



CRITIQUE



The Official Publication of the Cleveland Teachers Union

VOL. LI, NUMBER ONE

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2018

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Ohio's Teacher Evaluation Bill and the 'Cleveland Carveout'

Ohio finally seems to be moving in the direction of several other states that have acknowledged student test scores are not necessarily a fair, accurate, or effective way to evaluate and develop good teachers. Senate Bill 240 would change the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) and reduce the reliance on student test scores as a significant part of a teacher's evaluation. But this wasn't a clear path for CTU teachers.

Here's the background. In March 2017, the members of the Ohio Department of Educator Standards Board, which includes CTU Trustee Jim Wagner, and State Superintendent Paolo DiMario, all agreed that Ohio's teacher evaluation system, which relies heavily on student test scores (35-50% of a teacher's rating), should be changed.

Ohio Senator Peggy Lehner (R-Kettering), the Senate's Education

Committee Chair, had agreed to support the panel's recommendation. In December 2017, she introduced legislation aimed at updating OTES. Her bill, SB 240, represented months of work by the Board with considerable input from many stakeholders, including teachers and administrators.

Proponents say SB 240 would make OTES more flexible and effective by updating the current rubric. It would also make revisions to the data used

to measure teacher performance. It would emphasize that teacher evaluations **not** be primarily determined by student test scores.

The goal of the proposed law is to change the mindset of the evaluation process, and make it more about genuine teacher improvement than judging. Isn't that the ultimate goal of the teacher evaluation process: better teaching?

However, CMSD CEO Eric Gordon felt that using test scores to rate teachers is vital to the Cleveland Plan, the improvement plan that Governor John Kasich and the GOP-led legislature approved in 2012. And he testified in Columbus, saying, "I can't

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ELECTION 2018

Cordray, Sutton Join on Gubernatorial Ticket

Richard Cordray, the former director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, and former U.S. Representative Betty Sutton announced January 10 that they will be running together on the same ticket in Ohio's gubernatorial election in November.

Mr. Cordray is running for Governor, while Ms. Sutton has dropped out of the governor's race to run for Lieutenant Governor. The combination will provide a strong ticket for working Ohioans. Mr. Cordray and Ms. Sutton were leading the Democratic field before announcing their joint decision.



"This is just our first step to building a larger team that will be a leadership team for the future of Ohio," Mr. Cordray said. "It will not just be Betty and me, but others who will join us to fulfill the high expectations of all Ohioans."

Ms. Sutton had been campaigning around the state for several months, and was endorsed by CTU. "The truth of the matter is that nobody has done more to stand up for everyday Ohioans than Rich Cordray," she said, "and we are not afraid to take on the tough fights. We'll take on the special interests that have been running things too long in Columbus."

"The CTU will work hard to sup-

port our endorsed candidates in the November 2018 elections," said Kurt Richards, CTU 2nd Vice President and COPE (Committee on Political Education) Director. "I'm counting on CTU members to turn out as they have in

the past, to help elect candidates who support public education, unions, and working Americans."

Mr. Cordray and Ms. Sutton are

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Don't miss the guest Op-Ed Column from U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown on page 2!



In his message to CTU members, he discusses what he believes America should be investing in — public education, teachers, working families — instead of huge tax cuts to wealthy corporations. Senator Brown is pictured here at the CTU office last spring at a press conference with CTU's Mary Moore, opposing proposed health care cuts that would hurt Ohio children.

Cordray, Sutton Join on Gubernatorial Ticket

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both strong supporters of working people and labor. Ms. Sutton served as U.S. Representative in Ohio's Congressional 13th District from 2007 to 2013.

Mr. Cordray was the first head of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, until he stepped down in December.

The CFPB was created in July 2011,

as part of the Dodd Frank Act passed after the financial crisis in 2008. Its job is to ensure banks, lenders, and other financial institutions treat consumers fairly. It assists people who have problems with mortgage lenders, credit reports, debt collectors, and student loan lenders. President Barack Obama appointed Mr. Cordray to lead the CFPB.

During Mr. Cordray's six-year tenure, the CFPB handled more than 1.3

million complaints and returned \$12 billion to nearly 30 million consumers who were harmed by unscrupulous practices of financial institutions. In September 2016, after its fake accounts scandal was uncovered, the CFPB slapped Wells Fargo with \$185 million in penalties. Wells Fargo agreed to pay full restitution to all victims, plus \$100 million fine to the CFPB's civil penalty fund, and \$85 million in other fines. Last fall, the

CFPB adopted a new rule to stop payday loan abuses, making paydays lenders determine if a borrower can actually afford to repay a loan before approving it.

Recently, GOP politicians in DC have been vocally critical of the CFPB's pro-consumer agenda. Consumer watchdogs are concerned that President Donald Trump will appoint a replacement who will put the interests of banks ahead of consumers.

OP-ED FROM SENATOR SHERROD BROWN



AMERICA: Invest in Teachers, Working Families, Public Education!

One of my most important jobs as your U.S. Senator is ensuring that all Ohio children have the tools they need for success, and the opportunity to achieve their dreams — regardless of what zip code they live in, the color of their skin, or what their parents do for a living.

Ohio's teachers are critical to that goal. You all do vital work for too little pay, under relentless attack from people who want to tear down our public education system.

We see that disregard for public education in the tax bill that Congressional Republicans passed before leaving for the holidays. Corporations will receive trillions of dollars in permanent tax cuts, with brand-new, permanent incentives to ship American jobs overseas and hide profits in tax havens in the Caribbean.

But for a teacher making a little over \$50,000 a year, the future is less certain. In 2019, depending on where they live and the size of their family, they may be among those who get a small tax cut, or they may be among the over 9,000,000 middle-

class families whose taxes will immediately go up. And no matter what, under the bill the Senate passed, that same teacher will be paying more in taxes each year starting in 2027.

I offered many amendments to this bill, all designed to put the focus back where it belongs: on you, your family, and your kids. Most of those were rejected in partisan votes, but one of my amendments, to double the teacher deduction for classroom expenses to \$500, was included in the final bill. We know your commitment so often extends far beyond the classroom. You stay after school during hours you aren't paid for; you selflessly dig into your own pockets to buy school supplies; you take

calls and answer emails from parents at home. Doubling this deduction is one way we can put more of your hard-earned money back in your pockets.

I'm also working to hold Ohio's for-profit charter schools accountable. Ohio's for-profit charter school system is a disgrace on our state. Ohio has been called the "wild west" of charter schools, and that's not meant as a compliment. The failure to monitor Ohio's charter schools is denying too many students a quality education and stealing your tax dollars — tax dollars that should be going to educate the nine out of ten Ohio kids in public schools. According to a report from Stanford University's Center for Research on Education Outcomes, students at Ohio's charter schools lose 43 days of math instruction and 14 days of reading instruction, compared with traditional public schools in the state.



Senator Brown has a long record of support for unions and public education. He is pictured here with his wife, Pulitzer-prize winning columnist Connie Schultz, and Kurt Richards, CTU's Director of Political Action.



Senator Brown put his support for labor into action in the SB5/Issue 2 campaign at the CTU's phone bank in 2011. Along with other phone bankers, he worked calls on the automatic phone system, surprising some Ohio voters when they realized they had the "live" Senator on the line and not a robo-call. The anti-union legislation was soundly defeated.

Fundamentally, there's one big difference between the folks running these for-profit companies and our public education professionals: for-profit charter CEOs are in it for the profit. You're in it for the kids. They're using our students to build their bottom lines — you're helping students build their own futures. None of you chose these jobs to get rich. You didn't just choose a career, you chose a way of life. And we know that for-profit charters have stonewalled unionization efforts.

The proliferation of for-profit charters in Ohio is a symptom of the fact that too many people simply don't value public education the way we used to in this country. That's why your work as educators and as union members matters.

By investing in you, we in turn invest in Ohio students, making sure our children have the opportunities and resources they need to grow and succeed. Thank you to CTU members for all that you do to serve the next generation of Ohioans.

— Sherrod Brown

Ohio's Teacher Evaluation Bill and the 'Cleveland Carveout'

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2018 New Year's Resolutions

- ✓ **All CMSD administrators** resolve to read and follow the contract, treating the CBA as it was intended to be — the guidebook for both administration and union members to follow, that helps improve the educational settings for students and educators — and not a list of optional recommendations to be ignored as often as possible.
- ✓ **All CTU members** resolve to read (yes, every page, both books!) the Collective Bargaining Agreement we fought to negotiate, to better understand their rights and responsibilities as union educators, and then to help ensure it is followed in their worksites.
- ✓ **CMSD Payroll** resolves to make certain people are paid correctly, on time, and what they are owed, on every payday.
- ✓ **Special Education personnel** resolve to ensure related service providers have timely access to all tests, protocols, and scoring programs they need to expertly assess students.
- ✓ **Downtown administrators** resolve to remember what it is like to work in a school building, and respect the significant, tremendous day-to-day efforts of all staff who work directly with CMSD children and families every day.
- ✓ **CMSD evaluators** resolve to actually read and interpret the TDES rubric as it was intended, apply the rubric fairly and supportively, and meet TDES timelines and deadlines.
- ✓ **CTU members and qualifying family members** resolve to participate in the Wellness Program, thereby saving themselves money in health care costs while improving their health, the quality of their lives, and possibly their longevity. Kudos to all who participated! And remember, this is an annual process, so plan ahead to meet the deadlines for 2018.
- ✓ **The dedicated members of the Cleveland Teachers Union** resolve to continue to advocate on behalf of their students, despite the obstacles that many others (sometimes even the District, unfortunately) put in their way. You are the voice for Cleveland's children, and you make a difference.
- ✓ **Ohio legislators** resolve to treat CTU educators fairly — without a Cleveland carveout — when they adopt changes to the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System that would limit use of student test scores in teacher evaluations. If the proposed changes are good for every other teacher in the state of Ohio, and are a positive move to make the evaluation process more about genuinely developing good teaching, then why would CEO Eric Gordon want Cleveland teachers to be excluded from these constructive changes?

move away from the importance of having a student's performance as part of a teacher's results. I can't support anything that would erode the Cleveland Plan that we have fought so hard to get. Evaluation is what all the elements of the Cleveland Plan are built upon."

The CTU totally opposes this position. President David Quolke also testified in Columbus. "We want to be included in the (statewide) changes," he said, "and we don't think 3,000 teachers in Cleveland should be treated differently."

In his SB 216 testimony before the Senate Education Committee in Columbus on December 6, 2017, President Quolke explained that in February 2017, members of the CTU, CEO Gordon, the CMSD Board of Education, and ultimately Mayor Frank Jackson, agreed that if changes to ORC 3319.112 were to occur to OTES, those changes would also apply to Cleveland. The recommendations proposed by the Educator Standards Board are intended to improve teacher evaluation, and make improvements that benefit teachers and students.

