruit high-quality educators, and increase school autonomy and accountability.”

The CTU and a few legislative friends were able to mitigate some of the original anti-teacher and anti-union language in the bill, but with a super-majority and the Governorship, this was a Republican-crafted effort. (In the meantime, the Ohio Legislature has consistently failed to address Ohio’s inequitable and unconstitutional — as ruled four times by Ohio’s Supreme Court — school funding

teachers in high-demand fields. While experience can be a key characteristic of a quality teacher, it’s more important to ensure proven educators are in Cleveland classrooms.”

The Plan requires that “seniority will still be part of the equation, but well-rounded evaluations that consider all aspects of a teacher’s abilities will have priority. Additionally, teachers will no longer be assigned to buildings based simply on seniority. Instead, teachers must be approved by a team of the principal, parents and teachers at each building.”

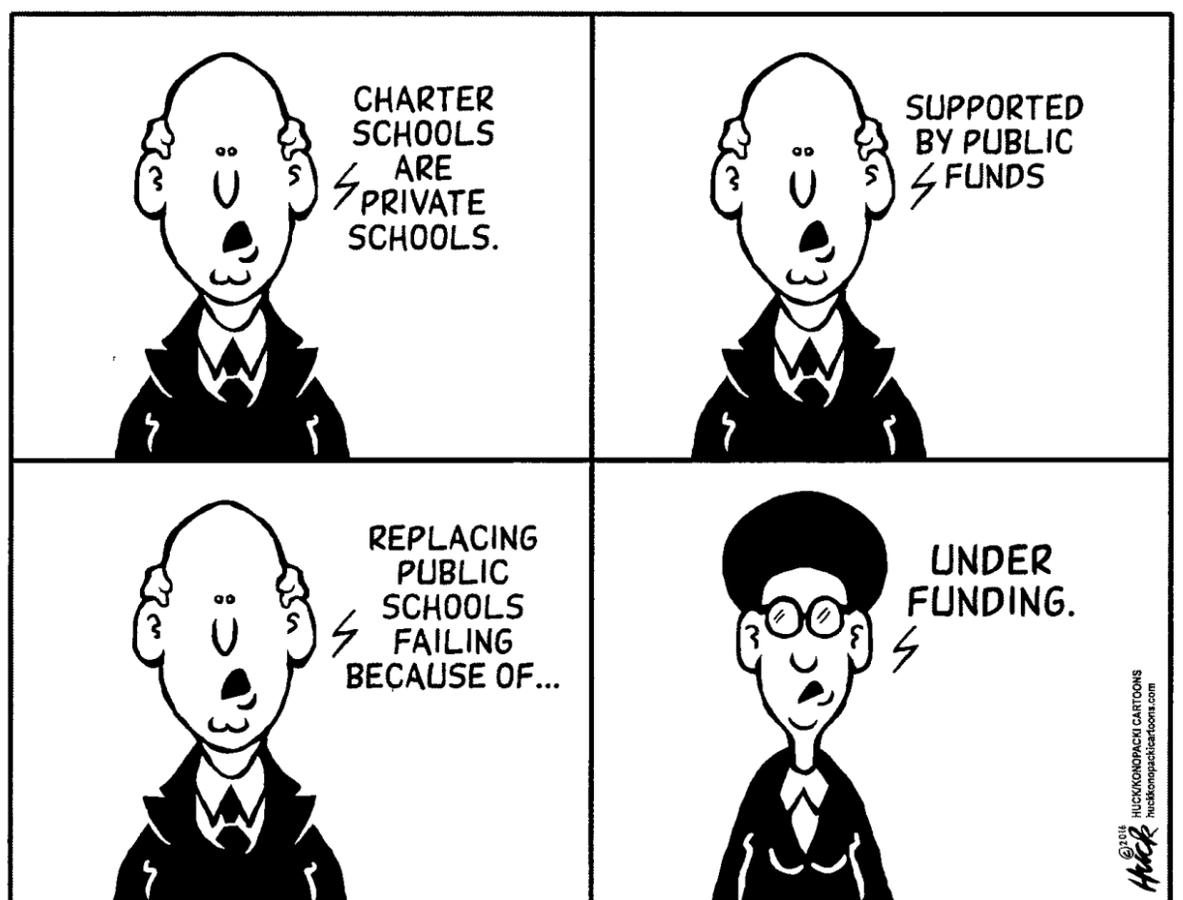
The Plan promised “more freedom and teaching tools for failing buildings . . . Moving away from a bureaucratic system that failed to quickly respond to poor performance, district leaders now will have the ability to swiftly respond to problems by bringing in new staff or changing the instructional program. District leaders will also be able to provide additional teaching tools for struggling students or students in failing schools, such as additional instruction, special tutoring or even a longer school day or year — whatever it takes to help children succeed.”

