



# CRITIQUE



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**Negotiations complete, 3-year CBA in place, no crisis (today)**

## IMPLEMENTATION

**... What's my union's job now?**



Once a contract is ratified, the nuts-and-bolts work of ensuring its implementation across the District begins for Director of Negotiations Shari Obrenski and CTU officers.

The CTU Negotiating Team, led by Shari Obrenski, Director of Negotiations and 3rd Vice President, Senior/Special, continues to work to implement the provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, now in its second year.

### Schedules and Staffing

"We are still working on school schedules," said Ms. Obrenski, "making some necessary changes and addressing problems." The CBA established a Joint Committee on School Schedules, to review all schedules, and identify and correct problems. After past scheduling errors — avoidable errors — violated the CBA, cost the District millions of dollars in compensation, and were publicized in Cleveland media, the committee was established to find and fix any future errors. It has six appointed members: Shari Obrenski, Mark Baumgartner, Trustee-at-Large and Director of Professional Issues, and Mary Moore, 3rd Vice President and Co-Director of Grievances, represent CTU. Karen Thompson, Deputy Chief of Curriculum and Instruction, and Erin Frew and Lorenzo Russell, Network Leaders, represent CMSD.

Besides correcting any problems with this school year's schedules, the committee is working to develop guidelines for

**W**e're trying to be proactive, and we're working closely with CMSD to prevent potential problems.

next year that will help schools avoid future scheduling errors, Ms. Obrenski added. "We are trying to be proactive and prevent potential problems in developing school schedules," she explained. Also, staffing is intertwined with scheduling. If schedules for the next school year can be done correctly and earlier, schools can make more accurate determinations of their staffing needs before the next open positions process. "While we can't predict every factor, like student mobility, we can help to make the staffing process better."

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## SOLIDARITY IN ACTION

### Donate to AFT's Disaster Relief Fund

#### "A bad situation just got much worse."

Those were AFT President Randi Weingarten's words as she wrote on behalf of AFT affiliate leaders in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. "Barely a week after Hurricane Irma, AFT members and their families in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands are coping with the ravages of a direct hit from Hurricane Maria. For the third time in the last month, we are asking you to give to the AFT Disaster Relief Fund for our colleagues who have been devastated by a monster hurricane. We've never seen three back-to-back hurricanes that caused so much destruction, and our brothers and sisters need our help. Please consider making a donation to the AFT Disaster Relief Fund today."

The CTU Executive Board authorized \$3,000 for the fund, and many CTU members have already made individual donations. To donate easily and securely online,

go to [www.aft.org/our-community/disaster-relief-helpful-resources](http://www.aft.org/our-community/disaster-relief-helpful-resources).

The damage has left many of our AFT brothers and sisters and their communities with nothing. It will take years for them to rebuild. Help us lend a hand in their time of need by donating to the AFT Disaster Relief Fund.

"The AFT is here for our members, their families and the students we serve," said President Weingarten. "Our three local unions in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands are making every effort to get in touch with all our members there to check on them and see what they need. We are praying for their safety. And just as we are doing in Texas, Florida and the other areas hit by these hurricanes, we will help them rebuild."

Show your solidarity by donating to the AFT Disaster Relief Fund. Help show our union family we have their backs. Donate today.

## Negotiations Give Way to CBA Implementation

■ continued from page 1

### Classroom Integrity

An important negotiations issue for CTU members was classroom integrity, especially within the Teacher Development and Evaluation System (TDES). The CBA now contains protocols for all classroom visitations in Article 10, Section 9 B. They cover all visitors, including parents, community members, state or federal representatives, CMSD-employed consultants, and CMSD employees.

"These protocols are not merely suggestions," Ms. Obrenski stated. "They are part of our contract, and must be followed. As the Union has been working with various groups in the District that will be doing classroom visits, we have been reminding everyone of these protocols. Everyone should be familiar with the rules governing classroom visits."

If you have problems with visitors

who do not follow the Protocols for Classroom Visitation outlined in the CBA, you should notify your chapter chairperson immediately. If the situation is not corrected, contact the CTU and report the violation to one of the 3rd Vice Presidents: Jillian Ahrens, Mary Moore, or Shari Obrenski.

"Again, we're trying to be proactive, and we're working closely with the CMSD Academic Office to attempt to prevent problems," explained Ms. Obrenski. "But if the protocols are not followed, members can grieve it."

### Evaluations

Another area negotiators worked to strengthen in the CBA was language concerning the evaluation process, to make it fairer for members. These language changes can be found in Article 13.

At this time, Formal Announced Observations and the SLO process are in progress. Ms. Obrenski reminded members that CBA language states

evaluators are to have evidence in the portal within 24 hours. An SLO appeals process was added to the CBA.

### Wellness Program and Healthcare

Members (and spouses, if applicable) who plan to participate in the voluntary Wellness Program, and be eligible for a lower monthly healthcare premium, must meet the October 31, 2017 deadline! You must file the completed Physician Certification Form with Hylant by October 31. This form can be downloaded and printed from the CMSD website at <http://cleveland-metroschools.org/Domain/3724>.

Remember, to complete the form, you need an annual screening, including: 1) cholesterol screening; 2) glucose screening; 3) blood pressure screening; and 4) your body mass index (BMI). You must also complete the CMSD Health Risk Assessment, which can be downloaded and printed at <http://clevelandmetroschools.org/Do->

[main/3724](#), and then submit that completed CMSD Health Risk Assessment to your healthcare professional.

If you've already seen your physician and had these screenings done since November 1, 2016, you only need to complete the Health Risk Assessment and take the Physician Certification Form to your healthcare provider for their signature.

**November is Open Enrollment month. All CMSD employees will need to sign up for healthcare during November.** New employees who began work on August 9, 2017, were eligible for Healthcare on October 1, 2017. While they still must sign up during the Open Enrollment period in November, the District will give those new employees a 60-day window from the date their CMSD healthcare coverage began to complete their annual screening and Health Risk Assessment form for the Wellness Program.

# THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN

**THUMBS UP** — and good luck on November 7 — to **Meg Ryan Shockey**, who is running for Brooklyn City Council. CTU members know Meg as the Executive Assistant to the CTU President. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Communication from Bowling Green State University, and a Master's Degree in Urban Planning, Development and Design from Cleveland State University. She currently serves on the Planning Commission in Brooklyn. While CTU does not endorse city candidates outside of Cleveland, Meg is endorsed by the North Shore AFL-CIO. If you are a Brooklyn resident, please consider supporting Meg Ryan Shockey for City Council.

"Be the change you want to see," said Meg Ryan Shockey, candidate for Brooklyn City Council.



**THUMBS UP** to **Eva Concepcion**, bilingual paraprofessional at James F. Rhodes, who recently presented a workshop on ESL students for teachers and paras, for VPD time. The workshop helped give participants a different and positive outlook on teaching students who are learning English.

**THUMBS UP** to **Michelle Pierre-Farid**, Chief Academic Officer, who has demonstrated a refreshing willingness to make use of the current labor-management window of opportunity to work together with CTU, genuinely and collaboratively, to solve problems. With a finite amount of time and energy in a day, it's much more productive to be proactive, cooperate, and avoid unnecessary problems that would otherwise waste valuable time and energy.

And a related **THUMBS DOWN** to those administrators at all levels who waste precious time and energy by trying to circumvent — or simply ignore — certain provisions in the contract. Just a reminder . . . as CEO Eric Gordon and President David Quolke said in their joint statement in the CBA: "Our greatest success will not be found in the District's offices or the CTU's headquarters, but in the labor-management relationships in our schools and departments that turn the elements of this document into successes for students!"

**THUMBS UP** and congratulations to the ten winners of the 2017 Excellence in Teaching Award: **Dean Bryson** (New Tech Collinwood); **Mary DeVille** (Euclid Park); **Tonya Dunlap** (Buhner Dual Language Academy); **Catherine Duplisea** (Orchard STEM School); **Kirsten Fischer** (Scranton); **Andrea Kitchen** (Louisa May Alcott); **Jason Levy** (Campus International School); **Rita Mikita** (MC2Stem High School); **Alexis Pohlman** (Louis Agassiz); and **Jordan Seigler** (Charles Dickens). Sponsored by CMSD partners, the George Gund Foundation, the Cleveland Foundation, and CTU, the award honors CMSD teachers who

demonstrate instructional expertise, creativity and innovation in their classrooms; who make learning engaging, vibrant and relevant for students; and whose work and accomplishments set a standard of excellence for all teachers.

**THUMBS UP** to the CTU Grievance Team for winning two recent arbitrations, regarding special education assignments and assault leave. These decisions will impact future contract interpretations in ways that benefit teachers and students. Read about these decisions on pages 4-5.

**THUMBS DOWN** to anti-union **Marc's stores**. Please don't shop there. A representative from Local 880, United Food & Commercial Workers, spoke to CTU leaders at the October Delegate Assembly, asking for CTU's assistance. You can support your union brothers and sisters by shopping at union-friendly stores and businesses. For a complete list of Union Shops in your area, contact them at [UFCW@ufcwlocal880.com](mailto:UFCW@ufcwlocal880.com).

**THUMBS UP** to CTU Chapter Chairs — one of most difficult but most important jobs in our Union. Every chapter has an elected chairperson in place this fall, as we work together to ensure the CBA is implemented in every worksite.

**THUMBS DOWN** to the impending Janus v. AFSCME case currently in the U.S. Supreme Court, that could overturn decades of legal precedent, expand harmful right-to-work statutes, and allow mooching employees to circumvent fair-share fees. Read more about it in The President's Report on page 16.

# VPD: Now Back in the CBA

*With Name Change,  
'Voluntary Professional Development'  
Is Now 'Staff /Community Engagement'*



Educators from several schools enjoy a Saturday VPD session. The popular “Bag Ladies” Make & Take was arranged by Charles A. Mooney Chapter Chair Lisa Arraj, Principal Michelle Person, and the UCC.

**Voluntary Professional Development (VPD) time is back in the contract for teachers, related service providers (RSPs), and paraprofessionals. In the previous contract, paras were the only group that had VPD time.**

Now called “Staff/Community Engagement” time, it provides two days per school year for all licensed or certificated bargaining unit members, including sign language/educational interpreters (except day-to-day substitutes), paid at the member’s daily rate. The time is to be defined and approved through the AAP process, or mutual agreement of the principal and Union Conference Committee. It can be scheduled in one-hour increments, with six hours equaling a full day.

“All CTU members are encouraged to participate in 12 hours of Staff/Community Engagement activities,” said Shari Obrenski, 3rd Vice President, Senior/Special. “This is a valuable VPD opportunity for schools. It gives schools flexibility in providing targeted, valuable professional development to



improve educators’ skills and engage families and the community.”

Ms. Obrenski explained that schools can offer more than 12 hours, since not every staff member can go to every event. “There should be multiple opportunities for all CTU members to get these 12 hours. Schools can work together to share presenters and sessions. Principals and UCCs can make agreements for their schools.”