"The teachers and students of Cleveland deserve to share in these changes, and the benefits and improvements that they will bring to teaching," said President Quolke. He illustrated how unfair and illogical it would be to carve Cleveland educators out of positive changes that were designed and will be implemented to improve the evaluation system for all other teachers in the state of Ohio. He asked that an amendment in SB 216, a bill about state testing requirements, be removed. The amendment had language carving out Cleveland from the evaluation changes.

Teacher evaluations have been a controversial topic across the country. While some believe standardized test scores are the best objective measure of a teacher's skill, the results do not take into account all the other factors influencing stu-

dent performance, making scores an unreliable measure of teaching ability. SB 240 would use measures of student progress to guide teacher development instead.

President Quolke was adamant about the Cleveland carve-out: "CTU teachers don't want the test scores used. The new contract between the CTU and the District makes repeated references to using tests as 'mandated under state law.' If the law changes for the rest of Ohio teachers, then there should not be a carve-out that penalizes only CMSD teachers."

"We did not anticipate wiping them out [use of test scores] instead of a change in percentages," CEO Gordon said. "I don't think we would wipe out our evaluation system because the state no longer uses data in a substantive way." CEO Gordon said he felt using test scores in evaluations has been helpful, even though using the ratings to determine teacher pay was eliminated, for the most part, in the most recent CBA.

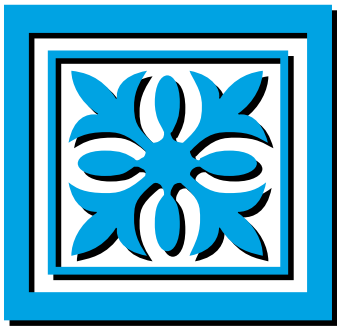
Senator Lehner defended her bill, saying that Ohio's test-heavy evaluation process has not helped distinguish good teachers from ineffective ones. "Absolutely nothing has changed. We have no more teachers rated as ineffective as before. Looking at test scores has not accomplished what we wanted, to get rid of bad teachers."

Under the new law, if it is passed, teachers will still be responsible for student test scores, but in different ways. Results of state tests and other assessments set by ODE will be integrated into each teacher's improvement plan and classroom observations.

"CTU testimony and aggressive lobbying made a difference," said CTU President David Quolke. As this issue goes to print, Senator Lehner and Senator Matt Huffman (R-Lima) removed the Cleveland carveout from SB 216, and SB 240 was introduced, with changes to OTES that will include Cleveland teachers.

"I want to thank OFT President Melissa Cropper, OFT Director of Legislation Darold Johnson, and political consultant Connie Nolder," added President Quolke. "They were very helpful and supportive in this effort."

(Read more about this legislation and the process in the Presidents' Report on page 16.)



REPORT

THE CTA VAWT REPORT

CTU, CMSD Working to Expedite Responses, Remove Delays

Jillian Ahrens and Mary Moore, CTU's Co-Directors of Grievance and 3rd Vice-Presidents, K-8, reported that CTU received 396 grievances in 2017, and fewer than 50 remain unanswered by CMSD. These are Step II grievances that were not resolved satisfactorily at the initial Step I level, and were forwarded to the CTU for further action.

"These numbers show a great improvement from the District's past practices," said Ms. Moore, "and the Grievance Team continues to work to push CMSD to resolve the others."

President David Quolke credited the Grievance Team's current practice — having some grievants and principals appear at the Step II hearings to explain their positions — for helping to clarify issues, and lead to faster, fairer resolutions for CTU members.

Additionally, instead of waiting for answers at Step III, once the deadline for CMSD's response has been reached, the Grievance Team has been preparing to take some unanswered, unresolved grievances to arbitration. To avoid arbitration, CMSD has been settling these grievances, most in favor of the CTU members.

In a recent meeting with CTU Grievance Team leaders, CEO Eric Gordon, and CMSD representatives, CTU argued that the District is simply not getting around to settling some clear-cut grievance issues, particularly those involving compensation. The delays often lead to costly settlements

for the District, which then owes members not only the appropriate compensation, but an additional 5-10%, depending on the length of the payment delay. The CEO agreed, and indicated that he wants to cooperate with CTU to expedite payments to CTU members, thus saving CMSD unnecessary costs.

The Grievance Team worked with CTU's Negotiating Team to settle scheduling grievances at 23 schools and a portfolio issue affecting New and Innovative Network schools. Almost 400 CTU members were affected, and will receive additional compensation.

In another concern, at the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year, it was discovered that due to the transition to the Workday payroll system, combined with specific situations involving extended minutes, some CTU members had been incorrectly overpaid. Since CMSD is a public entity, there is a legal obligation to recoup the overpayments. The Grievance Team met with CTU attorney Susannah Muskovitz and cooperated with the District to work out various repayment options. CTU

is working with members to find the best repayment options for them.

Article 15 Grievances Increasing

Article 15 grievances include student assaults, menacing, student discipline, the Planning Center, Student Support Teams, Removal for Educational Intervention, classroom meetings, and other student discipline-related issues. Grievances related to student misconduct are filed under Article 15 and have a different procedure.

The Grievance Team discovered a problem with the language around timelines and the Article 15 grievance procedure. The timeline said the principal has five days to respond, but the Academic Superintendent has two days. This discrepancy in the timeline has resulted in responses to a member's grievance stating the member is "out of timeline," although the principal was within the five-day limit. CTU believes it is unfair to penalize members for this, and is working to correct the timeline language.

"We sent proposed language changes to the District on December 21," said Ms. Ahrens, "that will fix this discrepancy. We understand the issue, and are working on it."

"Discipline is definitely a serious issue," reiterated Ms. Moore. "It needs to be dealt with seriously, not dismissed on a timeline

One More Time: A Grievance Review

by Jillian Ahrens and Mary Moore *CTU Grievance Co-Directors*

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. 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.

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.

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 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.

technicality. That does nothing to improve education and safety in our schools.”

Both Ms. Ahrens and Ms. Moore urged CTU members to follow the procedures around Article 15 issues the best they can despite the timeline discrepancies, and file grievances. They are confident the new language will be implemented soon.

Discipline Problems Continue

Student discipline remains a major issue, especially in some CMSD schools. Network leaders met with CTU officers early in the school year, and again in December, to discuss the issue in targeted schools. “Some schools need additional support to deal with overwhelming discipline problems,” said Ms. Moore. “Both CTU and CMSD leaders need to recognize this, and then do whatever we can to help.”

“We’re trying to look at the problem holistically but realistically, including contract language, schools with particular problems, and ways to intervene,” added Ms. Ahrens.

The Grievance Directors emphasized that Article 15, Section 10 of the CBA is not the complete answer to discipline problems, but only a tool. However, they urged all member to read that section of the agreement, understand their rights, and use it when necessary to address student discipline issues.

“Our members should never be afraid to use negotiated contract language to protect their rights,” added Ms. Moore. “CTU members should never be threatened or discouraged by any administrator from filing a grievance — that could constitute an unfair labor practice, and CTU needs to be informed if this is happening.”

Another tool for addressing student misbehavior is the Discipline Sub-Committee of the Union Conference Committee. This group can start candid conversations with the principal and assistants to address building-wide concerns, and look for solutions beyond Article 15.

“Wherever we can, we need to develop preventions, not only reactions to student misbehavior,” encouraged Ms. Moore. “Mental health and discipline issues are related, and we must deal with both. Punishing kids is not enough. If something is wrong, we need to try to fix it. We need more behavior specialists and mental health providers, who have time to actually work with those students who need help, not only do paperwork.”

“There are Humanware strategies available,” said Ms. Ahrens, “but they are not always enough. We can’t ignore the real problems that some of our students face.”

Chapter Chairs and UCCs can contact their 3rd Vice-Presidents for help with discipline issues in their schools: Ms. Ahrens and Ms. Moore, 3rd Vice Presidents, K-8, and Shari Obrenski, 3rd Vice President, Senior/Special.

Article 15 Procedure

Since January 1, 2017, Article 15 grievances are filed under the separate Article 15 grievance procedure. To review, all grievances that are violations of Article 15 (Policy and Procedures Governing Social-Emotional Learning, Student Discipline, and Misconduct) have a different procedure and must be submitted on the Article 15 form. The form was distributed to chapter chairs, and is also available on the CTU website.

Article 15 covers student assaults, menacing, student discipline, the Planning Center, Student Support Teams, Removal for Educational Intervention, classroom meetings, and other student discipline-related issues.

Under this procedure, Step I of an Article 15 grievance (on its specific form) does not go to the Principal. Instead, it is to be sent directly to the CTU at 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.

Electronic Communication

Remember, all grievances are filed electronically with the CTU. Electronic communication has increased efficiency, saved time, and made sharing information more effective. It also establishes an electronic trail, and eliminates lost paperwork.

Know Your Rights!

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. Enforcing the CBA begins at the building level. It’s important for all CTU members to defend the contract, and insist that the working conditions and protections CTU negotiated are followed. And if they aren’t, file a grievance!

Special Ed Joint Letter

IEPs Must Focus on Student Needs, Not School Convenience

CTU President David Quolke and CMSD CEO Eric Gordon sent a Joint Letter regarding Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to all CTU Chapter Chairs November 16, 2017. They forwarded it to principals and CTU members in their chapters.

The letter stated that it had come to the attention of CMSD administrators and CTU officers that “building administrators were directing case managers (Intervention Specialists) to convene IEP teams and amend IEPs for the sole purpose of changing the placement of [special education] students to fit the school’s schedule. IEPs should be written and implemented on the educational needs of the student rather than to comply with a school’s program or model . . . it is inappropriate to write or amend an IEP to fit the needs of the building; rather IEPs are team decisions and are based on what the student needs.”

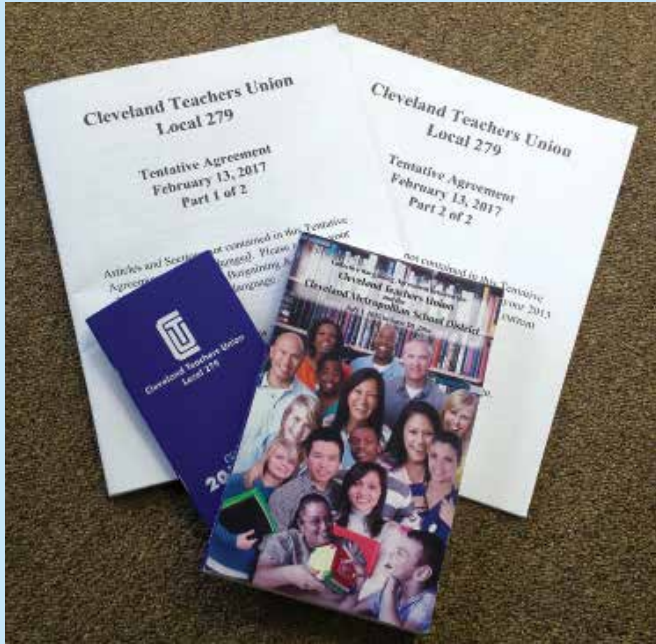
The letter explained that there are requirements for change of placement and Least Restrictive Environment, and protocols for placement in specialized Intensive Behavior Intervention (ED), Medically Fragile, and Low Incidence settings. Enrollments and transfers of students with disabilities are completed by Special Educations’ enrollment office at 1111 Superior Avenue East.