The Cleveland Plan has noble goals. We all want successful schools and great teachers for every student. But like all plans, the proof is in the interpretation and implementation.

And until the law can be changed or improved, CTU members must live under the current mandates of the Cleveland Plan. And CTU negotiators must negotiate within its constraints.

system. Instead, they developed and passed the Cleveland Plan into law.)

The Cleveland Plan states that children deserve to be taught by dedicated, well-trained, and high-performing teachers, a fine goal. The Cleveland Plan was to “introduce updated, flexible employment policies to ensure every student is taught by a great teacher, and a salary schedule that rewards high-performing teachers and



Principals' Report Card 2015-16

CTU Educational Issue Committee

School	Principal	Overall Rating	Should be Reired
STEAM Network			
A.J.Rickoff	Gloraine Smith	D-	Yes
Charles A.Mooney	Brynn Morgan	B-	Yes
Charles Dickens	Lisa Braxton	C	Yes
Charles Eliot	Marwa Ibrahim	C	Yes
Dike School of the Arts	Alisha Evans	B+	Yes
Garrett Morgan	Andrea Bishop	A-	Yes
Hannah Gibbons	Katherine Coverdale	D-	No
Jane Addams	Elaine Gollate	F	No
Martin L. King, Jr	Latonia Davis	D-	No
Max S. Hayes	Kelly Wittman	D	No
Miles Park	Tamika Taylor- Ivory	C-	Yes
Nathan Hale	Joelle McIntosh	A	Yes
Newton D. Baker	Wendy Rose-Geiling	B-	Yes
Orchard	Kathryn Francis	A-	Yes
Washington Park	Donald Strika	D-	No
LIFT Network			
Downtown Ed Center	Wayne Marok	B-	Yes
East Clark	Lisa Adams	D-	No
Harvey Rice	Serena Houston-Edwards	C	Yes
James F. Rhodes	Charlene Hilliard	C-	Yes
John Marshall	Tiffany James	C	Yes
Mary B. Martin	Lauren Seymour	D+	Yes
McKinley	Victoria Janke-Mousty	C+	Yes
Memorial	Michelle Person	C	Yes
Miles	Roy James	D	Yes
School of One	Wayne Marok	A	Yes
Sunbeam	Joshua Gunvalsen	C-	Yes
Wade Park	Lee Buddy Jr.	C-	Tie
Waverly	Sommer Edwards	C+	Yes
Wilbur Wright	Vimeal Finley	B-	Yes
Willow	Lisa Williams-Locklear	C	Yes
Investment 2			
Adlai Stevenson	Christopher Wyland	C+	Yes
Almira	Laverne Hooks	C+	Yes
Bolton	Juliet King	C	Yes
East Tech	Paul Hoover	C+	Yes
East Tech	Temujin Taylor	B-	Yes
Fullerton	Kevin Payton	C+	Yes
George W. Carver	Susan Harvey	B-	Yes
Glenville	Jacqueline Bell	D+	Yes
Glenville	Dr. Samuel Scavella	D-	No
Marion-Sterling	Adrianna Chestnut	D+	No
Michael R. White	Ariel Hayes	C+	Yes
Patrick Henry	Monique Martin	D+	Yes
Investment 1			
Alfred Benesch	Latosha Glass	B-	Yes
Anton Grdina	Harold Booker	C+	Yes
Case	Brandee Lee Carson-Jones	D	No
Collinwood	Maria Carlson	D-	Yes
Collinwood	Mary Miller	C	Yes
Franklin D. Roosevelt	Sherie Turner	D	Yes
John Adams	Luciana Gilmore	D	Yes
John Adams	Terrance Menefee	C+	Yes
Kenneth Clement Boys Leadership	Jacky Brown	A	Yes
Lincoln- West	Darla Hilt	B-	Yes
Luis Munoz Marin	Ricardo Torres	D-	No
Mound	Velma McNeil	D-	No
Robert H. Jamison	Sharon Cooper	C	Yes
Robinson G. Jones	Melissa Watts	A	Yes
Walton	Elizabeth Fennell	F	No