The CBA language states: “Beginning in the 2017-18 school year, teachers, RSPs, and Sign Language

Interpreters can earn two Voluntary Professional Development/Community Engagement days. For teachers, RSPs, and Sign Language Interpreters, these VPD/Community Engagement days are designed through the approved AAP, or through mutual agreement of the Principal and UCC. Each school must have a plan in place for how staff members can earn these additional days.” An email from Tracy Radich, 1st Vice President, and Jillian Ahrens, 3rd Vice President, K-8, explaining Staff/Community Engagement time, was sent to all members in September.

If you have questions about VPD opportunities in your school, talk to your chapter chairperson or contact the CTU.



## Equifax Data Breach: *How to Protect Yourself*

**The massive cyber security incident at Equifax, one of the largest credit reporting agencies in the USA, may have exposed private information belonging to 143 million people — nearly half of the U.S. population.**

The breach was discovered on July 29, but not reported until over six weeks later —and long after some of the highest Equifax officials sold their stock in the company. And this news comes amid current GOP leaders wanting to reduce government regulations on financial institutions, and wanting to weaken the Consumer Finance Protection Bureau (CFPB). The Bureau was created after the financial crisis in 2008 to protect consumers from the deceptive practices that led to the financial meltdown.

The security breach included consumers’ sensitive information: social security numbers, birthdays, addresses, some driver’s license numbers, and 209,000 credit card numbers.

Equifax has established a dedicated website to address the incident at [equifaxsecurity2017.com](http://equifaxsecurity2017.com). At this site, consumers can find out if their data was likely impacted, enroll in

free credit protection and monitoring, and read progress updates about the incident.

If you’re afraid you might be a victim of the Equifax data breach, Senator Sherrod Brown encourages you to visit the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau’s website for more information and resources, at [www.consumerfinance.gov](http://www.consumerfinance.gov).

In the meantime, Senator Brown is drafting legislation to provide Equifax victims with 10 years free credit monitoring, with no strings attached. He wants to make it easy and affordable for customers to freeze their credit reports, so criminals cannot open accounts in their name.

Senator Brown also called on the Department of Justice, the Federal Trade Commission, and the Securities and Exchange Commission to investigate accusations of insider trading by Equifax executives. He said that any criminal actions should be prosecuted to the full extent of

the law.

Also, he was successful in getting Equifax to remove so-called “forced arbitration” clauses from the credit monitoring and identify theft protection products Equifax was offering to customers to deal with the breach. Those clauses would have forced Equifax customers to sign away their rights to access the court system in order to get the free credit monitoring.

It’s easy to feel overwhelmed by the possibility of identity theft, and how to deal with it. Experts advise checking all your financial accounts regularly for errors or suspicious activity. Consider enrolling in a credit-monitoring service, placing a fraud alert on your credit reports, and freezing your credit at the three major credit bureaus, Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion.

Be sure to alert the authorities if you are a victim of identity theft. File a report with your local police department, **and** with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) online at [identitytheft.gov](http://identitytheft.gov), or by phone at 877-438-4338.

# ‘W’ CTU Wins Two Working to G

**CTU has settled many Step 2 and 3 grievances in the past weeks, and is getting answers to grievances more quickly, Grievance Co-Directors Jillian Ahrens and Mary Moore announced. Many of those responses included resolutions in favor of the CTU grievants, and included monetary compensation.**

“We have been working with Carol Lockhart, CMSD’s new Executive Director of Legal Services, to get answers more quickly,” said Ms. Ahrens. If answers are not received within the timeframe, the Union can move to expedited arbitration to settle the grievance, but at this time, the District has been providing answers more promptly.

Initial placement on the salary schedule, especially for some new teachers, has been an ongoing issue. The Grievance Team has been working with CMSD to fix these problems. In addition, the Union recently received awards in two successful arbitrations.

## **Assault Leave Arbitration**

The first arbitration dealt with an assault leave grievance. Two separate incidents with the same CTU member involving two different students took place within a ten-minute period of time. The member was verbally threatened by one student, then physi-

cally punched by another student in an unrelated incident. The member filed for assault leave. Incredibly, the District ruled that the verbal threat was an assault, but the punch was not, and denied the assault leave.

The arbitrator ruled that this was indeed an assault. The member was awarded lost compensation plus 10%, and their sick time back.

“It is vitally important,” said Ms. Ahrens, “that in case of an assault, members complete and submit all required paperwork, and follow the timelines.” She reminded CTU members that all grievances that are violations of Article 15 (Policy and Procedures Governing Social-Emotional Learning, Student Discipline, and Misconduct) have a specific procedure and must be submitted on a special form. The form was distributed to chapter chairs, and is available on the CTU website.

Article 15 deals with student assaults, menacing, student discipline, the Planning Center, Student Support

Teams, Removal for Educational Intervention, classroom meetings, and other student discipline-related issues. Step I of an Article 15 grievance (on the special form) does not go to the Principal. Instead, it is to be sent directly to the CTU at [grievances@ctu279.org](mailto:grievances@ctu279.org). The Grievance Team processes it and sends it to the Director of Labor Relations, who has five days to attempt to resolve. If a resolution is not achieved, CTU and CMSD will contact a special purpose panel per Article 15 Section 31 (c).

Before a member files a grievance on a serious assault or battery by a student, the member must first follow the steps outlined in the CBA, Article 15, Section 10. If the member does not agree with the Principal’s decision, they appeal to the Network Leader. If they do not agree with the Network Leader’s decision, then they file the grievance.

If a member has any questions or concerns about an assault, they should immediately contact Jim Wagner from the CTU Grievance Team, who is the Union’s point person in dealing with assaults. He can be reached at 216-861-7676 ext. 255.

## **IEPs and Student Assignment Arbitration**

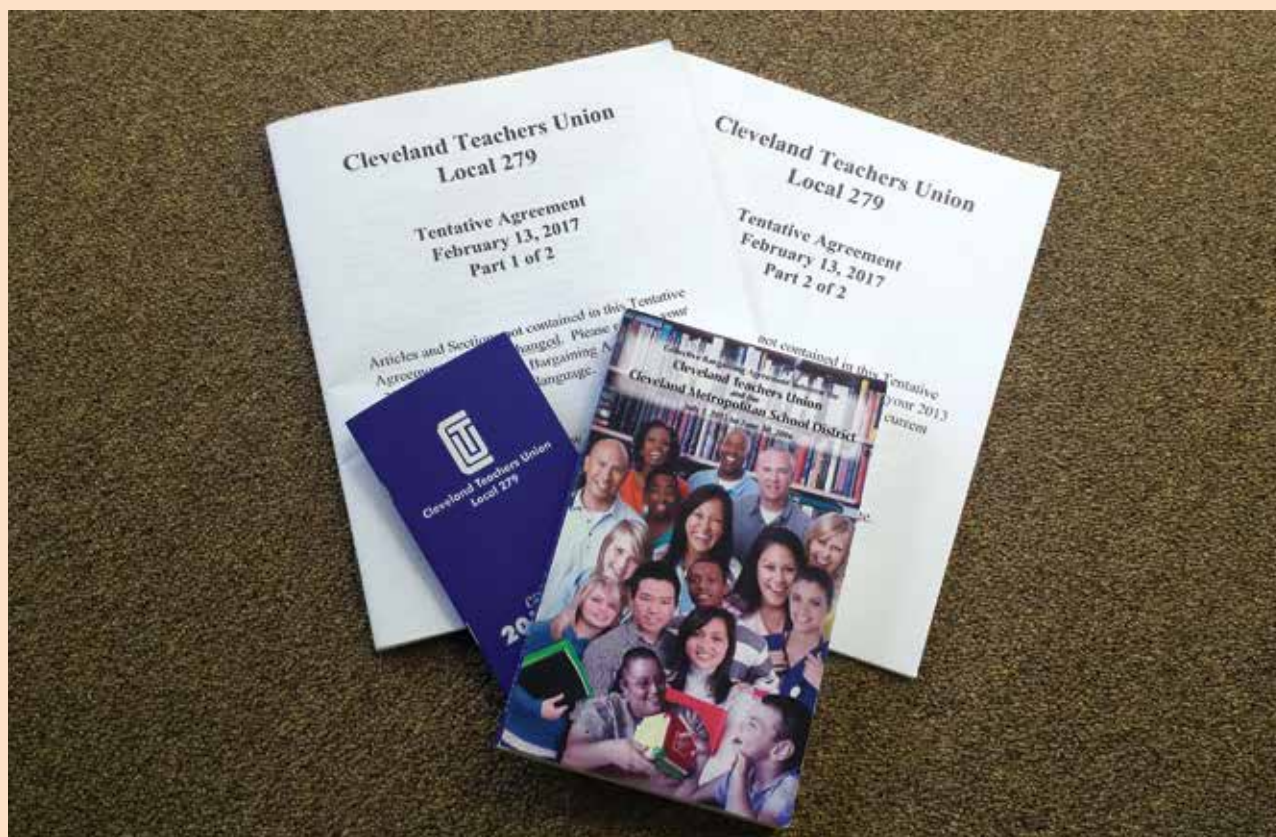
The second arbitration award dealt with student IEPs, and whether CTU members can grieve when an IEP is not followed. In this grievance, a Cross Categorical (CC) special education teacher was assigned three hard-of-hearing/deaf (HH) students in her high school English class for the 2016-2017 school year.

All three of the students’ IEPs explicitly stated that they were to be placed in an HH classroom with an HH intervention specialist for all their core subjects, including English. The grievant did not have an HH intervention specialist license, had never taught HH students, and did not have the proper background to teach these students. The grievant has a K-12 mild/moderate intervention specialist license.

The grievant went to the principal to discuss the situation, but the principal refused to reassign the students to another teacher in the building who had an HH license. The teacher then filed the grievance, alleging that the District had violated Article 10, Section 3(C), which states that special education students shall be served “in the Least Restrictive Environment and in accordance with their IEP.”

The District argued that Ohio Department of Education standards state that any intervention specialist may be assigned HH or Visually Impaired (VI)

## Have You Done Your Required Reading?



## **Paraprofessional News**

Cherylane Jones-Williams, Paraprofessional Chapter Chair, reminded Paraprofessional Building Representatives to submit their 2017-2018 Para Chapter Report on Organization immediately, if they have not already done so.

If your building has not elected a CTU Paraprofessional Building Representative, paras should hold a special election immediately. All candidates must be dues-paying CTU members — no fair share people may run or vote.

Duties of the Representative or Alternate include: to hold a monthly para union meeting in your building; to distribute all para CTU materials; to attend all Para General Meetings; to conduct the yearly Para Election in March; to site on the building’s UCC; and to attend the Para Leadership Workshop/Luncheon in May.

Contact Cherylane Jones-Williams at the CTU office, 216-861-7676 ext. 241 if you have any questions.

# o Arbitrations, et Answers Faster

students, so long as the class is not entirely comprised of HH or VI students. The District also argued that any issue of improper placement under a student's IEP cannot be addressed through the grievance process. And they submitted that the grievance was moot, since the school year was over and therefore there was no remedy which could be granted through the grievance process.