“It’s important that IEPs are written to best meet the educational needs of the student, not for a school’s convenience,” added Mary Moore, CTU 3rd Vice President, K-8, and an intervention specialist at Willson. “That’s what the law guarantees, and both District and Union leadership expect this.”

Michelle Rzucidlo, CTU Secretary and an intervention specialist at Mary B. Martin School, concurred. “Individualized Education Plans are for the students, and are written to address specific educational needs of students with disabilities or special needs. A school’s education plan is the Academic Achievement Plan, but that does not override an IEP, which is a legal document.”

All staff are encouraged to re-read this letter, and be sure the rights of CMSD students with disabilities are being guaranteed in your school. If building leaders and case managers have questions about LRE, placement, or enrollment, they should consult their school’s Program Manager.

Required Reading For CTU Members



THE HISTORY OF THE TRICKLE-DOWN THEORY

“THERE ARE THOSE WHO BELIEVE THAT IF YOU JUST LEGISLATE TO MAKE THE WELL-TO-DO PROSPEROUS, THEIR PROSPERITY WILL LEAK THROUGH ON THOSE BELOW.”

- WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN, CROSS OF GOLD SPEECH, 1896

[PRESIDENT] HOOVER WAS AN ENGINEER. HE KNEW THAT WATER TRICKLES DOWN. PUT IT UPHILL AND LET IT GO AND IT WILL REACH THE DRIEST LITTLE SPOT. BUT HE DIDN'T KNOW THAT MONEY TRICKLED UP. GIVE IT TO THE PEOPLE AT THE BOTTOM AND THE PEOPLE AT THE TOP WILL HAVE IT BEFORE NIGHT, ANYHOW.”

- WILL ROGERS, 1932

“SUPPLY-SIDE ECONOMICS WAS MERELY A COVER FOR THE TRICKLE-DOWN APPROACH TO ECONOMIC POLICY—WHAT AN OLDER AND LESS ELEGANT GENERATION CALLED THE HORSE-AND-SPARROW THEORY: ‘IF YOU FEED THE HORSE ENOUGH OATS, SOME WILL PASS THROUGH TO THE ROAD FOR THE SPARROWS.’”

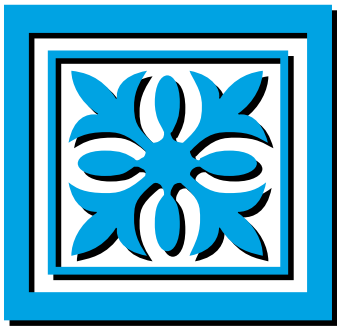
- JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH, 1980s

“I THINK NOT HAVING THE ESTATE TAX RECOGNIZES THE PEOPLE THAT ARE INVESTING, AS OPPOSED TO THOSE THAT ARE JUST SPENDING EVERY DARN PENNY THEY HAVE, WHETHER IT’S ON BOOZE OR WOMEN OR MOVIES.”

- GOP SENATOR CHARLES GRASSLEY, 2017

KONO PACK! ©2018





UPDATE

NOT A TIGHTEN

CTU Resolving Contract Issues

The CTU Negotiating Team was going through Settlement Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding as 2017 ended, working “to tie up some loose ends, fix any problems from the last CBA, and develop a bridge to the new CBA,” said Shari Obrenski, CTU Director of Negotiations and 3rd Vice President, Senior/Special.

One issue they addressed was health care payment deductions for CTU members, as they move from 26 pays to the new 24-pay system. An agreement was reached with CMSD for the remainder of this school year and next school year, when paydays will begin August 20, 2018. The move to 24 paydays, generally on the fifth and twentieth of each month (unless these days fall on a holiday), will eliminate numerous pay-related issues that arose with the every-two-week pay cycle, explained Ms. Obrenski, including the three-week pay gap in summer, a 27th pay in some fiscal years, and deductions tied to pays.

“The 24-pay system will help resolve these issues, but there may be some ‘growing pains’ during the changeover,” she added. “We are working to make the process as uncomplicated and stress-free for CTU members as possible.”

The Negotiating Team worked with the CTU Grievance Team to settle 23 schools’ scheduling grievances, and a portfolio is-

sue with the New and Innovative Network schools. Almost 400 CTU member were affected, and most will be receiving additional compensation.

In another compensation issue, it was discovered at the beginning of the school year that due to the transition to Workday and situations with extended minutes, some CTU members were incorrectly overpaid. CTU cooperated with the District to work out various repayment options, and are conducting informational meetings with these members so they can choose the best options for them.

Ms. Obrenski reported that progress has been made on new scheduling language for 2017-2018, and they are close to a resolution which includes a formal payment process that was not in place previously.

“When there were scheduling errors, such as extra preps or an additional assignment, CTU members had to fight for their appropriate compensation through the grievance process,” said Ms. Obrenski.

“There was no formal, organized process in place to apply for the proper compensation, and it could be hit-or-miss.

“Now there will be a uniform process, with a standard form to use, which will follow the differential payment schedule of four times per school year. This will be much easier and more efficient for CTU members who are due this additional compensation, and it should result in more timely payments. And CTU members won’t have to file a grievance to get the compensation they are owed due to administrative scheduling errors.”

Although negotiations are not taking place now, in the second year of the three-year contract, the Negotiating Team remains busy with implementation of the Collective Bargaining Agreement with CMSD administration. It’s still a work in progress, Ms. Obrenski cautions, but there are some positive changes.

“The combination of working together to implement details of the new CBA, problem solving previous grievances and their resolutions, and incorporating arbitration awards will ensure that all CTU members are treated fairly and compensated appropriately in a timely fashion for the important work that they do.”

Staff/Community Engagement VPD Time:

A REVIEW

Voluntary Professional Development (VPD) time is back in the contract again for teachers, related service providers (RSPs), and paraprofessionals. In the previous contract, paras were the only group that had VPD time. In case there are any questions about this opportunity, here is a short review.

Also called “Staff/Community Engagement” time, it provides two voluntary 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.

VPD for Paras and OT/PT Assistants

Paraprofessionals will continue to have the opportunity to earn **three** VPD days in a school year. The first para VPD Day is contiguous with the first day of the

school year. For traditional schools, the first day mandatory day for everyone to report was August 9, so the first paraprofessional VPD day was on August 8, 2017. All other schools should have adjusted the date accordingly. Principals and UCCs were to plan accordingly with the school’s Paraprofessional Representative. If there are questions, please contact Cherylane Jones-Williams, Paraprofessional Chapter Chair, at 216-861-7676 ext. 241.

VPD for Teachers, RSPs, Sign Language Interpreters

Beginning in the 2017-18 school year, teachers, Related Service Providers, and Sign Language Interpreters can also earn up to **two** VPD/Community Engagement days. In previous contracts, the day before staff was required to report to school was a VPD day. **Currently, that language is only in place for paraprofessionals.**

For teachers, RSPs, and Sign Language Interpreters, the two 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 VPD/Community Engagement days.

The CTU encourages all staff to participate in the VPD/Community Engagement days. The contract language gives schools flexibility in providing valuable professional development targeted to their unique school community and its needs.

Schools should offer more than 12 hours, since not every staff member may be able to attend every event. “There should be multiple opportunities for all CTU members to get these 12 hours,” explained Shari Obrenski, CTU’s Director of Negotiations. “Schools can work together to share presenters and sessions. Principals and UCCs can make agreements for their schools.”

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

Is Your Permit/License Current?

Cherylane Jones-Williams, Paraprofessional Chapter Chair, reminded all paraprofessionals to check the expiration date on their Ohio Educational Aide Permit, Pupil Activity Permit, or License. If it is due to expire on June 30, 2018, she encouraged paras to start the renewal process now, to obtain a valid ODE permit/license by July 1, 2018.

Letters have been sent to paras who had expired permits/licenses from 2017, and hearings are beginning to take place. Don't put your job in jeopardy! This is part of your professional responsibility — be sure your permit/license is valid and up to date. And if it's due to expire soon, don't wait until the last minute to start the renewal process.

All permit/license renewal applications are completed online, per ODE requirements. To apply online, you will first need an ODE SAFE account. You can create one at the ODE website <https://safe.ode.state.oh.us/portal>. Through your SAFE account, you can

access the online application through the *My Educator Profile* link, from the ODE CORE link on the SAFE account menu. CMSD's IRN number is 043786. In the space for the Superintendent's signature on your application, enter IRN 043786.

ODE requires online payment by credit card. If you don't have a credit card, you must contact ODE at 877-644-6338 for other payment options.

Ohio law requires that if an applicant resides continuously in Ohio, they do not need to update the BCI background check, but must obtain an updated FBI check every five years. Use your SAFE account to look up the date of your most recent background checks through the CORE licensure system tool within ODE CORE.

It is recommended that fingerprints be done at the CMSD Office of Safety and Security at East Professional Center at 1349 East 79 Street, Room 110. Contact their office at 216-838-0420 for times and days.

If you choose to get your fingerprint check done elsewhere, the results must be sent electronically to ODE through WebCheck. For WebCheck information, go to www.webcheck.ag.state.oh.us.

Costs for a background check through CMSD is \$46, payable by money order only, made out to CMSD. This includes \$22 for BCI and \$24 for FBI background checks.

Current costs for an ODE Educational Aide Permit are \$25 (one-year permit) or \$100 (four-year permit) paid online at ODE, credit card only. Current costs for an ODE Pupil Activity Permit are \$45 (three-year permit), \$60 (four-year permit), or \$75 (five-year permit), paid online at ODE, credit card only.

Ms. Jones-Williams explained that CMSD's human resources personnel conduct annual audits to determine if all paras have valid permits. Without a valid permit, an employee may be subject to disciplinary action, includ-

ing termination.

If you have questions about the permit/license process, send them to licensing@clevelandmetroschools.org. ODE's website, www.ode.state.oh.us, also has information and assistance about the renewal process requirements.

ESchool Plus Upgrade

Shari Obrenski, CTU 3rd Vice President, Senior/Special, emailed principals and chapter chairs on November 29 about the ESchool Plus upgrade that took place on January 2. ESchool Plus, our Student Information System, was upgraded from version 2.5 to version 4.0. ESchool is CMSD's platform for taking attendance, entering interims, and entering grades. It is also the platform secretaries, administrators, and others use for attendance reports, schedules, enrolling students.