School	Principal	Overall Rating	Should be Reired
Best Practices & Academic Culture Network			
Artemus Ward	Chris Myslenski	D+	Yes
Buhrer Dual Language	Jose Gonzalez	B	Yes
Clark	Amanda Rodriquez	B-	Yes
Daniel E. Morgan	Dessie Sanders	D	Yes
Euclid Park	Jennifer Woody	C-	Yes
H. Barbara Booker	Nicholas Scheibelhood	D	Tie
Iowa-Maple	Natalie Smith-Benson	F	No
John F. Kennedy	Maryum Sims	D	Yes
Joseph Gallagher	Thomas Kubiak	C	Yes
Marion C. Seltzer	Denise Urban	D-	No
Mary M. Bethune	Melanie Nakonachy	D+	Yes
Scranton	Troy Beadling	A-	Yes
Intl Newcomers @ Thomas Jefferson	Marisol Burgos	C	Yes
Willson	Dawn Hayden	C	Yes
Innovative Network			
Campus International	Julia Beers	B+	Yes
Design Lab Early College @ Health Careers	Eric Juli	D-	Yes
Douglas MacArthur Girls Leadership	Victoria King	A-	Yes
Facing History New Tech @ Mooney	Marc Engoglia	B	Yes
Ginn Academy	Nicholas Petty	A	Yes
John Hay Campus	Ed Weber	C-	Yes
John Hay Architecture and Design	Tianna Maxey	A	Yes
John Hay Early College	Chaumdria Smith	A-	Yes
MC2STEM	Feowyn MacKinnon	A-	Yes
New Tech East @ East Tech	Christy Nickerson	C-	Yes
New Tech West	Erin Frew	C+	Yes
Promise Academy	Marc Aden	A	Yes
Tremont	Lori Haag	D	Yes
Valley View Boys Leadership	Robert Black	A-	Yes
Warner Girls Leadership	Audrey Staton-Thompson	B+	Yes
Portfolio Network			
Bard Early College	Dumaine Williams	B+	Yes
Digital Arts	John Buzzard	D-	No
PACT JFK	Richard Reynolds	C	Yes
E3agle Academy JFK	Margaret Schauer	C-	Yes
Cleveland School of the Arts	John Lepelley	D	Yes
John Marshall School of Business & Civic Leadership	Sara Kidner	D	Yes
John Marhsall School of Engineering	Timothy Primus	C	Yes
John Marshall School of Information Technology	Chelsey Cook	C+	Yes
Supervisors			
Downtown Educational Center	Wayne Marok	F	No
Attendance Liaisons	Lorri Hobson	D-	Yes
Nurses	Debbie Aloschen	A-	Yes
OT/PT	Karen Thompson-Repas	A	Yes
Psychological Services	Jessica Baldwin	B-	Yes
Sign Language Interpreters	Jessica Baldwin	B	Yes
Speech/Language Pathologists	Samantha Brown	B	Yes
Transitional Services	Illus Taylor	B-	Yes
Basic Skills	Curtis Hutchison	B	Yes
Achievement Network			
Benjamin Franklin	Rachel Snider	C-	Yes
Clara Westropp	Francie Watson	C	Yes
Denison	Sonja Clark	B-	Yes
Garfield	Dawn Imler	C-	Yes
Louis Agassiz	William Wingler	C	Yes
Louisa May Alcott	Eileen Mangan-Stull	B+	Yes
O. H. Perry	Anne Priemer	B-	Yes
Paul Dunbar	Sofia Piperis	C	Yes
Riverside	Paige Baubiltz-Watkins	F	No
Success Tech	Phillip Schwenk	D	Yes
Watterson-Lake	Gretchen Liggins	D	No
Whitney Young	Karen Bryon-Johnson	B-	Yes
William C. Bryant	Amy Mobley	A-	Yes



THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY DAVID J. QUOLKE

Fair For Educators and Good for Kids

The CTU and CMSD Negotiating Teams reached a tentative agreement (TA) after a marathon bargaining session August 30, averting a strike. The CTU Executive Board unanimously approved the TA and recommended its approval. As this goes to print, CTU officers are informing members of the details of the agreement, and answering their questions. When you receive this, CTU members will be voting on the TA. If approved, it will become the new contract. Parts of the contract would have a three-year duration, while others would only be in effect for one year.