Mary Moore, a special education teacher and CTU 3rd Vice President, K-8, testified in the arbitration hearing. She explained that JSEC (Joint Special Education Committee) recognized the importance of assigning special education students to properly licensed professionals. Not doing so makes no educational sense. She provided evidence as to how CMSD in the past assigned HH students only to teachers with HH licensing. The arbitrator called Ms. Moore's testimony "significant" in the explanation of his decision.

The CTU also used Dr. Pamela Luft from Kent State University as an expert. She explained how different the educational requirements are for an HH certification versus a mild/moderate certification. She said teachers must complete four years of intense training to receive HH certification, including skill in the use of American Sign Language (ASL). The grievant did not know ASL.

Arbitrator James M. Mancini rejected all CMSD's arguments, and sustained the grievance. First, he said CTU members could grieve if a student's IEP was not being followed and they were incorrectly assigned to a class. It is not acceptable to merely reconvene the IEP team and change the IEP to fit the situation. Additionally, the teacher is not required to address the situation with the IEP team before filing the grievance. He held that it is the administration's "responsibility to schedule courses in compliance with the student's IEP."

In a very important finding, he decided the ODE rule was not determinative of the issue of assigning students; licensure matters. After reviewing CBA language regarding assignment of special education students, he decided, "The only reasonable meaning of these provisions is that the special education students in the District must be served in accordance with their IEPs."

The arbitrator also disagreed with CMSD's claim that the grievance was



moot, explaining: "It is apparent that the issue raised in this case must be addressed in order to avoid any dispute which could occur of a similar assignment of HH students in the future. Therefore, this arbitrator does not find that the matter presented is moot."

The grievant had also requested in the initial grievance that any evaluation during the time the HH students were inappropriately

assigned to her class be declared invalid. The arbitrator agreed with this too, and included it in his award.

"This was a significant decision for the CTU," said Ms. Moore. "The arbitrator was clear; IEPs must be honored. While we agree that in some situations, HH kids may belong in a cross-categorical classroom, the wording of the IEP is important and must be followed. And teachers can speak up for students whose needs — as determined in their IEPs — are not being met, and file a grievance."

## About Arbitration

Arbitration is not an automatic "next step" in the grievance process. The CTU does not take every case to arbitration, for good reason. It can be risky and expensive. The CTU Grievance Team and the CTU Executive Board ultimately decide which cases to take 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, and 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

## TDES Dates and Appeal Process

Be sure to check the District calendar on the website for important TDES dates. Walk Through I was to be completed by October 6.

The CTU strongly encourages members to add evidence within the TDES portals **at the time of the events**. It's helpful to have the rubric in front of you when adding your evidence. While you can't copy the information from the rubric, it's beneficial to have it as a reminder while compiling and recording your evidence.

In the CBA, there is an appeals process for TDES, in Article 13, Section H. You have ten days following an event to appeal to the Network Leader, who has ten days to respond. If the issue is not answered or resolved to your satisfaction in ten days, contact the TDES Co-Chairs by email at [tdes@clevelandmetroschools.org](mailto:tdes@clevelandmetroschools.org). Make sure you observe the deadlines in the process.

is guaranteed a win when a case goes to arbitration. The agreement cannot cover every possible workplace scenario, and as such it is a living document that is being 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.

## Special Ed Teachers and the Planning Center

Has your building scheduled special education teachers in the Planning Center, as specified in the CBA? This provision was included to provide services to students with IEPs while they are in the Planning Center.

However, if there are no students with IEPs in the Planning Center during their assigned period, the special education teacher is free to use that as unassigned time, to work on IEPs, plans, etc.

## THE NITTY-GRITTY: Quick Grievance Review

The grievance procedure is explained in the CBA in Article 6, Problem Resolution, Grievance Procedure and Time Limits.

A grievance is defined as "any matter concerning the interpretation, 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." Any CTU member can file a grievance, if they believe their rights in the CBA have been violated.

All grievances that go beyond the building level to the CTU are filed online. The email address for grievances only is [grievances@ctu279.org](mailto:grievances@ctu279.org). The grievance forms for each step, with the instructions and timelines applicable to the various steps, are available on the CTU website, and can be completed in the online format. Principals can also add their responses online.

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. Be sure to include this with the completed Step Two Appeal form. Scan and email them to [grievances@ctu279.org](mailto:grievances@ctu279.org).

CTU's 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; and Jim Wagner, K-8 Trustee. By CTU Constitution, the three 3rd Vice Presidents are automatically members of the Grievance Team, and the CTU President selects other members of the team from the Executive Board.

The Grievance Team has a piece of advice for every CTU member: read the contract! And if you feel it has been violated, file a grievance. Ms. Ahrens and Ms. Moore emphasized that enforcing the CBA begins at the building level, and it's important for all CTU members to insist that the working conditions and protections CTU negotiated are followed. And if they aren't? File a grievance!

## MAC Announces \$1 Million Grant for CMSD

The Mid-American Conference (MAC) announced in a September 18 press conference it has secured a five-year, \$1 million-dollar grant for Cleveland Metropolitan School District for TEACHing Cleveland, a program to focus on teacher recruitment, mentoring and retention.

The MAC secured the funding from the College Football Playoff (CFP) Foundation, the charitable arm of the CFP, through its Extra Yard for Teachers platform. They provided a \$500,000 contribution over the next five years toward TEACHing Cleveland. The MAC also secured \$250,000 from The George Gund Foundation over the next five years, and \$150,000 from the Cleveland Foundation over the next three years. The MAC will reapply for additional funding from the Cleveland Foundation in three years.

"The Mid-American Conference is proud to partner with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District to provide funding for this important initiative," said MAC Commissioner Dr. Jon Steinbrecher. "Teachers are a critical factor in a child's educational success. Through TEACHing Cleveland, we will facilitate greater retention of quality teachers to the betterment of the students and to the betterment of Cleveland."

This grant provides CMSD and the Cleveland Teachers Union an opportunity to collaborate in recruiting, developing and retaining new teachers to best support the Cleveland area students and community.

"Retaining and developing new teachers remains a challenge in Cleveland schools," said Debbie Paden, Chairperson of CTU Educational Issues Committee. "Through this grant, the TEACHing Cleveland program will develop programs to assist in the recruitment of highly-skilled teachers to CMSD schools. It will also provide those new teachers with professional development that focuses on culture and exposure to successful practitioners, and as a result, increase teacher retention rates and success."

Several speakers affirmed the need for supporting and retaining new teachers in the District. Raghad Bteibet from Orchard STEM School discussed her situation as a new CMSD teacher, and how she was lucky to have supportive colleagues and administrators. She stated that in her experience, CMSD "values its teachers and provides phenomenal professional development opportunities to newly hired teachers . . . Teaching is about being able to pass on knowledge to the future generations of students, who in turn make new innovations in our society. All teachers make a difference in their students' lives, but at CMSD, we do much more than that. We change lives. I'm thankful every day that I was able to stay in this district and to be a positive influence in our

students' lives."

"CTU understands the critical need to provide new teachers with the resources, mentoring, and support networks that are essential in building and retaining new teachers in the Cleveland schools," said David Quolke, CTU President. "We are looking forward to partnering with the Mid-American Conference, College Football Playoff Foundation, the Cleveland Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, and CMSD in this endeavor."

"Increasingly, we are seeing the most talented and dedicated teachers electing to teach in urban school districts, and this funding will be instrumental in our efforts to support and retain those teachers in Cleveland," said CMSD CEO Eric Gordon. "While the choice to educate disadvantaged children is enormously challenging, our goal is to ensure teaching in Cleveland is equally rewarding."

"We are proud to partner with the Mid-American Conference to improve the recruitment and retention of teach-

ers in Cleveland schools through our Extra Yard for Teachers platform," said CFP Foundation Executive Director Britton Banowsky. "We are also blessed to align our investments with both the Cleveland Foundation and The George Gund Foundation." The MAC is the only Conference among the ten Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) leagues to secure a matching donation from the original financial commitment by the CFP Foundation.

"We want great teachers to commit to Cleveland and to our children," said Ann Mullin, senior program officer for The George Gund Foundation. "We know that means supporting them in their early years, getting them to fall in love with our schools and our city, and making them feel as though they are part of transforming children's lives."

"We recognize that great teachers are key to improving student achievement," said Helen Williams, Cleveland Foundation program director for education. "That is why in recent years we have collaborated with the District as well as other key partners in recruiting passionate and talented teachers locally and from around the country. The TEACHing Cleveland program, made possible through this partnership with the Mid-American Conference and the College Football Playoff Foundation, will ensure that we are able to not only attract these talented educators, but also deeply engage, develop and retain them, critical elements in ensuring bright futures for CMSD students."

Founded in 1946, the Mid-American Conference is an NCAA Division I, 12-member conference that sponsors 23 championships and is one of ten members of the Football Bowl Subdivision. With total enrollment of nearly 300,000 students, the league represents institutions of higher learning in five states: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, New York, and Ohio.



Orchard teacher Raghad Bteibet, Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson, Mid-American Conference Commissioner Dr. Jon Steinbrecher, CMSD CEO Eric Gordon, CTU President David Quolke, and CMSD Chief Talent Officer Lori Ward announce the one-million-dollar grant secured for the District, for new teacher training and retention.