Teachers who entered grades before January 3 did so in the old version (2.5). Any grades, marks, or comments entered before the upgrade were to be backed up and rolled over into the new upgrade (4.0), and teachers should not worry about losing any data entered.

After January 8, 2018, any grades will be entered in the new upgraded version (4.0). Principals and their UCC/BLT were to survey their staffs to determine the appropriate amount of time to address concerns and provide additional support regarding the upgraded system. Chief Academic Officer Michelle Pierre-Farid recommended one to two hours. Additional training on features such as gradebook and scheduling will be forth coming.

What's the difference between the 2.5 version and 4.0? For attendance, grades, and interims, Ms. Obrenski reported that it is essentially the same and pretty intuitive. Assistant principals have been charged to provide training for staffs regarding the changes. Also, time was allocated during the January 8 Professional day to address concerns, check out the new system, and address concerns.

The grade book that is available will be significantly different in the upgrade. For teachers who are currently using the ESchool gradebook, there will be special training sessions for you to see and learn about the the new features. For teachers who are not currently using the gradebook, there will be trainings in the spring and summer for those who may be interested. Remember, it is not mandatory to use the ESchool gradebook.

Spring is AAP Time in CMSD Schools

by Mark Baumgartner

CTU Director of Professional Issues

With the ratification last spring of the new 2016-2019 Collective Bargaining Agreement, all AAPs written before the spring of 2017 were null and void. The Union and District have recommitted to the AAP process as a way for schools to put efforts of reform and focus into what each school believes is educationally best for their students.

All schools were required to have an approved AAP in the spring of 2017. After some hurdles and bumps, all schools now have an approved AAP. These AAPs become the default AAPs if in the future, a school cannot pass a

new AAP.

One of the types of support that schools are receiving in the AAP process are team meetings with District and Union personnel, to help schools focus on what data is important and how to look at this data with a critical eye. CMSD, along with CTU help, brought school teams together in the spring of 2017 before writing the new AAPs, so that all team members heard the same message.

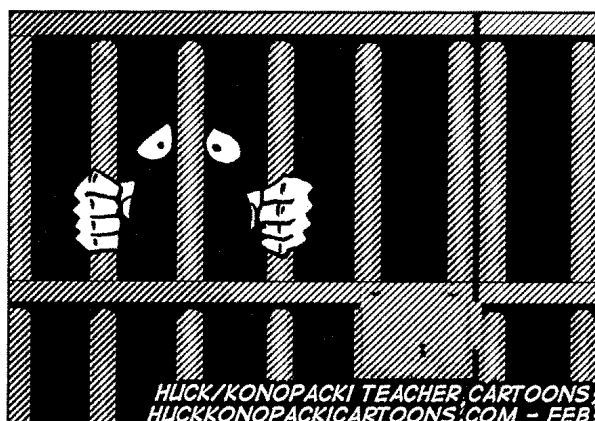
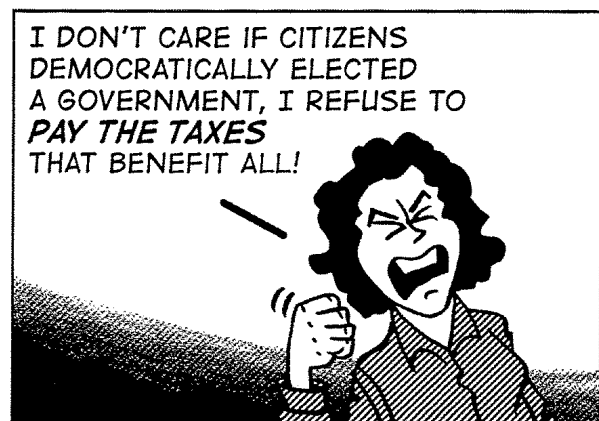
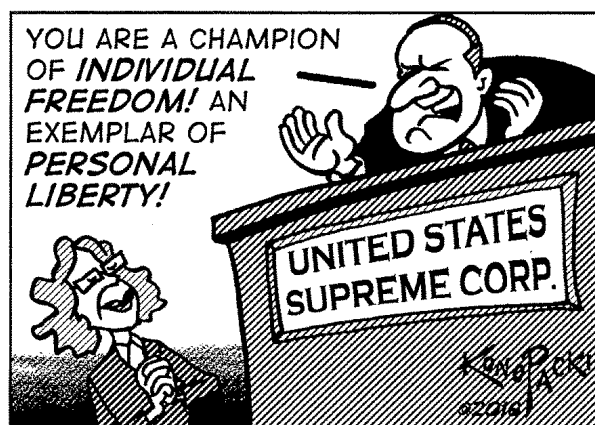
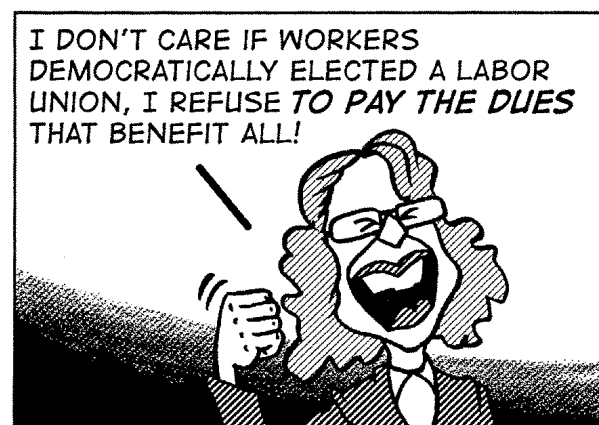
At the beginning of the 2017-18 school year, principals and chapter chairs attended meetings together for discussions around their new approved AAPs, and to hear what support the schools would need to fully imple-

ment their new plans. In November of 2017, school teams were again brought together to examine new data from NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association), CFL (Conditions for Learning), and other data points. Teams were asked if the plan is working for their school, and if not, what refinements could they make within the AAP to get the school moving in the right direction again.

As we begin the second semester, school teams and staff members are thinking about the best strategies to help their schools and students be successful. The AAP team members will once again meet in February for support on thinking about and drafting a new spring AAP. The new AAP will need to be voted on by each school's staff by the middle of March.

The CTU was firm in making sure the District stayed committed to supporting schools during the AAP process; this was agreed to in the CBA. Teachers instinctively know that each school is unique, and each school will have its own plan to reflect that uniqueness.

If you have questions about the AAP process, contact Mark Baumgartner at 216-861-7676 ext. 272.



Chapter Chairs Gather at Annual Leadership Conference

“Defend the Contract: It’s Not a Suggestion” was the theme at the CTU’s annual Leadership Conference at Sawmill Creek Resort in Huron October 19-20, 2017. All CTU chapter chairpersons and Executive Board members convened for the two-day educational union conference.

“The CTU Chapter Chairs are our Union’s ‘front line’ at schools,” said Michael Kulcsar, CTU Treasurer and Bargaining Unit Director. “It’s vital for our Union’s strength that they are well-informed, so they can uphold the contract and better represent our members.” The Collective Bargaining Agreement recognizes the importance of ongoing training for Chapter Chairs, and provides for two days for the annual Leadership Conference each fall, as well as one day for divisional meetings in the spring.

The CTU Leadership Committee, under the direction of Co-Chairs Michael Kulcsar and Michelle Rzucidlo, organized the event. Featured speakers included CTU President David Quolke; OFT President Melissa Cropper; and former U.S. Rep. Betty Sutton, who was then CTU’s endorsed candidate for governor. [Editor’s note: Rep. Sut-

ton has since dropped out of the race for governor. She is now running for Lieutenant Governor on the ticket with Richard Cordray. Mr. Cordray served as the first Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau from 2012 to 2017. He also served as Ohio’s Attorney General, Solicitor General, and Treasurer.]

Rep. Sutton told attendees she would be a friend to labor, and as Governor, would never allow anything like SB 5 to get past her desk. Her experience and past accomplishments make her the most qualified candidate for CTU members to support.

Participants attended five workshops over the course of the conference.

A very popular workshop was the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS) presentation by John Buch, the long-time Member Education Coordinator at STRS. He presented information about Ohio’s teacher retirement system, along with helpful tips and advice for members on how to prepare for retirement.

The Janus workshop, another highly-ranked workshop, was presented by Rick Kuplinski, AFT Deputy Director, Department of Organization and Field Services, and Michelle Rzucidlo, CTU Secretary. Mr. Kuplinski informed CTU chairs about Janus v. AFSCME, the latest Supreme Court case attacking working people and unions by trying to make dishonestly named “right-to-work” laws the law of the land in America. Ms. Rzucidlo reviewed the many benefits of CTU membership, and both introduced the CTU’s Recommitment Campaign.

Participants also enjoyed the Teaching Cleveland workshop presented by educators from Beachwood Schools, retiree Greg Deegan, and current Beachwood teachers Jennifer Forshey and Pamela Ogilvy. (Pam is the sister of CMSD Pre-K teacher Dan Ogilvy of Garfield School and the daughter of former CTU Chair Rosemary Ogilvy.)

They provided a condensed version of the Teaching Cleveland Institute program for educators. Teaching Cleveland is a non-profit that connects students and educators with Cleveland’s history of innovation, politics, and culture, encourages the integration of Cleveland’s story into the classroom. Since its inception, more than 60 educators from 32 institutions have participated in Teaching Cleveland programming. The full program is open

to interested educators. For more information, their website is teachcle.org.

Another valuable workshop on the topic of Workers’ Compensation was presented by Jeffrey Johnson and Stuart Garson of Garson Johnson LLC, Attorneys at Law. They covered how to document an injury, the free choice of a physician (one of the



Rep. Betty Sutton, with CTU President David Quolke, reiterated her support for public education and union educators in her keynote speech at the Leadership Conference.

most important rights you have), the statute of limitations, the administrative process and hearings, appeals to the court, and how to determine if you need an attorney.

The workshop “Evidence” was presented by two CTU members, Gloria Doering, CTU’s Peer Assistance and Review Liaison, and Megan Scully, TDES Coordinator. They reviewed the TDES rubric, and explained the types of things needed to be included in evidence to support a rating of Accomplished or Skilled in different teaching areas.

The Leadership Committee expressed special thanks to Cassandra Carter, CTU Social Committee Chairperson and Member-at-Large, K-8, for coordinating the hospitality breaks; to the lunch sponsors: Appreciation Financial, Mylifewerks, and Valic; and to the Hospitality sponsors: AXA, NTA, and Voya.

Kudos to the Leadership Committee for a job well done: Co-Chairs Michael Kulcsar and Michelle Rzucidlo, and committee members Yusef Abdallah, Anne Fitzgerald, Melissa Hardy, Wendi Kral, Christian Osterland, and Natalia Posner.