The road to this agreement was long and difficult. Negotiations and the preceding preparations lasted for over a year. At the end, there were a Fact-Finder vote that both sides rejected, some long summer sessions that we hoped would produce an agreement but ended with no success, a decisive strike vote, and groundwork for a strike.

As we were preparing to exercise our collective bargaining rights to strike, the teams had a breakthrough. We reached a tentative agreement that we believe is fair to educators and good for the kids we serve.

I won't go through every detail of the proposed agreement, but will cover a few highlights. Every CTU member received a copy of the agreement, a summary, and pros and cons. Informational sessions provided opportunities to ask questions and clarify specific provisions of the TA. CTU officers have taken members' calls about the TA. It has been discussed and debated.

As in any negotiations, both sides came to the table with their list of demands. Both sides had their reasons for supporting some items and rejecting others. Neither side got 100% of its demands; collective bargaining doesn't work that way. But we addressed the major issues that you, the members, told us were the most important to

you, through surveys, discussions, grievances, etc., as we could.

Wages and benefits are usually the #1 and #2 issues in any labor negotiation. This agreement will give every CTU member a 2% raise now, this school year. Our health benefits will remain the same. These issues must be renegotiated beginning in February 2017. Why? The District cannot certify contract financials (a state requirement) beyond that point, until

As we were preparing to exercise our collective bargaining rights to strike, the teams had a breakthrough. We reached a tentative agreement that we believe is fair to educators and good for the kids we serve.

they know the results of the November levy. If the levy is not renewed, the District will suffer huge losses in revenue, and we will likely be facing major cutbacks.

In other wage-related issues, we were able to restructure the compensation schedule for licensed/certificated members. The new system is **not** dependent on Achievement Credits. Those members will automatically get two-year step raises if they receive an Effectiveness Rating of Accomplished, Skilled, or Developing. Accomplished-rated teachers will receive a \$4,000 payment. Sub pay for paras, payment for nurses performing duties outside of the school day, and payment for after-school-hours activities at Corrective Action Plan schools are some other additions.

In this negotiations, some of the biggest issues were based on **respect**, or rather, what many members perceived as the lack of it. Respect for our careers and what we do as professional educators. Respect in how we are treated by administrators and supervisors. How our time is respected and valued. And how our classroom integrity, that affects not only us but also our students, is respected.

We worked to strengthen classroom integrity by creating guidelines for all

visitors, including District and community members, to limit invasive, disruptive classroom visits. By restructuring the compensation system, we lessened the pressure of TDES, the Teacher Development and Evaluation System. Guidelines for TDES and Related Service Providers and Encore teachers were developed. The change in 200 minutes, requiring 100 minutes instead of 50 to be teacher-directed, effectively added another planning period to the day; this is additional time that cannot be assigned by an administrator.

This was only our second negotiations under Sub HB 525, the Cleveland Plan. Thankfully, by working to mitigate some of the worst provisions of the original version of this law, we retained our collective bargaining rights. However, we can only negotiate within the conditions and stipulations



bad for our kids. We still have much more work to be done in the legislative area, in Ohio and nationally. And we need your help to pass the school levy renewal. (See Kurt Richards' COPE article on page 8 of this issue to learn how you can help with Election 2016.)

This agreement includes terms that we believe are good for our students too. Some are: art, music, physical education, and media preserved in all K-8 schools; reopening four high school libraries; a shared commitment to test reduction (though some testing is state-mandated); surveying parents regarding elective options for their children; measures to provide safe, clean, healthy buildings for all students; technology surveys to assess needs and prioritize resources; prohibiting teachers from being assigned to classes or assignments for which they aren't qualified to teach.

As I look back over the last year, I am tremendously grateful for the support of the CTU membership. Your willingness to show up and stand up for what you believe in made the difference. You were at Board meetings throughout the past year, calling out CMSD officials who would not come to the bargaining table.

You were at community events all over the city, explaining to Clevelanders that what the CTU wants is good for kids too. You were at rallies in the spring and even during summer break, to call attention to our situation. And when it came time to stand together and strike if necessary, your resolve was loud and clear: "We don't want to strike but we will!" The Cleveland community and CMSD leaders heard you, and your solidarity gave us strength in the negotiations process.

I believe we want to genuinely improve teaching and learning in the Cleveland schools. I believe this agreement is another step in that direction. I believe this agreement is good for kids and fair for educators. I ask you to vote YES to ratify this agreement.

Have a successful, productive school year, as you continue to give your best to educate Cleveland's children.



THE CRITIQUE

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