### 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

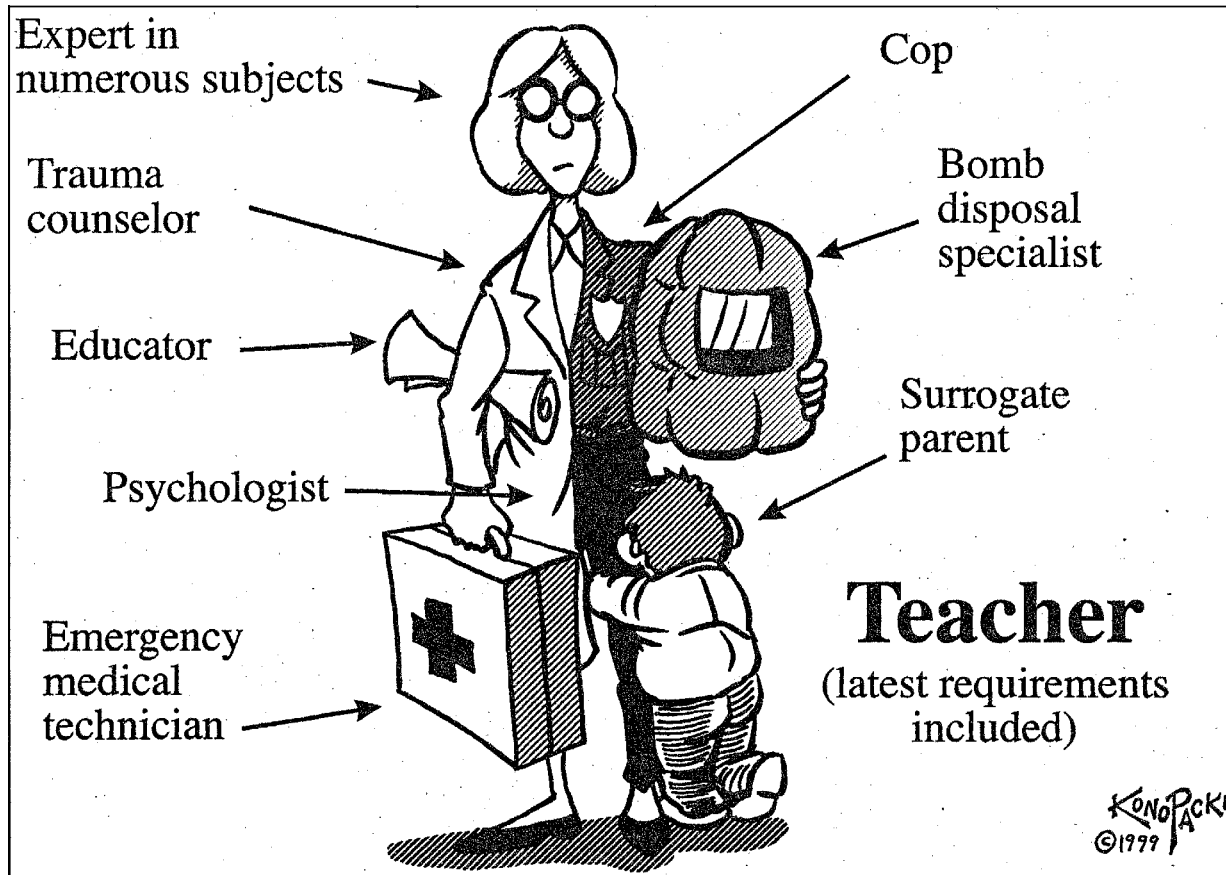


from AFT and CTU. You will receive updates, notices, and reminders.



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.



MAC schools in the East Division are University of Akron, Bowling Green State University, University at Buffalo, Kent State University, Miami University, and Ohio University. MAC schools in the West Division are Ball State University, Central Michigan University, Eastern Michigan University, Northern Illinois University, University of Toledo, and Western Michigan University. The conference office is based in Cleveland, Ohio.

# United Way of Greater Cleveland: Together We're Greater

**Data, data, data! Educators know about the importance of using data to drive educational decisions in their classrooms. The United Way of Greater Cleveland is now using a combination of demographic data and feedback from nonprofit employees, residents, and the agencies trying to help them. They're using this data to better understand how to help in the resolution to end poverty, and to how to more effectively select funding priorities.**

The statistics on poverty in our city are staggering. The child poverty rate in Cleveland is 53.5%. Cleveland's median income in 2015 was \$28,831, compared to Cuyahoga County's median income of \$45, 297. This puts

**Every \$1 invested in quality preschool saves \$8.60 over a child's lifetime.**

Cleveland on par with Detroit.

"United Way of Greater Cleveland has four impact areas that drive our funding strategy for the Community Impact grants: financial stability, health, education, and our newest bucket, basic needs," explained Kayla

Hauser, United Way's Associate Director, Workplace Campaign. United Way has always funded agencies that work to address basic needs of those in poverty in our community. However, by utilizing the Community Needs Assessment which was released last June, United Way is better positioned to determine how to more effectively set funding priorities.

The Community Needs Assessment was a huge undertaking, involving substantial amounts of data collection and interpretation. Results indicate the needs of Greater Clevelanders and Cuyahoga County community members are widespread and include issues such as unemployment, literacy, housing and food, access to transportation, chronic health conditions, infant mortality, mental health, and violent crime.

Most compelling, data showed that these issues were not singular, but instead were part of an overarching issue — poverty.

"In response to the demands put on our partner agencies to address these needs, we saw a need to reform our funding model to focus on qualifications, versus just ideas and proposals," explained Ms.

Hauser. "Herein, the 'Hub Model' was created."

How will the Community Hub Model change how United Way responds to community needs?

Volunteers will review proposals and make recommendations about which programs to fund, with program funding computed through a standardized algorithm promoting collaboration. Funded programs will

**Research suggests that nearly 95% of all children can be taught to read at a proficient level or higher.**

be required to participate in ad-hoc work groups convened by United Way to address critical community issues through a solutions-focused process. They will report indicators to United Way every six months, setting and measuring meaningful outcomes. United Way will provide funding for program capacity, and leverage the broad United Way network to convene and amplify the service provider network.

### Education A High Priority

Education is consistently ranked high as a priority, and United Way recognizes education is vital, and starts even before kindergarten. By focusing on kindergarten readiness, grade level reading, after-school, and mentoring programs, United Way hopes to cultivate a community where children not only thrive, but are also well-equipped for successful futures.

In Cleveland, more than 45% of children need literacy and language interventions when they begin kindergarten, and 46% percent of students do not test at third-grade proficiency levels. Only 69% graduate high school in four years. To set our youth up for success, we need to positively impact their lives as early as possible to ensure they can build positive relationships, confidence, academic and leadership skills.

United Way believes shaping someone's future starts at birth. Adult outcomes such as college attendance rates, home ownership and even 401(k) savings have been linked with kindergarten test scores. Children who do not read proficiently by the end of third grade are four times more like-

ly to leave school without a diploma than those children who are proficient. Research shows that mentoring and after-school programs can positively impact children in the long term. In fact, young adults who were at risk of falling off track but had a mentor were 55% more likely to enroll in college than those children who did not have mentors.

Last year, 63 of 80 United Way-funded child care centers in greater Cleveland were rated as four or five stars through the Step Up to Quality five-star rating program. Additionally, its programs helped 482 students

**For every \$1 invested in social-emotional learning programs, there is a return of \$11.**

to begin reading or progress toward reading at grade level. After-school and mentoring programs helped 835 elementary school students improve social and emotional skills, and 81% of high school students are on track to graduate.

### United Way Counts on You

The United Way's workplace campaign is a critical part of its fundraising efforts. Last year, United Way was able to put just over \$31 million back into our community to help fight poverty. Donors can designate the area(s) they would like their contributions to go.

"The United Way of Greater Cleveland provides vital assistance to many of our students and their families," said President David Quolke. "Your contributions through CMDS's United Way campaign can make a significant difference in the lives of our students, and in the greater Cleveland community. Please be as generous as you can in supporting the United Way campaign in your school."

**Every student who does not complete high school costs our society \$260,000 in lost earnings, taxes and productivity.**



United Way of  
Greater Cleveland



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## CTU Provides PD for Chapter Chairs

**“The chapter chairs are the CTU’s first line of defense when it comes to contract enforcement and members’ representation in the buildings,” said Michael Kulcsar, CTU Treasurer and Bargaining Unit Director. “Their jobs as union leaders are tremendously important, and often very difficult. CTU recognizes that, and we work to provide them with the training and support they need to do their union-related jobs well.”**

“Training and professional development for chapter chairs is essential,” added Mark Baumgartner, CTU Trustee-at-Large and Director of Professional Issues. “President Quolke and the CTU Executive Board recognize this, and will continue to provide PD sessions to help inform and train chapter chairs.”

All CTU chapter chairs, along with Executive Board members, attend the Leadership Conference every fall, organized by Leadership Co-Chairs Michael Kulcsar and Michelle Rzucidlo, CTU Secretary. The two-day event provides them with information on current educational and union topics. Chapter chairs also receive additional updates and info at monthly Delegate Assemblies, and through email updates.

The Union recognizes that new chapter chairs, and the chapter chairs at the Corrective Action schools, have additional demands and needs. To meet the specific needs of these two groups, CTU is bringing each of the two groups together for three additional days throughout the school year.

The CTU is bringing together all 23 Corrective Action school chapter chairs for all-day professional development on Delegate Assembly days in September, November, and April, and all 29 new chapter chairs for all-day professional development on Delegate Assembly days in October, January, and February.

The first meeting with the Corrective Action chairs, held at the CTU office September 7, centered around community outreach tied to Don Freeman and his Education Committee community-based organization. This was a continuation of a summer meeting held with the Education Committee and some Correction Action school reps over the summer. The entire group will be back in November to finalize first steps in community outreach to aid educators and schools.

This is the third year that CTU has provided this much-needed union-led professional development for its chapter chairs. “The training is always well-received,” said Mr. Baumgartner, “and both the CTU leadership and the chapter chairs learn much from each other during these meetings.”

“Ongoing training for chapter chairs continues to be an important priority,” said Mr. Kulcsar. “The knowledge and skills of the CTU’s chairpersons are critical elements in ensuring that the CBA is enforced in every building, and our members’ rights are protected.”



Chapter Chairs from the 23 Corrective Action schools and CTU officers participate in a Union-led PD session as part of the CTU’s ongoing commitment to support and train its building leaders.



### Wear Your CTU Pride!

CTU apparel is now available for sale online! The Cleveland Teachers Union apparel site at <http://www.ctu279apparel.com/> is live and taking custom orders now.

The Legislative Committee introduced samples of new clothing items at the November Delegate Assembly.

Now you can order your custom union-made and union-printed gear online at <http://www.ctu279apparel.com/>.

If you have any questions, contact Legislative Chairperson Elisa Kazek at [ekazek@ctu279.org](mailto:ekazek@ctu279.org).

Show your CTU pride and support other union members — check out the website today.





Cassandra Carter, Social Committee Chairperson and member-at-large, K-8, and hostess extraordinaire, welcomed retirees and their guests to the CTU's Annual Retirement Luncheon at Windows-on-the-River.



Michelle Rzucidlo, CTU Secretary, congratulated retirees on behalf of the CTU Executive Board. She shared words of wisdom from Robert Fulghum's *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, closing with: "And it is still true, no matter how old you are, when you go out into the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together."



Teresa Green, President of CTU's retiree union chapter, 279-R, urged retirees to stay active and involved, and remain lifetime union members.

Retiree Kathi Vogler (center) is greeted by Mooney co-workers Cheryl Neylon, CTU Sergeant-at-Arms, and Lisa Arraj, Chapter Chair.



Kudos to the Social Committee members for the wonderful celebration honoring CTU retirees!



CTU's "Class of 2017" retirees posed for group photo before the luncheon.

# CTU Honors Recent Retirees

The CTU hosted its annual Retirement Celebration at Windows-on-the-River on the Flats West Bank September 9. The luncheon is organized by Cassandra Carter, Social Committee Chairperson and K-8 Member-at-Large, and the CTU Social Committee.

The All City Arts Jazz Alumni Band performed while 30 retirees and their guests arrived, and enjoyed hors-d'oeuvres and beverages. They were

greeted by the Social Committee and officers of the CTU's Retiree Chapter, 279-R.

The program began with Ms. Carter congratulating CTU retirees, and welcoming them and their guests to the event. Michelle Rzucidlo, speaking on behalf of the CTU Executive Board, thanked retirees for their years of service to Cleveland children. She encouraged them to enjoy their retirement years, and inspired them with an excerpt from Robert Fulghum's book, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten: Uncommon Thoughts On Common Things*. After an invocation by Patricia Forrai-Gunter, lunch was served.

Following lunch, 279-R President and former CTU officer Teresa Green officially inducted the retirees into 279-R. She challenged them to remain active and engaged in the community through the retiree chapter and other opportunities, and to be lifetime union members. Finally, Ms.