“This year’s Leadership Conference probably had the most diverse group of workshops that we ever presented,” said Michelle Rzucidlo, pictured with fellow Leadership Co-Chair Michael Kulcsar. “Based on the evaluation results, the workshops were well received by our Chapter Chairs. We review the evaluations very carefully every year, and use them to plan future CTU trainings.”



CTU Holiday Party

A good time was had by all at CTU’s annual holiday party at Club Impulse in Independence. Thank you to Cassandra Carter, CTU Member-at-Large, K-8 and Social Committee Chairperson, and the members of the CTU Social Committee for organizing the popular winter event.



Excellence in Teaching Award Winners Celebrated

by Christy Rorick

Ten winners of the Excellence in Teaching Award for the 2017-2018 school year were celebrated November 9, 2017. The Excellence in Teaching Award, now in its second year, is a collaborative effort that recognizes and rewards Cleveland teachers. The collaboration is a partnership of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, the George Gund Foundation, and the Cleveland Teachers Union.

This year, there were 239 CMSD teachers nominated. The nominations spread across 86 schools. Nominees were judged on the basis of demonstrating “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.” Once the winners were selected and announced, each winner and a guest were invited to a celebration gala at The Ballroom at Parklane. At the gala, each teacher was commended with a video where colleagues praised their work and each received a \$5,000 award. In exchange, the teachers committed to sharing their practice and expertise with others as a way of improving instruction throughout the District.

Each teacher’s expertise is shared on the Excellence in Teaching Award website at <http://teachexcellenceaward.org/>. For articles and great resources, please visit the website.



Congratulations to the 2017-2018 CMSD Excellence in Teaching Award winners!

- **Dean Bryson**, 9th grade Physical Science (New Tech Collinwood)
- **Mary deVillie**, 4th grade Math (Euclid Park School)
- **Tonya Dunlap**, 1st-2nd grade Special Education (Buhner Dual Language Academy)
- **Catherine Duplisea**, Kindergarten (Orchard STEM School)
- **Kirsten Fischer**, 6th-8th grade English Language Arts (Scranton)
- **Andrea Kitchen**, Kindergarten (Louisa May Alcott)

LOOKING FOR SOME EXAMPLES of award-winning best practices from your CTU colleagues?

Check out the sample lessons, classroom practices, videos, blogs, and other resources at the Excellence in Teaching website, teachexcellenceaward.org, under Sharing Practice.

Each subsequent group of winners will add to the resources, ultimately creating a rich repository for all CMSD teachers.

Congratulations to this year’s outstanding Excellence in Teaching award winners!

- **Jason Levy**, 4th-8th grade Music (Campus International School)
- **Rita Mikita**, 9th grade Science (MC-2STEM High School)
- **Alexis Pohlman**, 6th-8th grade Math (Louis Agassiz)
- **Jordan Seigler**, 4th grade English Language Arts and Science (Charles Dickens)

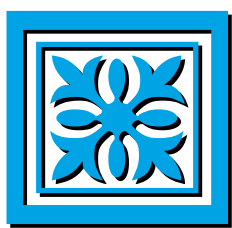


EIT winners and their guests were honored at a celebration in The Ballroom at Parklane.

AFT’s Civil, Human, and Women’s Rights Conference

Dorothy Fair, Stephanie Henderson, and Cheryl Neylon represented CTU at AFT’s 2017 Civil, Human, and Women’s Rights Conference in New Orleans, LA. Speakers and panels presented timely information about the *Janus v. AFSCME* Supreme Court case, women’s rights, voting rights, immigrants and the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) program, community engagement, and member mobilization around key social justice issues.





HELPING TEACH

THE CRITIQUE

Entrepreneurship Education: Enspire Conference Inspires Area Teachers

The third annual Enspire Conference hosted 375 educators — including 84 CTU teachers — at the Cleveland Marriott East on November 3-4, 2017, to learn about entrepreneurship education and experiences. Debbie Paden, CTU's Educational Issues Chairperson, made special arrangements with the conference organizers for many interested CTU teachers to attend, including paying the standard registration fee for those who registered using the CTU code.

The Enspire Conference, part of the Young Entrepreneur Institute at University School, is a creativity workshop for educators centered on expanding entrepreneurship education. The annual conference includes inspiring speakers, a take-home tool kit, ideas to fund classroom projects, peer-to-peer learning with curriculum provided, and ongoing professional development throughout the year.

This year's conference opened at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, a school day. Teachers from some CMSD schools attended the Friday session, but that had been previously arranged with their school and administrator, to allow them to attend during the day. Friday afternoon's hands-on workshop led by Stanford University design school's Rich Cox focused on teaching creativity, with exercises and examples of "how to get ideas out of your head and into the world."

CTU and Enspire worked out a special arrangement to allow many other interested CTU members to attend on Saturday only. Saturday's 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. session began with an elaborate continental breakfast, followed by a lively presentation on leadership from John Carroll University's Scott Allen that had everyone in the room on their feet and moving.

A conference highlight was the day's speaker, Charles Best, the CEO and founder of Donors Choose. The successful entrepreneur (and former teacher) told about founding the popular online e-crowdfunding organization that allows individuals to help classrooms in need. Mr. Best and the Burton D. Morgan Foundation generously provided every attendee a \$100 voucher to use to invest in a classroom project through Donors Choose.

"Partnering with YEI to make special arrangements for our CTU members to participate in the Enspire Conference," said Ms. Paden, "and receive \$100 vouchers to spend through Donors Choose on their own or a colleague's project, provided a great experience for CTU teachers and ultimately benefited Cleveland students."

Participants also received a free book for their classroom, *The Startup Club: The Big Idea*, by J.J. Ramberg, Melanie Staggs, & S. Taylor.

Other conference highlights, according to Ms. Paden, were hearing student entrepreneur pitches, shopping at the Young Entrepreneur Market, and presentations from 26 teachers and program leaders sharing best practices in K-12 education.

Since she leads the Resident Educator Program, Ms. Paden split her voucher be-

tween two Cleveland Teachers. She donated \$50 to Toiya Williams-Washington, a Fullerton middle school teacher, whose project "Celebrate Diversity" was in need of a Button Badge Maker Punch Press Machine, a printer with paper and ink, and button-making pieces.

"I was so excited to tell my students about this wonderful gift and get them working on this great project," said Mrs. Williams-Washington. "This project has so many possibilities to allow students to see the difference they can make in the world. The button maker is highly coveted among the students."

While a button maker may sound trivial, it is one more tool our school can use to create a visual reminder that we are a community here. Already, students have used it to create buttons with sayings and pictures that they like. They are also creating buttons to celebrate the diversity that we have in the school. I speak on behalf of the entire student body when I say that we greatly appreciate this gift!

The other \$50 went to Kimber Pappas, a primary grade teacher at Case who created a project for her students called "Chart your Course to Success."

"I appreciate the opportunity that CTU provided to teachers to attend the Envision Conference," said Stephanie Fialko, teacher and CTU Chapter Chair at Paul Dunbar. "It was a great opportunity to network with community partners, and hear how they can help us to bring more opportunities to our students. The presenters at the roundtable discussion session had information on how to secure funding for field trips, guest speakers, and materials to enhance instruction."

Charles Best, founder and CEO of Donors Choose, discusses his online crowdfunding organization with Debbie Paden, CTU Educational Issues Chairperson.



"The keynote speaker, Mr. Best, was an inspiration, and his \$100 voucher for Donors Choose was very generous. His non-profit has helped to bridge a gap that was typically only filled by teachers. Thank you so much, CTU!"

For more information about the Enspire Conference and the work of the Young Entrepreneur Institute, visit their website at www.youngentrepreneurinstitute.org.

YEI History

The Young Entrepreneur Institute (YEI) was founded by Greg Malkin in 2005, with its first activities at University School in 2006. Mr. Malkin was a successful entrepreneur himself for over 30 years, and believes "future generations' success rests with experiencing



CTU teachers enjoy the 2017 Enspire Conference, a creativity workshop that expands entrepreneurship education and activities into their classrooms.

entrepreneurship early in life." He believes connecting entrepreneurship education and experience with math and writing can make those subjects more relevant to students. He also believes that qualities like perseverance, hard work, managing adversity, overcoming failure, and problem solving are qualities needed for success both in entrepreneurship and in life.

YEI expanded beyond University School in 2008. Currently, it has partnerships with many schools and organizations throughout the northeast Ohio region. It provides thousands of children and their teachers with access to entrepreneurial education and experience.

YEI's funding partners include the Burton D. Morgan Foundation, Hudson Community Foundation, Martha Holden Jennings Foundation, Nordson, University School, and The Veale Foundation. YEI also works in conjunction with numerous community and school partners, including CMSD.



CTU teachers Yolanda Ryzner and Kelli McCorvey from Mary Bethune and Tenisha Willis-Patrick from East Clark thank Mr. Best, who along with the Burton D. Morgan Foundation, donated a \$100 gift card to each attendee to use for a classroom project.



When A Teacher Is Struggling: Peer Assistance and Review Program

When a teacher is struggling, where can they turn for practical help to improve their skills?

In the past, this problem was often left to an informal network of more successful, often veteran teachers who would unofficially assist new or struggling teachers with advice, plans and classroom activities, and management tips. While often effective, this personal assistance was not organized or guaranteed. And although administrators are the educational leaders of the building, and this is part of their duties, the daily demands of running a building can make intensive, consistent help unrealistic and unworkable.

Enter the Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) Program.

The current Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) Program began in the 2007-2008 school year to improve teacher effectiveness and academic achievement. (CTU and CMSD had implemented a similar Peer Review Program in the 1990s, which shrunk due to budget issues.)

The goals of the current PAR Program are to provide support to help develop teachers as career educators; to create and maintain a success-oriented atmosphere for teachers and students; to provide a process for guiding and supporting teachers; to provide a method for teachers to request and receive non-threatening help and guidance; to use educational research to guide teachers in their instructional strategies; and to professionalize teaching by allowing practitioners — current classroom teachers — to monitor and assist other teachers.

“The main purpose of PAR is for struggling teachers to receive personalized assistance, and improve their teaching skills,” explained Gloria Doering, PAR Liaison.

The PAR Program description and guidelines were negotiated and ratified in the CBA. There are two components, Voluntary and Intervention.

In the Voluntary PAR component, a teacher can volunteer to participate to get help in a teaching area where they believe they need assistance. This component is non-evaluative and a volunteer in the PAR program can determine that he/she no longer requires assistance at any time.

The Intervention component is the main focus of PAR. After receiving a final composite observation rating of “Ineffective,” a principal can recommend a teacher be placed in the PAR Program for the following school year.

“The teacher is then assigned a Peer Advisor, who teaches in the same area, or as close as possible, to the advisee,” said Michelle Rzucidlo, who serves as CTU’s Co-Chair of the PAR Governing Board. “During the next school year, the advisor works with the teacher by coaching, modeling, and providing resources and various other support. The advisor is also

responsible for all parts of the Teacher Development and Evaluation System touches, instead of the principal.”