Carter and members of the CTU Executive Board announced each retiree, and presented them with gifts: a clock, an apple-shaped medallion, and a group photo.

The CTU Retirement Luncheon has been a long-standing activity of the Social Committee for over four decades. "It's important for someone to honor the years of service each of our retiring members has given to the children, the Union, and the Cleveland community," said Ms. Carter. "This annual event is the Union's opportunity to thank every recent CTU retiree."

Three retiring former CTU Chapter Chairs were recognized: Paul Meyer, Karen Petro, and Kathi Vogler.



Retiring para Della Green (center) is congratulated by Cherylane Jones-Williams, CTU Paraprofessional Chapter Chair, and Michelle Rzucidlo, CTU Secretary and Ms. Green's former co-worker.



# THE CLEVELAND TEACHERS UNION — A HISTORY

## Part Eight of a Series: Recollecti

by Pamela Hummer



### A Synopsis

On September 7, 1978, on what should have been the first day of school in Cleveland Public Schools (CPS), over 9,000 members of all six employee unions went on strike. The Unity Strike effectively closed the schools for 100,000 CPS students.

CPS was broke. “Years of financial mismanagement had come home to roost,” said pundits. CPS employees were among the lowest-paid school workers in the county, with no raise in two years. They had endured “payless paydays” the previous year, when the District had no money to pay its employees for weeks, until the state stepped in with a loan. CPS was facing an imminent state takeover for financial reasons, and was also under a federal desegregation order.

Amid the CPS chaos, on the picket lines, strikers were calm and resolute. There was no law in Ohio at the time guaranteeing the right of public employee unions to strike; it was uncharted legal territory. They remained determined.

Negotiators tried to reach an agreement. The state would provide a loan, but there were strings attached, and it couldn’t be used for raises. The longtime CBOE President resigned on September 15, replaced by the 27-year-old Vice President whose judgment and maturity was questioned by many. The strike stretched into October, picketers unwavering and no end in sight. A Strike Welfare Committee worked to provide assistance as possible, with no paydays for employees since before the strike began.

A proposal was finally reached, and announced to the unions on October 4. It was rejected by a 3-2 margin in a mass vote that same day. Union members said it had “too many ifs and not enough guarantees,” including raises contingent on the unlikely passage of a November levy.

The next day, October 5, a judge issued a back-to-work order, threatening fines and possible jail time for union leaders and individual members. CTU Executive Secretary (equivalent to today’s CTU President) James O’Meara defied the order, stating: “We feel our members have spoken. The strike is still on, and pickets will be on duty as usual.”

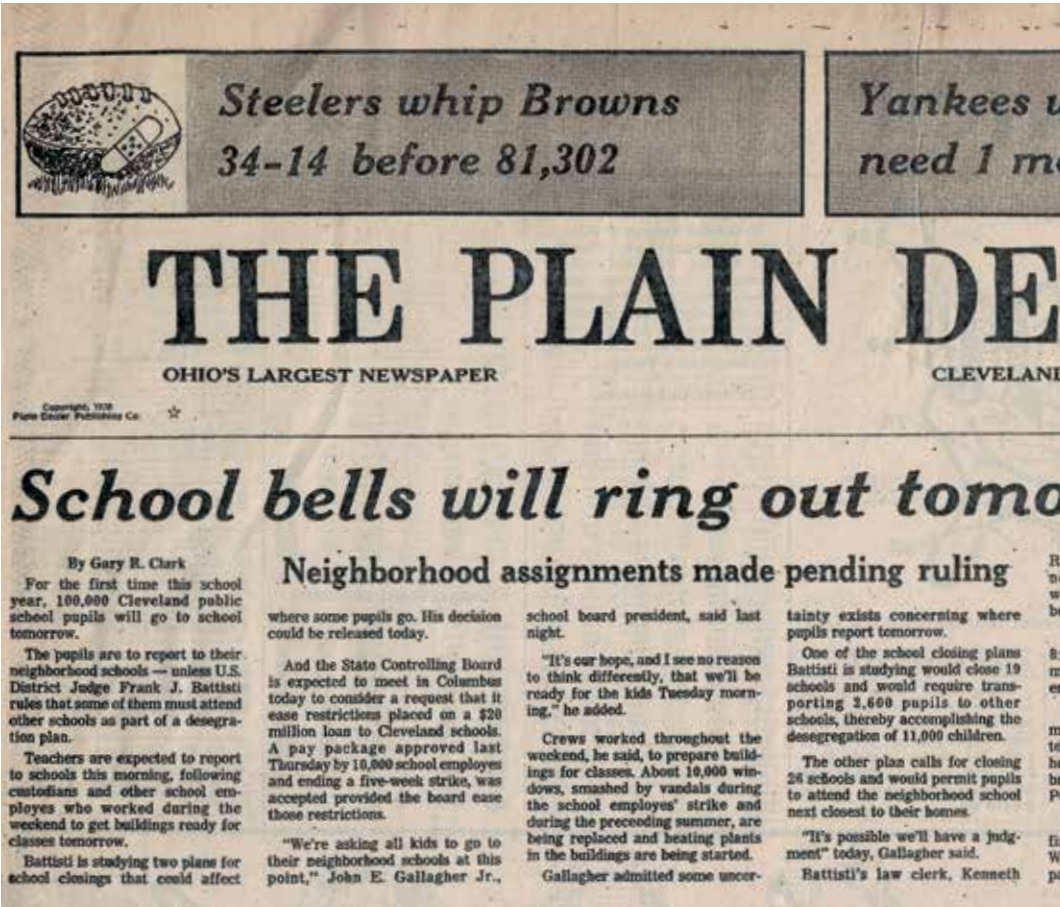
Striking employees did return to their buildings the next day, but only

to picket. The judge charged Mr. O’Meara with contempt of court October 6. Food stamps and other government assistance to strikers was cut off, since the strike was now declared illegal.

On October 7, Mr. O’Meara was found guilty, fined \$500, and sentenced to ten days in jail, the maximum allowed. Again, the judge ordered strikers back to work, and negotiations to resume on Sunday, October 8. On Monday, October 9, strikers continued to defy the order and resumed picketing. Only about 160 out of 5,000 CTU members reported to work and were designated “scabs.”

On October 10, CBOE and Union leaders met with state officials in Columbus to try to change the rules governing the state loan. On October 12, the changes were made, the impasse was broken, and a proposal was made to the unions, including an 8% guaranteed raise.

In another mass meeting and ensuing vote at Public Hall that same day, the proposal narrowly passed, 2,358 for to 2,212 against. Less than half of the 10,000 striking union members voted. Since it was a Unity Strike, results of individual union’s votes were not announced, only the totals. It was quietly reported that CTU had rejected it by 125 votes, but the strike was over.



### CTU Negotiator

Joseph Vargo held several offices in the CTU for many years, and served as a negotiator in the 1978 strike. He was CTU’s long-time Director of Negotiations.

Joe recalled the legal uncertainty of the strike, since it happened before a collective bargaining law for public employees in Ohio. No one knew for sure what legal repercussions the strike would bring to union officers and members.

Negotiating with a bankrupt school district that was under a federal desegregation order brought additional challenges to union negotiators. But striking employees were unyielding, and officials in Columbus and at the Board got their message of solidarity. Once the rules governing the state loan were changed, and it could be used for raises, a settlement was possible.



### Assistant Strike Captain

Teresa M. Green was CTU Elementary Member-at-Large, and a teacher at Almira Elementary during the strike. Later, she was the CTU Treasurer for many years, and now serves as President of 279-R, CTU’s retiree chapter.

Teresa was one of several Assistant Strike Captains under CTU Strike Captain Richard Farmer. They coor-

minated a committee of Strike Field Reps. One of their jobs was to find out who was crossing the lines. Committee members then called the scabs, to “have a conversation.”

She was asked to go on TV for an interview with Dorothy Fuldheim, the



first lady of the Cleveland news media at the time (google her!) to discuss the strike. Teresa recalls being very nervous, but found Ms. Fuldheim extremely supportive

of the strikers and the unions. And she remembers parents being understanding of the strikers, often bringing them coffee and snacks on the picket line.



# ions of the 1978 Six-Week Strike



## CTU Strike Welfare Committee Coordinator

Joanne DeMarco served on the CTU Executive Board in several different offices for 30 years, including Grievances and Negotiations, culminating as CTU President in 2004 until her retirement in 2008. During the strike, she was a Trustee and Strike Welfare Coordinator.

Joanne remembered the camaraderie, strength, and solidarity union members felt on the picket lines. As Strike Welfare Coordinator, she arranged for CTU members to get limited loans through the credit union, food stamps, and medical help. She worked with the United Labor Agency to provide emergency assistance and mediation between creditors and teachers who couldn't pay their bills.

As difficult as the long strike was, she felt it was important in establishing the CTU as a strong union. It demonstrated to the community — and to CTU members — the power they have when they stand together.



CTU Strike Welfare Committee Coordinator JoAnne DeMarco, center; and East Tech Building Chairperson John Hummer, right.

She admits that she loved being on the picket line!



## High School Building Chairperson

John A. Hummer was Building Chairperson (now called Chapter Chairperson) at East Tech High School during the strike. He later served as CTU 3rd Vice President, Senior/Special, and remained as Chapter Chairperson at Tech for 27 years.

John recalled the high schools as being the area hubs to which junior high and elementary schools reported during the strike. Representatives from the smaller "feeder schools" reported to the area high school each day, and from there the information was taken downtown to the union offices. The high schools became the center of communication where people brought their schools' picket line reports (names of picketers and scabs) and received the daily Unity Strike Report, a one-page memo of strike news, to take back to their members.

Strike communication was vastly more difficult then, with no cell phones, no cordless phones, no internet, and not even an answering machine in most homes! Photocopiers were rare and prohibitively expensive. Everything had to be typed, written, or stenciled on a master; limited copies could be made on ditto machines, but mimeograph machines were needed to make large numbers of copies. Strike communication required all-day efforts from many people.

John recalled East Tech, like other high schools, becoming unofficial social gathering spots as well as the official reporting/news centers for picketers. This was particularly true as the strike wore on, and it was harder to keep morale up. Several high schools became popular sites for potlucks, cookouts, and other unofficial get-togethers for picketers, building solidarity and raising spirits among union members.



## Elementary Building Chairperson

Florence Carter was Building Chairperson at Iowa-Maple School during the strike, and later served as CTU Treasurer.

Florence remembered the solidarity of the Unity Strike, with all CPS unions participating. Building chairs



had the important job of organizing the picket lines and keeping buildings closed until the strike was settled. Most parents and people in the community supported the strikers, knowing CPS teachers and staff were the lowest-paid

or near the lowest-paid in the county, and supported them getting a raise.

Even though the strike lasted for six weeks, it was understood that virtually all CPS students would be coming back, since there were no voucher programs or charter schools then. A few families moved or sent their children to parochial schools, but for the most part, the 100,000 students returned to CPS when the strike ended.



## CPS Parent

Can you guess this CTU Executive Board member who was a parent with a child in CPS during the strike?

I was working, but not in the schools, during the 1978 strike. I was a single parent with a young school-age son in CPS at the time. I worried about what I would do for child care. Some CPS administrators were encouraging parents to send their



children to school in the first days of the strike, before schools closed, to try to break the strike.

Thankfully, my parents were able to help out. They were always very supportive of teachers. And my father was very clear about picket lines. His exact words were: "I didn't raise no scabs." We all respected teachers — and picket lines. I'm proud to be a teacher and CTU officer today.



## CPS Students

Can you guess these two CTU Executive Board members who were ninth-grade students in CPS during the strike?

I was in ninth grade at Carl F. Shuler Junior High. I remember thinking the strike wouldn't last long, but then it went on for six weeks. We couldn't really plan anything, because we expected it would end any day, and we'd have to go to school. When we had to make up the days, we lost holidays and vacations, and the last day of school was on Saturday, June 30, 1979! I thought that was the worst thing in the world. Now as a CTU officer, I understand what CTU was fighting for then.



I was in ninth grade at Charles A. Mooney Junior High. I had recently gotten a

part-time job at Burger King, but due to my age, was limited in the number of hours I could work when school was in session. When schools officially closed during the strike, I was glad because I could work additional hours then! I made a lot of extra money that fall, but it was not fun making up the days when schools reopened. I'm proud to be a teacher at Mooney now, and a CTU officer.



Next: Back to School After the 1978 Strike

Answers: CPS parent was Dorothy Fair, Trustee, Senior/Special. CPS students were Michelle Rzuwido, Secretary, and Cheryl Neylon, Sergeant-at-Arms.



# America's Healthcare Crisis

As this issue was going to print, President Donald Trump had announced an executive order that would defund federal subsidies provided under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), or Obamacare.

These critical subsidies enable insurance companies to reduce healthcare costs to lower-income individuals and families by allowing their enrollment in plans with reduced co-pays, deductibles and coinsurance rates. At press time, 19 Attorneys General had joined in a lawsuit against this order, citing concerns about immediate and long-term harm to individual citizens and their states as a whole. Others were considering joining them.

Ohio's Attorney General has not joined the lawsuit. However, Governor John Kasich blasted the President's decision, saying, "That would be a disaster. No, he's got to continue to fund it. No, you cannot just cut this off and create more chaos."

In June, as the GOP was attempting in vain to repeal the ACA with no adequate replacement, the AFT held the Healthcare Leaders Conference. CTU Nurses Chapter Chair Patricia Forrai-Gunter and Patricia Forrai-Gunter, and CTU nurses Lenny Gregory and Beverly Scott attended the conference, titled "AFT Healthcare Professionals: Protecting Our Patients, Professions, and Communities."

Of the wealthiest industrialized nations in the world, the United States has the dubious distinction of being the only one that does not provide some form of universal healthcare to its citizens. And instead of working to improve access and lower costs, the political leadership in Washington seems bent on going backwards when it comes to Americans' healthcare.

We are in a time of unprecedented attacks on access to affordable healthcare for many in our communities. The right to healthcare is essential to a decent quality of life. Whether we work to expand this right to all American families — or restrict it to only those who can afford it — is a choice that reflects on the values of our democratic society.

**Student health matters.** AFT



Patricia Forrai-Gunter, CTU Nurses Chapter Chair, rallies for healthcare in Washington, D.C. while at the AFT Healthcare Leaders Conference.

believes schools can help fill gaps in access to care. AFT's blueprint healthcare plan for students, THRIVE, includes six points.

**Transform school capacity.** With help from local medical personnel and organizations, a school-based health center can improve access to health services and prevent emergency room visits.

**Honor school health staff.** Fight for appropriate staffing to address all students' needs. Full-time positions and safe staffing ratios for school nurses, counselors, social workers, psychologists, and other professionals are imperative.

**Repeal and replace.** Not the ACA, but repealing old language about school services covered by Medicaid. Be sure your state and district are not using outdated language that restricts Medicaid reimbursement for covered school health services.

**Illuminate what is hidden.** School funding formulas often rely on "average daily attendance" figures that obscure trends in



CMSD nurses Lenny Gregory and Beverly Scott, with fellow nurse Tom Stinson from Minnesota, learn about AFT strategies to support students' physical, mental, and social well-being at the Conference.

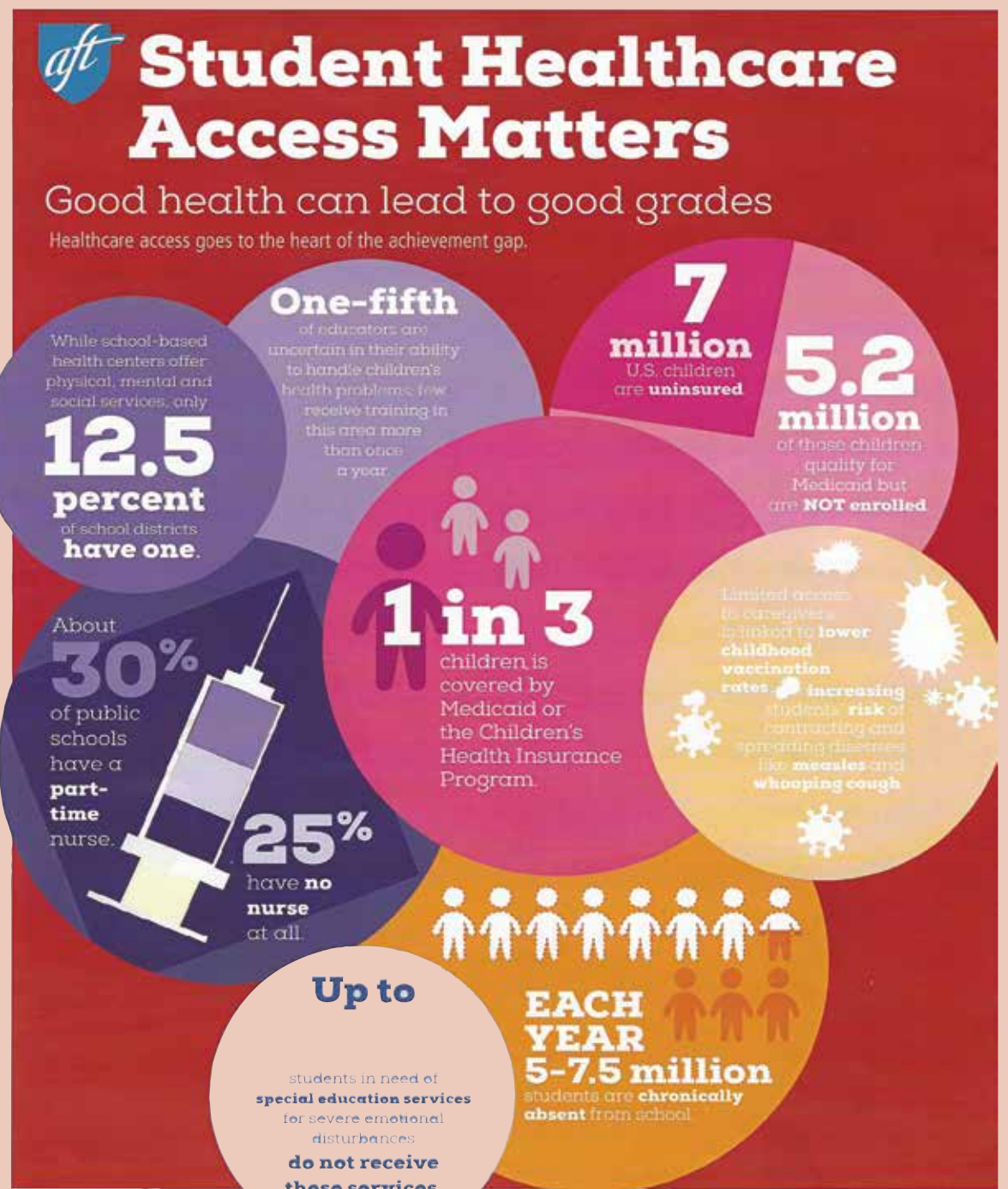
chronic absenteeism. Find out who isn't in class and why.

**Vouch for the ACA.** Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, many more children and their families have health insurance. Support this groundbreaking law, and urge lawmakers to advocate for progress to improve, not dismantle, the ACA.

**Engage community partners.** Adopt a community school model. Providing wraparound services can lower

hospitalization rates, improve immunization rates, reduce illness, and reduce high-risk and disruptive behavior.

"Affordable, accessible healthcare is vitally important for us and our families, just as it is for our students and their families," said Ms. Forrai-Gunter. "Their healthcare situation matters too, and we must be advocates for them."



# Paras Speak Out

by Centralia Scott  
H. Barbara Booker

I asked several CMSD paraprofessionals from schools across the city how they felt testing affects what happens in the classroom. Over 90% said they felt there is too much testing.

Most respondents stated that testing caused students to be unsettled in their learning routines. As one para stated, "Testing comes at students — bam, bam, bam one after another. Because of the frequency of testing, most students do not take the tests seriously. I've seen them put their heads down and sleep for the duration of the test."

The following are some additional responses, both positive and negative.

- "Very frustrating for students. Sad to see the students giving up or not even trying — their morale is sunk."
- "Rough on students and very confusing to them. They want to know why every year they take the same tests."
- "Drives students to the brink of despair, and too many students feel deflated with their test scores. They quickly lose sight of why should they even try."
- "Over-testing does not cultivate education and minimizes student creativity."
- "Too much testing is not fun and students do not see the rewards."

- "Students do get quite elated when they score high or improve their scorers."
- "Students feel a sense of accomplishment because they can see how well they used different strategies for taking/passing tests."
- "Students feel motivated to see their data wall with improvements."
- "Testing is a means of seeing milestones for how students develop academically from year to year."
- "Educators can better monitor what students know and in what areas students need improvement."
- "Documentation and data are pertinent to education and student development."
- "It's an oxymoron — education reform and testing. All the time and money spent on testing could be better used to get students to where they need to be to succeed."
- "Ironic — CMSD is trying to follow the 'Model of School Reform,' and the districts who are 'successful' often times are the wealthier districts, and their curriculum and structure are more or less cater-

ing to corporate America. And as it is very well-known, they have their own set of problems . . . and failures."

- "No real clear definition of what standards are and who sets these standards. Also, very little information of what are the long-term

effects of these standards, especially in the Inner City."

- "And of course, the question always comes to bear . . . are students being tested or are teachers being tested? There is an overwhelming feeling that testing is just a ploy to eradicate the public school system."

## Testing, Testing, Testing...

## Tell Us What It Looks Like in YOUR Classroom!

The testing craze that flourished under No Child Left Behind has changed what happens in America's classrooms. As educators, we understand that assessment has a key role in education. But we also understand first-hand the detrimental effects of excessive testing, and we can see — up close and personally — what it does to our students.

Some states and districts have realized this, and are beginning to reduce the testing burden on students and teachers. Hopefully, the testing pendulum will start to swing back to more rational levels across the nation.