PAR advisors are OTES-certified, and receive additional training before beginning their PAR assignments, and support and training are provided during the school year. “There are currently 30 trained PAR advisors available,” Ms. Doering said. She estimated that there are about 15 teachers in PAR annually, some in the Voluntary PAR component, but most through Intervention. Advisors provide a minimum of 60 hours of support per semester outside of the school day, and also have release time available to observe and assist. “The advisors are very creative with their time management, and are often able to go during the school day, when they can see the advisee with a class,” she added.

The advisor and advisee meet sepa-

ately with the PAR Governing Board throughout the school year, to give status reports. The Governing Board consists of nine members, five appointed by the CTU President and four by the CEO. The Governing Board members are: from CTU, Michelle Rzucidlo, Co-Chair, Marcella Hall, Alan Mintz, Ro Rossero, and Raquel White; from CMSD, Gerard Leslie, Co-Chair, Troy Beadling, Erin Frew, and Heather Grant.

The PAR Liaison is a teacher on assignment, and reports to the CTU President, the CEO, and the PAR Governing Board. The Liaison oversees the Program but is not a voting Governing Board member.

At the end of the school year, the Governing Board meets with the advisor and advisee, and the advisor makes one of three recommendations to the Board: the advisee be successfully released from PAR; the advisee remain in PAR for a second year; the advisee be non-reappointed or terminated.

The PAR Governing Board votes on the recommendation to the CEO. A super majority of six votes is needed for non-reappointment or termination. If this recommendation is made for a continuing contract teacher, due process as outlined in the CBA is followed prior to a recommendation by the CEO to the Board of Education.

The program has a good success rate, with over half of the advisees, on average, improving and being released from PAR. Some advisees do not make sufficient improvement and choose to resign, or are non-reappointed or terminated.

“PAR’s main focus continues to be assistance,” emphasized Ms. Doering. “We want every teacher to be successful in the classroom. When teachers are released from PAR, there is no doubt they have improved their teaching skills. We want them to exit this program feeling confident that their daily teaching practices will provide the highest quality of education for the students they serve. That is PAR’s goal.”

“PAR provides a professional, organized opportunity for practicing teachers to assist their colleagues — teachers helping teachers,” added Ms. Rzucidlo.

The PAR Program is described in Appendix L of the CBA. If you have questions about PAR, contact Ms. Doering at gloria.doering@cleveland-metroschools.org, or at the CTU office at 216-861-7676 ext. 244.

Get Help at CTU Workshops

Student Loan Debt Growing

In 2018, Americans are more burdened by student loan debt than ever. The current shocking statistics, updated as of January 2018, show about 44 million borrowers owe over \$1.48 trillion in student loan debt. That is about \$620 billion more than the total U.S. credit card debt! The average grad from the class of 2016 owes \$37,172 in student loan debt, up 6% from the previous year.

The average monthly student loan payment for a 20- to 30-year-old borrower is \$351, and the median monthly student loan payment for those borrowers is \$203. There is a delinquency rate of 11.2% (90+ days delinquent or in default).

As professional educators, we are also required to obtain a graduate degree and continuing college coursework credits. Graduate student loan debt can be an additional burden for professionals. About 40% of student loan debt was used to finance graduate and professional degrees. Here are the figures for combined undergraduate and graduate debt by degree:

- MBA = \$42,000 (11% of graduate degrees)
- Master of Education = \$50,879 (16%)

- Master of Science = \$50,400 (18%)
- Master of Arts = \$58,539 (8%)
- Law = \$140,616 (4%)
- Medicine and health sciences = \$161,772 (5%)

These stats show the cost of attending college is becoming an increasing burden for many Americans. Do you need help with student loan debt?

CTU’s Salary & Benefits Committee, under the direction of Chairperson Cindy Antonio, has been working to provide help for CTU members with a series of workshops about student loan debt. If you missed her January presentation, but are interested in attending the next one on Wednesday, March, 14, 2018, look for the Salary & Benefits Committee flyer next month. Meetings are held in the lower level of the Halle Building, with a parking voucher for the Halle Garage provided.

When you get the flyer, you must RSVP to Cindy Antonio with your name, building, and contact information. Spouses and significant others are welcome to attend with CTU members. You’ll receive a confirmation by email that your space at the meeting is reserved.

Take advantage of the valuable student loan debt information provided by the CTU.

United Way's 2-1-1 Line: Get Help 24-7

by Cheryl Neylon
CTU Sergeant-at-Arms

When President Quolke asked me to represent CTU at the United Way Labor Community Breakfast last November, I expected a series of speakers talking about United Way's new approach to community assistance, a review of information I already knew. I was in for a major surprise.

First, United Way of Greater Cleveland's new approach is the result of a year-long community needs assessment. Its overall goal was to create a resource allocation process that is transparent, integrated, data-informed, and focused on long-term solutions. The result was the Community Hub Model, where programs receive funding based on a formula.

But the topic of that breakfast was a United Way program with huge potential that I believe many of us are not aware of — the United Way's 2-1-1 Information Line. It can be used by anyone; simply dial 2-1-1 from Cuyahoga County and a wealth of assistance is available.

About 2-1-1

The United Way 2-1-1 Help Center provides free, confidential, 24-hour access to compassionate professionals who review the callers' options for help, develop a plan, and act as advocate if the caller has barriers to accessing services. The Help Line can help callers find needed resources in the four Community Hub-model impact areas.

The four areas are: Basic Needs (food, emergency shelter and housing, transportation and medication access); Health (violence prevention, substance abuse and mental health treatment, chronic disease management); Financial Stability (IOB training for adults and teens, adult literacy and GED, financial literacy); and Education (kindergarten readiness, grade-level reading, after-school and mentoring) programs.

The system's data base is constantly updated, so the assistance information is current and accurate. Similar to CMSD's EASE@Work (Employee Assistance Program), 2-1-1 is anonymous.

County-Wide Assistance

The 2-1-1 line serves all of Cuyahoga County. Many of the calls come from inner and outer ring suburbs; in fact, in 2016, in the age group data breakdown, a higher percentage of calls from the outer ring suburbs came from callers in the 50-64 years and 65+ years than callers from inner ring suburbs or the city of Cleveland.

The top three needs categories for calls from the city were regarding food, housing/shelter, and utilities. The top needs categories for calls from the inner ring suburbs were regarding utilities, housing/shelter, and food. The top needs categories for calls from outer ring suburbs were health care/mental health, housing/shelter, and utilities.

Clearly, the needs in our Greater Cleveland community are county-wide. United Way is working to allocate its resources in the best, most effective way possible.

While this call center deals with Cuyahoga County, there are United Way-sponsored assistance call centers available in almost every Ohio county.

2-1-1 for Veterans

The 2-1-1 line also has a Veterans desk, with professionals trained to deal with the unique and special needs of military veterans. If veterans call 2-1-1, they should ask to speak to

a veterans' specialist, explained Tim Grealis, United Ways' Veteran's Line Coordinator.

Labor Community Support

The November 16 Breakfast Meeting, held in the Board Room of the United Way of Greater Cleveland offices on Euclid Avenue, was the first of quarterly meetings to be held with the labor community. The goal is to get community and labor leaders together to provide a coordinated effort of assistance in the greater Cleveland community.

August A. Napoli, Jr., President and CEO of United Way of Greater Cleveland, made the opening remarks and welcomed representatives from Cleveland's labor community to the meeting. John E. Skory, Regional President of the Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company, introduced the panel. He and Harriet Applegate, Executive Secretary of the North Shore Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, participated in an open round table discussion, focusing on the opioid epidemic in northeast Ohio.

Tim Grealis made the presentation about the 2-1-1 Help Line program. After closing remarks from Ms. Applegate and Mr. Skory, Mr. Grealis led attendees on a tour of the 2-1-1 call center. It is located on the first floor in the United Way office building.

The breakfast meeting provided valuable information: the explanation of the 2-1-1 Help Line, the opioid epidemic discussion, and the tour of the call center. If you know of someone in Cuyahoga County who needs assistance or has questions about available help, have them call the 2-1-1 Help Line. Make use of this excellent resource for our county's neighbors in need.



We can help.
Get assistance for your social service needs 24 hours a day.

United Way
2-1-1
Get Connected. Get Answers.

The United Way 2-1-1 Help Center provides free and confidential 24-hour access to a compassionate professional who will review your options for help, develop a plan and act as your advocate if you are faced with barriers to service. Se habla Espanol.

Simply dial 2-1-1 or visit 211oh.org to chat online.

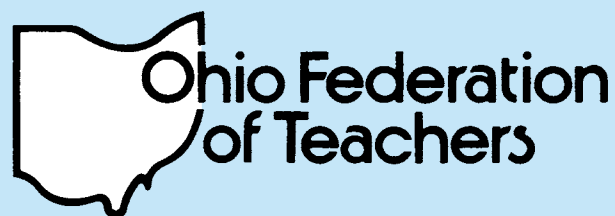
United Way
2-1-1
Get Connected. Get Answers.

LIVE UNITED
United Way

OFT Supports Price, Pfeiffer for STRS Board

OFT supports two candidates in the STRS Ohio's spring 2018 election for two contributing (active) member seats on the State Teachers Retirement Board, Dale Price and Ben Pfeiffer, reported Darold Johnson, OFT Director of Legislation.

Dale Price is an incumbent STRS board member, serving on the Board since 2010. Dale is a math teacher in Toledo Public Schools. As an STRS Board member, he helped strengthen the Labor contracting agreement, and attended all OFT regional meetings held regarding STRS COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) changes. Dale is the only OFT member of the seven elected Board members, and has served as chair of the STRS board during his tenure.



Ben Pfeiffer is an Oregon City Schools science teacher, and a member of OFT's Retirement Committee. Ben is the Vice President of his local, the Oregon City Schools Federation of Teachers. Ben has worked on health care issues as the OFT Health, Welfare, and Benefits Committee Chair.

Ben and Dale are running for the STRS board not to represent just OFT concerns, but to protect the interests of all active teachers. Both have a background of bringing people together to work on tough issues. Both were endorsed by the OFT after having been screened by the Retirement Committee, which interviewed all candidates who agreed to be screened. This screening included both OEA and other OFT member candidates.

STRS Ohio contributing members will receive their ballots and voting information in April; they will have through May 7, 2018, to cast their votes. The winners of the election will begin their four-year terms on the Board on September 1, 2018.

The Ohio Federation of Teachers urges you to vote for Dale and Ben when you receive your ballot this spring.

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), Bonnie Hedges (bhedges@ctu279.org), or Tracy Radich (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.

TDES Dates and Appeal Process

Be sure to check the District calendar on the website for important TDES dates.

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. Please note: 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. Be sure to observe the deadlines in the process!