The CTU is looking for your personal stories, experiences, and insights about testing as it is currently required in your school and class, and what it means to your students. What do you and your students gain from it, and what do they lose from spending the required school time on testing?

Please send your comments about what testing looks like in your classroom, including your grade level/subject area, to the Critique staff at [critique@ctu279.org](mailto:critique@ctu279.org). We will print selected comments in future issues.

## Members' Activism Needed! CTU Endorses

## Betty Sutton for Governor

The CTU has endorsed former Congresswoman Betty Sutton for governor of Ohio, citing her long history of standing up for educators, students, and families in her distinguished career as an attorney, state representative, and member of Congress.

"Betty Sutton understands that providing a good education to our students is the most important thing we can do to grow and strengthen our workforce and economy," said CTU President David Quolke. "Betty is a leader with the experience and fortitude to take on the special interests and put the education of Ohio's children first. It is time to elect a governor who supports our educators, children, and families and will move Ohio forward."

"We can no longer afford to short-change public education in any district or at any level, said Ms. Sutton. "As governor, I

will stand with our educators to provide students with opportunities for success and build a well-prepared workforce to propel Ohio businesses and our economy forward."

"Ohioans deserve a state, and a governor, where educators and public education are appreciated and supported, and Betty Sutton's record and her vision have earned her this endorsement," explained President Quolke. "All of Ohio deserves Betty Sutton, and all that she stands for and will do as the next Governor of Ohio."

Ohio's primary elections will be held in the spring of 2018, and the election for governor — as well as elections for other important federal, state, and local positions — will be held in November 2018.

"The CTU will be calling on its members to help us work to elect candidates who support public education, unions, and the middle class," said Kurt Richards,

Betty Sutton, CTU's endorsed candidate for Governor, spoke at the Leadership Conference at Sawmill Creek. Pictured here with David Quolke (top right), Tracy Radich (right), Dorothy Fair and Elisa Kazek (left).



CTU 2nd Vice President and Director of Political Action/COPE (Committee On Political Education). "As public educators and union members, we can complain about things we wish were different, or work to elect leaders and legislators who will make those positive changes. I look forward to seeing all CTU members participate in the upcoming election season, in support of our endorsed candidates."



# Endorsements

## AFL-CIO North Shore

- ☒ BEDFORD COUNCIL WARD 3  
**Vic Fluharty**
- ☒ BEDFORD MUNICIPAL COURT  
**Brian J. Melling**
- ☒ BRECKSVILLE CITY COUNCIL  
**Jack Petsche**
- ☒ BRECKSVILLE BROADVIEW BD. OF ED  
**Fred E. Pedersen III**
- ☒ BROOK PARK MAYOR  
**Michael D. Gammella**
- ☒ BROOK PARK COUNCIL PRESIDENT  
**Jim Astorino**
- ☒ BROOK PARK COUNCIL AT-LARGE  
**Brian Poindexter**
- ☒ BROOKLYN COUNCIL AT-LARGE  
**Meg Ryan Shockey**
- ☒ **Kevin Tanski**
- ☒ BROOKLYN HEIGHTS MAYOR  
**Michael Procuk**
- ☒ CLEVELAND COUNCIL WARD 3  
**Kerry McCormack**
- ☒ CLEVELAND COUNCIL WARD 4  
**Gail Sparks**
- ☒ CLEVELAND COUNCIL WARD 6  
**Blaine A. Griffin**
- ☒ CLEVELAND COUNCIL WARD 10  
**Anthony Hairston**
- ☒ CLEVELAND COUNCIL WARD 11  
**Dona Brady**
- ☒ CLEVELAND COUNCIL WARD 14  
**Jasmin Santana**
- ☒ CLEVELAND COUNCIL WARD 16  
**Brian Kazy**
- ☒ CLEVELAND COUNCIL WARD 17  
**Martin J. Keane**
- ☒ CLEVELAND JUDGE FTC 1-1-18  
**Joseph J. Zone**
- ☒ CLEVELAND JUDGE FTC 1-2-18  
**Jazmin Torres-Lugo**
- ☒ CLEVELAND JUDGE FTC 1-3-18  
**Pinkey S. Carr**
- ☒ CLEVELAND JUDGE FTC 1-4-18  
**Lynn McLaughlin Murray**
- ☒ CLEVELAND JUDGE FTC 1-5-18  
**Michael L. Nelson, Sr.**
- ☒ CLEVELAND JUDGE UTE 1-1-20  
**Ronald J. H. O'Leary**
- ☒ CLEVELAND JUDGE UTE 1-2-22  
**Ann Clare Oakar**

- ☒ CLEVELAND HTS. SCHOOL BOARD  
**Dan Heintz**
- ☒ CLEVELAND HTS. CITY COUNCIL  
**T. Nadas**
- ☒ **Cheryl L. Stephens**
- ☒ **Michael Ungar**
- ☒ **Melissa Yasinow**
- ☒ CLEVELAND HTS. MUNICIPAL COURT  
**James J. Costello**
- ☒ EUCLID COUNCIL PRESIDENT  
**Charlene Mancuso**
- ☒ EUCLID COUNCIL WARD 8  
**Laura Gorshe**
- ☒ EUCLID MUNICIPAL COURT  
**Patrick J. Gallagher**
- ☒ GARFIELD HTS. COUNCIL WARD 2  
**Joe LaMalfa**
- ☒ GARFIELD HEIGHTS MAYOR  
**Vic Collova**
- ☒ LAKEWOOD COUNCIL AT-LARGE  
**Tom Bullock**
- ☒ **Cindy Marx**
- ☒ **Ryan P. Nowlin**
- ☒ LAKEWOOD BOARD OF EDUCATION  
**Ed Favre**
- ☒ LYNDBURST MUNICIPAL COURT  
**Mary Kaye Bozza**
- ☒ MAPLE HTS. COUNCIL DISTRICT 1  
**Stafford L. Shenett**
- ☒ N. OLMSTED COUNCIL WARD 2  
**Dan Rahm**
- ☒ N. ROYALTON COUNCIL WARD 3  
**Dan Langshaw**
- ☒ N. ROYALTON COUNCIL WARD 6  
**Cheryl Hannan**
- ☒ OLMSTED FALLS MAYOR  
**James Patrick Graven**
- ☒ PARMA COUNCIL WARD 7  
**Brian Brochetti**
- ☒ PARMA SCHOOL BOARD  
**Amanda Karpus**
- ☒ **John Schweitzer**
- ☒ **Steve Vaughn**
- ☒ ROCKY RIVER COUNCIL WARD 3  
**Katie Timmons**
- ☒ ROCKY RIVER COUNCIL AT-LARGE  
**Rob McRae**
- ☒ WILLOUGHBY MUNICIPAL COURT  
**Laura DePledge**

- ☒ SHAKER HEIGHTS CITY COUNCIL  
**Sarah Megenhardt**
- ☒ SOLON MAYOR  
**Edward H. Kraus**
- ☒ SOLON COUNCIL WARD 2  
**Robert N. Pelunis**
- ☒ SOUTH EUCLID COUNCIL WARD 1  
**Ruth I. Gray**
- ☒ SOUTH EUCLID COUNCIL WARD 3  
**Sara Continenza**
- ☒ SOUTH EUCLID MUNICIPAL COURT  
**Gayle Williams-Byers**
- ☒ STRONGSVILLE COUNCIL AT-LARGE  
**Joseph DeMio**
- ☒ UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS COUNCIL  
**John Rach**
- ☒ UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS MAYOR  
**Michael D. Brennan**
- ☒ ISSUE 59 (PORT AUTHORITY)  
**Yes**
- ☒ ISSUE 60 (CLEVELAND LIBRARY)  
**Yes**
- ☒ ISSUE 61 (TRI-C)  
**Yes**

## CTU Endorsements Cleveland City Council

WARD 1	<b>Terrell Pruitt</b>
WARD 2	none
WARD 3	<b>Kerry McCormack</b>
WARD 4	none
WARD 5	<b>Phyllis E. Cleveland</b>
WARD 6	<b>Blaine Griffin</b>
WARD 7	<b>Mansfield Frazier</b>
WARD 8	<b>Mike Polensek</b>
WARD 9	none
WARD 10	<b>Anthony Hairston</b>
WARD 11	<b>Dona Brady</b>
WARD 12	<b>Anthony Brancatelli</b>
WARD 13	<b>Kevin Kelley</b>
WARD 14	<b>Brian Cummins</b>
WARD 15	<b>Matt Zone</b>
WARD 16	<b>Brian Kazy</b>
WARD 17	<b>Martin J. Keane</b>

**OFT Recommends**  
**Vote NO on Issue 2**

## The Union Endorsement

How do candidates get a union endorsement? “The CTU and OFT have extensive questionnaires that candidates must complete first, in order to be considered for our endorsement,” explained Kurt Richards, CTU 2nd Vice President and Director of Political Action/COPE.

The questionnaires obtain basic information, such as background, education, and offices held. OFT asks candidates about their positions on issues such as school funding, education budget, charters and vouchers, health care, college access, collective bargaining and workers’ rights, and pensions. CTU asks candidates similar questions, including about charter school accountability, vouchers, school funding, tax abatements, TIF and Hold Schools Harmless issues, privatizing of public services, and other union- and education-related topics.

Sometimes candidates are invited for an interview, to get more detailed answers and information about their positions.

Once all the information has been received and reviewed, the COPE Committee makes recommendations based on candidates’ responses and their past records in supporting unions, public education, and related issues.

The Executive Board reviews and discusses the recommendations from COPE, and has the final vote on whether to endorse a candidate or not. The CTU endorses in city races only in the city of Cleveland. The Union can also decide to make no endorsement in a race.

# THE PRESIDENT’S REPORT

BY DAVID J. QUOLKE

## Proud to be Union . . . Proud to be AFT/OFT . . . Proud to be CTU!

■ continued from page 16

Federation of Teachers (OFT). You have a collective bargaining agreement that guarantees job protections and working conditions, and fairness in their application. You have union representation in any problems on the job. You have access to a grievance process that resolves, remedies, and compensates for any contractual violations. You have policies for sick leave, assault leave, special privilege leave, and other leave that are available as needed, with no risk to your employment status.

Along with job protections, the CTU works to enhance and improve educators’ careers. CTU committees provide a variety of workshops and professional development, as well as social events that promote collegiality. CTU partners with the District on positive educational initiatives such as social-emotional learning, expanded early childhood opportunities, Peer Assistance and Review, ER&D for new educators, and annual AAP and SLO training. CTU works with community partners to forge mutually-beneficial relationships and help improve education for all children.

Our union — AFT, OFT, CTU — provides a multitude of benefits, tangible and intangible, but most

important, it provides a voice and strength for its members: as a union member, CTU has your back. This was not more evident than in the past few months when Texas, Florida, and Puerto Rico were devastated by hurricanes. In addition to the many individual contributions our members made, the CTU donated \$3,000 to the AFT Disaster Relief Fund. The Houston Federation of Teachers made their offices a central distribution center for supplies, and countless AFT members volunteered to make sure families and members got the support they needed. Our AFT Florida affiliate worked hours to ensure members and families stayed out of harm’s way during the devastating hurricane. And AFT members from across the country volunteered to assist with relief efforts in Puerto Rico, as our newest AFT affiliate deals with a crippling hurricane.

We are not only a union that cares, but a union that fights back. We fight for our students, our communities, and our members. When attacks on unions continue in the current political climate, ask yourself, why are corporations and the ultra-wealthy willing to pay so much money and invest so much effort to weaken and destroy America’s unions?

Molly Ivins, Pulitzer-prize win-

ning American newspaper columnist, author, political commentator, and humorist, understood why: “Although it is true that only about 20 percent of American workers are in unions, that 20 percent sets the standards across the board in salaries, benefits, and working conditions. If you are making a decent salary in a non-union company, you owe that to the unions. One thing that corporations do not do is give out money out of the goodness of their hearts.”

Remember that advice.

In union,  
David J. Quolke



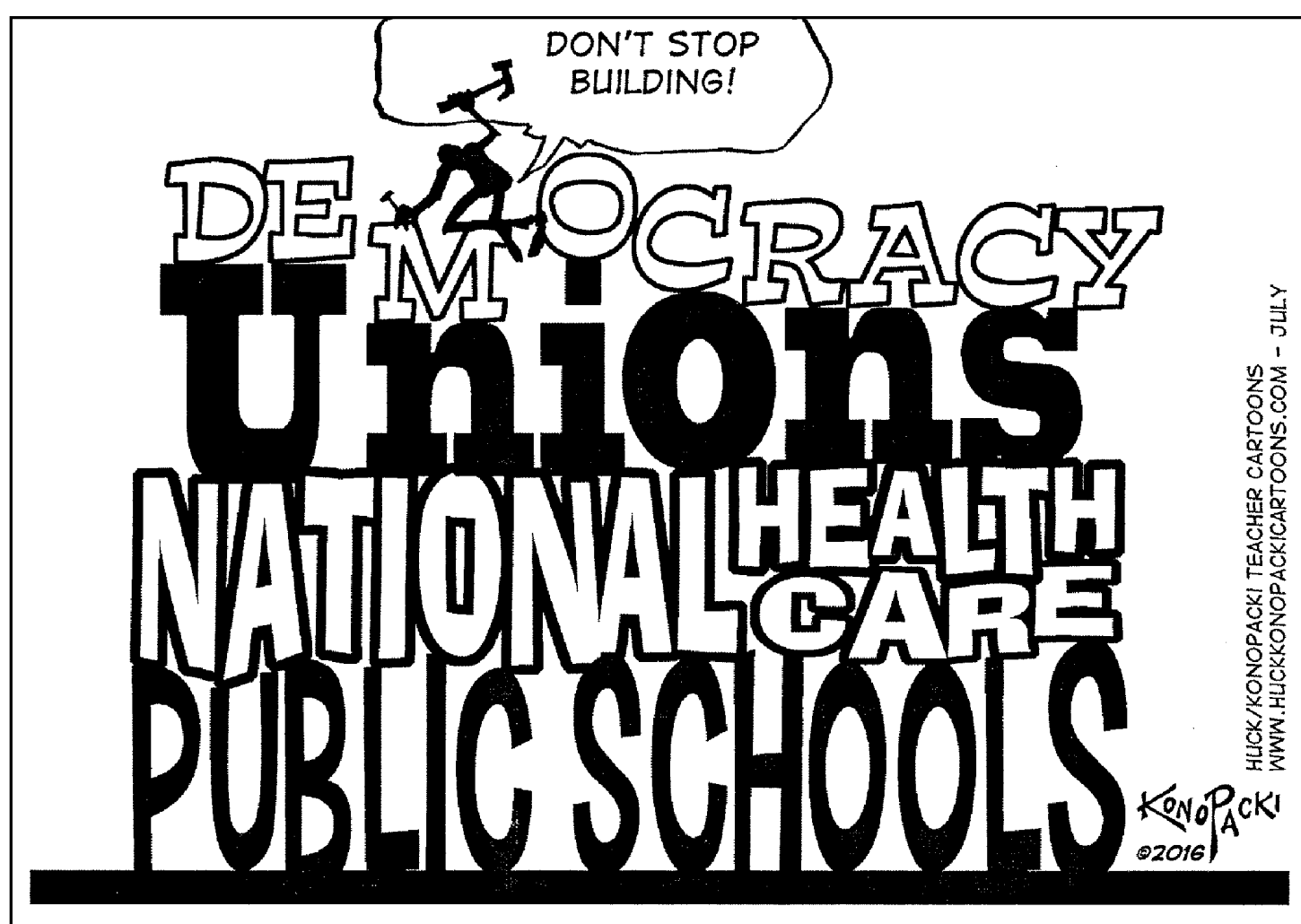
## It’s ALWAYS IPDP Time!

Be sure you *always* have an Approved IPDP (Individual Professional Development Plan) on file. When do 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](mailto:jwagner@ctu279.org)), Bonnie Hedges ([bhedges@ctu279.org](mailto:bhedges@ctu279.org)), or Tracy Radich ([tradich@ctu279.org](mailto:tradich@ctu279.org)).

Remember, the license, certificate, or permit renewal process is part of your professional responsibilities. Get a new IPDP approved as soon as you renew, every time.



# THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY DAVID J. QUOLKE

## Proud to be Union . . . Proud to be AFT/OFT . . . Proud to be CTU!

Watching the seasonal changes of autumn reminds me of the quote, “Change is the only constant in life,” often attributed to the Greek philosopher Heraclitus.

As career educators, our years and series of seasons begin with each new school year. They now start in August, but used to begin in September. Labor Day, the national holiday celebrating America's workers, is the unofficial if not meteorological beginning of fall. This fall, I was struck with the changes from a year ago to now.

The beginning of the 2016-17 school year was apprehensive and unsettled. The last contract had expired, negotiations were at an impasse, CTU members had turned down a contentious Fact-Finder's report and authorized a strike, and the Union was making preparations for the impending strike.

If anyone had questioned the commitment of CTU members, that was answered in July 2016. An afternoon rally outside City Hall on one of the hottest days of the summer drew an overwhelming turnout of CTU members, who changed plans, cancelled appointments, and made arrangements in order to show up and protest CMSD's unwillingness to negotiate. Members who were out of town or unavailable expressed support and encouragement. The District — and the community — saw your solidarity and understood your resolve. Negotiations resumed, and eventually we reached and ratified a new agreement.

Now in the fall of 2017, in the second year of our current three-year contract, we are in a much better place regarding labor-management relations. While not perfect, it's far from the confrontational, adversarial

relationship of a year ago. There is always room for improvement, but this is a valuable window of opportunity. This is the time for CMSD and CTU to work together collaboratively to solve problems. It's a chance to cooperate, use solution-driven unionism, and make genuine improvements to the District that will benefit students and educators. As CEO Gordon and I state in our joint statement in the CBA: “Our greatest success will not be found in the District's offices or the CTU's

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**T**here has been — and continues to be — a concerted effort . . . to destroy unions and weaken the rights of American workers.

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headquarters, but in the labor-management relationships in our schools and departments that turn the elements of this document into successes for students!”

Last month, pundits used Labor Day as a forum to discuss unions and their place in America today, including opinions on the declining relevance of organized labor. They agreed that historically, America's unions were important to raising workers' wages, improving benefits and working conditions, and giving workers a voice in their workplaces. As unions grew, so did the U.S. economy and the American middle class. The rising tide of union membership lifted all boats in a growing American economy and a thriving middle class.

However, union membership has been on the decline for the past 40 years. That may be partially due to the decline of manufacturing jobs, as technology made many of these jobs obsolete.

But there has also been — and continues to be — a concerted effort, led by some GOP lawmakers along with the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), to destroy unions and weaken the rights of American workers. ALEC is an organization of conservative state legislators and private sector representatives who draft and share so-called “model state-level legislation” for state governments. It was behind many anti-union laws, including Ohio's Senate Bill 5/Issue 2 in 2011.

Through ALEC, global corporations

and their wealthy owners are constantly working to rewrite laws that weaken or abolish unions, and boost corporate revenue at workers' expense. These “model bills” that reach into all areas of American life are written behind closed doors, and usually directly benefit huge corporations and the wealthiest Americans, and decimate the middle class.

So-called “right-to-work” laws are a favorite of ALEC; 28 states now have some form of right-to-work law in place. The upcoming U.S. Supreme Court case, *Janus v. AFSCME*, is another attempt to expand right-to-work

conditions and change the current legal precedent of fair-share fees for unions.

Most union members know what fair-share fees are. They are the fees that workers who object to joining the union in a unionized workplace are required to pay — in other words, their fair share of the costs of negotiating and administering the union contract they also benefit from, and advocating for working conditions that are good for our students and fair for our CTU members. Most Americans understand that fair share fees are necessary, reasonable, and simply put, fair. If people want to share all the advantages and benefits that come with working in a unionized workplace, it's only fair that they share a reasonable portion of those costs. It costs money to run an effective union, and all who benefit should help bear the costs.

The Supreme Court has long allowed these fees and upheld their legality. Fair-share fees prevent non-members from free-riding or mooching on the same benefits earned by union members' dues. A 1977 U.S. Supreme Court decision stated: “A union shop arrangement has been thought to distribute fairly the cost of these (representative) activities among those who benefit, and it counteracts the incentive that employees might otherwise have to become ‘free riders’ — to refuse to contribute to the union while obtaining benefits of union representation that necessarily accrue to all employees.” The idea is that everyone benefits from the contract and

its protections, so everyone should pay their fair share of the costs of union representation.

In 1947, a Republican-controlled Congress passed an amendment to the National Labor Relations Act allowing individual states to ban union-security or fair-share agreements. These so-called “Right-to-Work” laws ban agreements that require all workers in the union workplace to pay their fair share of union representation. In other words, in “Right-to-Work” states, workers and employers are banned from negotiating contract provisions insisting all employees covered under that contract join the union (called a “union shop”).

Since then, 22 states have passed right-to-work laws, most of them in the South right after the amendment was passed. Union membership fell in those states, and today their rate of unionization is about half of what it is in free-bargaining states.

Now the long-standing fair-share precedent is under further attack, as some of the Supreme Court's conservatives may try to reverse the long-established American principle. The latest attack is *Janus v. AFSCME*.

What is the effect of weakened unions on workers? One need only look at states with right-to-work laws in place to see that unions provide significant value to workers. In study after study in right-to-work states, on average, those workers have lower wages, fewer benefits, poorer working conditions, weaker job protections, and less on-the-job safety than their counterparts in free-bargaining states.

Union membership in the Cleveland Teachers Union brings numerous and substantial benefits to CTU educators. Besides a competitive salary schedule and guaranteed benefits, including health, dental and vision insurance, your union membership provides a one-million-dollar liability insurance policy through our national affiliate, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). Our affiliation with the AFT and the OFT provide us with advocacy on a federal and state levels in all Ohio communities. You have additional representation, nationally through the AFT, and statewide through the Ohio



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