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. As this issue goes to press, Ohio lawmakers are considering changes to mandated student testing, and reducing the value of student test scores in teachers evaluations. 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 crorick@ctu279.org. We will print selected comments in future issues.

UNION NEWS

Income Tax Service for CTU Members

The CTU is offering a limited income tax service for members of Local 279. Taxes will be prepared at the CTU office in the Halle Building at 1228 Euclid Avenue, Suite 300. Members must call the CTU office at 216-861-7676 between 10:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to schedule an appointment. CTU does not pay or reimburse parking costs.

The service will run from Monday, February 5, through Thursday, April 12. Appointments are 40 minutes long, except for the last one of the day, which is an hour, reserved for members who require extra time. Appointments are scheduled from 3:25 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays, and 2:45 p.m.

to 6:15 p.m. on Fridays.

There will be no tax services on the following days: February 8, February 19, March 16, March 30, April 2, and April 6.

There is a minimum \$25 fee due at the time of the appointment. More extensive returns will require additional fees. These include Schedule C (business), Schedule D (capital gains), Schedule E (rental property), Form 2016 (auto expenses), depreciation, and other detailed forms.

Members are reminded to bring all W-2 forms; a copy of last year's tax return; any 1099 forms; social security numbers for themselves, spouse and dependents; childcare

payment summaries and their tax ID numbers; and Form 1095A (if enrolled in the Affordable Care Act healthcare).

Besides all pertinent tax paperwork, members must bring their current 2017-2018 CTU membership card and a photo ID. IRS mandates all tax preparers electronically file (e-file) all returns.

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

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.

Ohio Licensure Changes

Debbie Paden, CTU Educational Issues Chairperson, reminded CTU members of recent rule changes that impact some licenses. The State Board of Education has approved several Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) changes that affect educators seeking supplemental, short-term substitute, and alternative resident educator licenses. Another rule change will assist educators who have worked at schools out-of-state when they wish to renew their Ohio professional educator licenses.

- **Supplemental license course requirement removed.** This one-year license allows an educator with a currently valid standard teaching certificate or license to teach in a supplemental area. A qualified individual is no longer required to complete coursework in the content area of the supplemental license he or she is seeking. The educator, however, must successfully complete the required content exam for the licensure area to obtain an initial supplemental license at the employing Ohio school district's request. Be aware of the requirements to renew a supplemental license and seek standard licensure in the supplemental area. (OAC 3301-24-14)

- **"Short-term" definition for substitute licenses expanded.** Individuals who hold short-term substitute teaching licenses now may teach for 60 (school) days during the current school year. Ohio schools and districts must employ an individual with a long-term substitute license for periods longer than 60 (school) days. (OAC 3301-23-44)

- **Out-of-state teachers can renew their Ohio professional licenses more easily.** A change in

the professional development rules will help an educator who previously held, or currently holds, an Ohio professional license but has been teaching outside Ohio under a standard teaching license in that state. Such an educator may fulfill the professional development requirement for renewing an Ohio license with continuing education units completed since the issue date of the out-of-state license. The rules now allow renewal of a current or expired professional Ohio license with professional development completed to keep the out-of-state license current, if the continuing education relates to classroom teaching or the licensure area. (OAC 3301-24-06)

- **Alternative resident educator license reflects Senate Bill 3.** The rules now reflect changes made in state law through Senate Bill 3, effective March 2017, by first removing the content area coursework requirements for the initial alternative resident educator license. Additionally, those pursuing the alternative career-technical workforce development license must complete a university-approved performance-based assessment rather than the Resident Educator Summative Assessment (RESA). (OAC 3301-24-19 and 3301-24-22)

- **Pupil activity permit requirements updated.** In accordance with Ohio Senate Bill 252 (Lindsay's Law), the rules now reflect the annual sudden cardiac arrest training requirement for pupil activity permit holders. Additional amendments include clarification of who is required to hold a pupil activity permit. (OAC 3301-27-01)

If you have questions regarding these changes, contact Debbie Paden at the CTU office, 216-861-7676 ext. 252.

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY DAVID J. QUOLKE

The Union: Your Voice in Columbus and DC

■ continued from page 16

CMSD leaders made it clear that their concern was centered on the belief that the proposed legislation would eliminate the 22-point rubric that was part of our TDES system and mandate the 10-point OTES rubric.

I made it clear that was not the intention of the Cleveland Teachers Union, and that we would commit to that in writing. CTU was asked to write the first draft of what that language would encompass, so we could resolve this issue quickly. We responded in less than 48 hours on November 9 with draft language and a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) committing to our 22-point TDES rubric and incorporating Student Growth Measures into that rubric. Unfortunately, the District did not respond to our draft for more than three weeks and finally, on Friday, December 1, 2017, they indicated they could not agree with CTU.

In another attempt to resolve the issue, CTU proposed maintaining the 22-point rubric and incorporating Student Growth Measures (SGMs) into the rubric. We further proposed that if both sides could not agree to how to incorporate them into the rubric, we would adopt a 23-point rubric incorporating SGMs that then-CAO Gordon helped develop back in 2011 as the lead CMSD administrator responsible for developing TDES.

Back in February 2017, members of the CTU, CEO Gordon, the CMSD Board of Education, and ultimately Mayor Frank Jackson, agreed that if changes to ORC 3319.112 were to occur to OTES, those changes would also apply to Cleveland. The recom-

mendations proposed by the Educator Standards Board are intended to **improve teacher evaluation, and benefit all teachers and students.**

The teachers and students of Cleveland deserve to share in these changes and the improvements. It is unfair to carve one group of educators out of



that will include Cleveland teachers. I want to give a shout-out to OFT President Melissa Cropper, OFT Direc-

It is unfair to carve one group of educators out of positive changes that were designed to better the evaluation system for all other teachers in the state of Ohio!

positive changes that were designed to better the evaluation system for all other teachers in the state of Ohio!

In my testimony before the Senate Education Committee in Columbus on December 6, 2017, I made this case, and asked that an amendment to SB 216 be adopted to remove the language carving out Cleveland from the proposed evaluation changes. CEO Eric Gordon testified that using test scores was “helpful” and necessary in the Cleveland Plan. I testified that 3,000 Cleveland teachers should not be treated differently than every other teacher in Ohio when it comes to improving teacher evaluations.

Legislators Heard Our Voices!

As I write this, the compelling testimony and aggressive lobbying by CTU and OFT have made a difference. Senator Lehner and Senator Matt Huffman (R-Lima) removed the teacher evaluation piece (Cleveland carveout) from SB 216. **SB 240 was introduced, with changes to OTES**

tor of Legislation Darold Johnson, and political consultant Connie Nolder, who were very helpful and supportive of CTU in this effort.

Thanks to the work of the CTU and OFT, the carveout language has been changed: Cleveland teachers will be included in the positive OTES changes.

This legislative process is complicated, and the bill's wording can be confusing. But the bottom line is, thanks to the work of the CTU and OFT, the carveout language has been changed: Cleveland teachers will be included in the positive OTES changes.

Nevertheless, we must remain focused on the legislation, and make sure we stay included in the legislative process. If needed, we **will** send our CTU legislators to Columbus to testify.

At this point in time, CEO Eric Gordon has not been successful in getting CTU teachers excluded from the proposed changes to Ohio teacher evaluations — changes that will help to genuinely improve teacher development and practice, the ultimate goal of evaluations. Why would anyone want Cleveland teachers to be excluded from changes to an evaluation system that wasn't working as planned?

SB 246: SAFE Act and Student Suspensions

SB 246, called the SAFE Act, is another bill introduced by Senator Lehner and joint sponsor Gayle Manning (R-North Ridgeville) in Decem-

ber. SB 246 would prevent schools from issuing out-of-school suspensions to students in grades pre-K through third, except for violent behavior and serious threats toward others.

Senator Lehner said the bill is “aimed at addressing cycles of poverty by keeping students with disciplinary concerns on the path to earning their diploma.”

She said schools want to cut down on the number of suspensions and expulsions, and cited the movement towards more positive classroom climates. She believes provisions of the bill will limit out-of-school suspensions and expulsions for children, pre-kindergarten through third grade, by encouraging locally-driven positive interventions and supports. However, violent behavior and threats toward others would still make a student eligible for suspension or expulsion.

If enacted, this legislation would have a three-year phase-in. Districts could choose positive behavior intervention methods and training policies most appropriate for them, as alternatives to suspension. The bill calls for \$2 million for competitive grants to help implement positive interventions.

The Senator cited studies indicating that students who have been expelled or suspended from school are up to ten times more likely to drop out of high school, experience academic failure and grade retention, or face incarceration than those who have not been expelled or suspended.

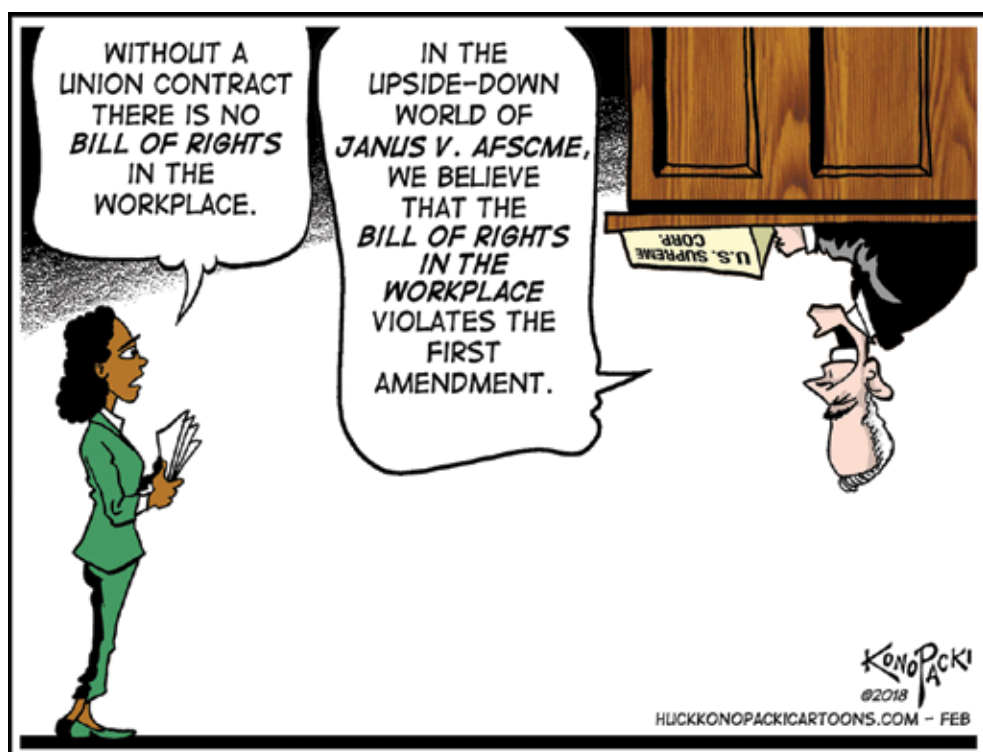
I believe the findings of these studies are accurate, but I also question the underlying causes. Are suspensions the cause of academic problems? Or are some misbehaviors symptoms of other problems?

While the SAFE Act addresses suspensions as an issue related to poverty, merely prohibiting suspensions except in the most severe cases will not fully address the possible root problems. The “positive interventions” must address the issues behind the behavior.

In my opinion, I believe some of our most disruptive students are kids in trauma, who may be dealing with terrible situations, bring that trauma into our classrooms, and act out as a way to process it. And most educators aren't trained or equipped to handle these extreme situations in the course of a regular school day.

CMSD's Planning Centers and Humanware Initiatives are excellent resources, and can help children and teachers deal successfully with some disruptive behaviors. But CMSD also needs its own social workers — which the District used to have — to help children and families in serious crisis. Until we recognize that and take positive steps to address it, we are only putting band-aids on the problem.

Are suspensions the cause of academic problems? Or are some misbehaviors symptoms of other problems?



As union educators and advocates for children, we need to be their voices and insist on genuine, effective programs and supports for kids and families in crisis.

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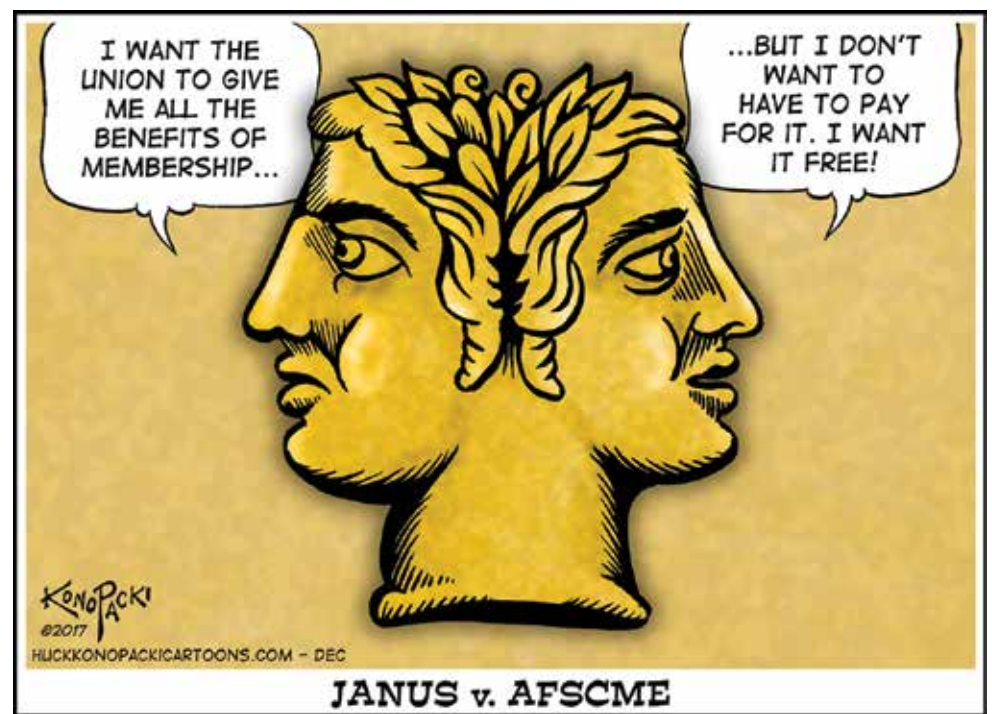
The Dangerous Elephant in the Room: Janus

First, a little history lesson: in June, 2016, the U.S. Supreme Court (after the untimely death of Justice Antonin Scalia, split 4-4 on *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association*, preserving union's right to agency fees.

In the *Friedrichs* case, a group of educators backed by a right-wing group filed a lawsuit asking the courts to decide whether public sector unions may continue to charge non-members a fee equal to the cost of representing them to their employer. This fee is called "agency fee" or "fair share." In states where there is no fair share (right-to-work states), the union must sign up everyone as a member — not merely a fair-share payer — to keep the union strong. When the court split, the case did not advance, and fair share was preserved.

Then the GOP-led Senate blocked President Barack Obama's nominee, and the seat was not filled until Donald Trump was elected with a GOP majority in Congress. Neil Gorsuch was confirmed, tipping the predicted balance on the Court to 5-4 in favor of the GOP or conservatives. And the attack on unions has returned with a new case, *Janus v. AFSCME*.

The *Janus* case began in Illinois. The Illinois Governor, billionaire Bruce Rauner, originated this case in a lawsuit he filed against AFSCME Council 31 to try to weaken the union by banning fair share fees in state government. When the federal court said he didn't have standing to bring such a suit, he found a lone state employee — Mark Janus — to allow the legal challenge to proceed in his name. In a letter to supporters detailed in *The Guardian*, the CEO of the corporate-backed State Policy Network revealed the true intent of this right-wing, anti-union nationwide campaign (of which Janus is only one part): to strike a "mortal blow" and "defund and defang" America's unions.



Unions originally developed the concept of agency fee, also known as fair share, because it's only fair that employees who reap the benefits of a good union contract pay their fair share of the cost of negotiating that contract. Workers in a unionized workplace who don't want to join the union reimburse the union for that cost by paying a fair share or agency fee.

The agency fee equals the amount of money needed to represent a member in collective bargaining. Other

expenses, such as costs for political activity, are not charged to fair share payers. Non-members only pay for bargaining and administering a contract that covers their wages, hours, and working conditions. (Read more about *Janus* on page ??.)

If *Janus* succeeds in overturning fair share fees for public sector unions, it will weaken your voice and power as a union member, unless CTU members remain strong and re-join CTU.

When unions lose power, income inequality increases, and workers' rights and protections decrease. When unions are strong, income inequality lessens, America has a larger and more vibrant middle class, and workers' rights are protected.

CTU MEMBERS

RECOMMIT NOW

In anticipation of the impending Janus decision from the U.S. Supreme Court, CTU and other AFT locals have begun a recommitment campaign to keep our union strong. What's behind this vital effort?

For years, wealthy interests in America have been pushing dishonestly-named "right-to-work" laws. They are already in place in 24 states. These laws weaken workers' rights and give more power to employers. The number don't lie: stats prove that in right-to-work states, wages for employees are 12% lower on average, there are fewer worker benefits and protections, and workers are less safe on the job. Right-to-work is a lie dressed up in a feel-good slogan. It would tip the scales even further in favor of employers and wealthy corporate interests. The latest attack on unions and working people is *Janus v. AFSCME*.

The wealthy, right-wing interests behind the *Janus v. AFSCME* case want the Court to overturn decades of legal precedent that enabled public sector unions (like the CTU) to charge a fair-share fee to non-members for the representation they provide. The goal of *Janus* is to cripple unions, weaken the rights of workers, and exacerbate the imbalance of power between labor and management. The case was taken to the Supreme Court right after the confirmation of Justice Neil Gorsuch, who has a record of siding against working people and for corporate interests. (Read more about the *Janus* case in President Quolke's Report on this page.)

What Can CTU Members Do?

Don't let the corporate interests behind *Janus* weaken the CTU and its ability to protect your rights. Recommit to the CTU today. Reaffirm your union membership and solidarity with your CTU colleagues.

Membership forms were distributed to chapter chairs at the annual CTU Leadership Conference. Members are being asked to fill out the form to show their recommitment to CTU. If you have not completed the membership form yet, please check with your chapter chair today.

In unity, there is strength. Stand up for your rights as a union member . . .

AND KEEP YOUR UNION STRONG

It seems we may have to re-fight many of the original battles that were fought and won by dedicated Union members decades ago.

The CTU, along with the OFT, AFT, and America's other major unions, are not optimistic about the probable outcome of *Janus*. It seems we may have to re-fight many of the original battles that were fought and won by dedicated Union members decades ago. They recognized the value of Union membership, and the strength it brought to America's workers, and were up to the battle. Our turn to demonstrate that same resolve and solidarity may be coming.

Like sailors on rough seas, we have three choices. We can complain about the wind, wait passively for it to change, or adjust the sails. It's time for Union members across America to adjust our sails, and face the current storm with action and solidarity.

I wish all of you a happy, healthy, productive new year in 2018, as you continue the important work of educating Cleveland's children.

In union,

David J. Quolke

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY DAVID J. QUOLKE

The Union: Your Voice in Columbus and DC

The CTU, OFT, and AFT have strong political arms, and strive to make your voices heard by the lawmakers who control our professional destiny. Your efforts as part of CTU's political activities are extremely important, as there truly is strength in numbers. Here is an update on two current issues affecting teachers and labor.

SB 240: OTES Changes

It appears Ohio is finally moving forward in its teacher evaluation system. SB 240 would move Ohio in the direction of several other states that have recognized using student test scores to evaluate teachers is not an effective evaluation of a teacher's skills, and doesn't help develop good teaching practices.

In December, Senator Peggy Lehner (R-Kettering), Chair of the Ohio Senate Education Committee, introduced SB 240, which would change the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES). After months of work by members of the Ohio Department of Educator Standards Board, including CTU Trustee Jim Wagner who serves on the Board, they and State Superintendent Paolo DiMario recommended changes in OTES. The proposed changes would focus on genuine teacher development. In a welcome and long-overdue change, the new system would remove student test scores as a significant part of a teacher's rating.

Many states have already acknowledged that student test scores are not effective in determining a teacher's skill level, and have lessened their impact in evaluating teachers. Six states have eliminated using student test scores entirely in their teacher evaluations: Alaska, Arkansas, Kansas, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Oklahoma.

Agreeing with the recommendations of the Standards Board, Senator Lehner acknowledged that Ohio's evaluation system, with its heavy reliance on student test scores, has not accomplished what it was intended to do: identify bad teachers. If SB 240 passes, teachers will still be responsible for student test scores, but in other ways. They will no longer be a major

Senator Lehner acknowledged that Ohio's evaluation system, with its heavy reliance on student test scores, has not accomplished what it was intended to do: identify bad teachers.

part of the teacher's evaluation.

Supporters of SB 240 say it will make OTES more flexible and effective by updating the current rubric. It will also make revisions to the data used to measure teacher performance, emphasizing that teacher evaluations should not be primarily determined by student test scores. It would add a professional growth process for teachers rated as "accomplished" and "skilled," and improve the timing of teacher observations and evaluations. Some changes would begin in the 2018-2019 school year, and it would be fully implemented in the 2019-2020 school year.

The goal of the proposed law is to change the mindset of the evaluation process, and make it more about genuine teacher development and improvement. This should be, I believe, the main goal of any teacher evaluation process — better teaching.

Our original understanding was that the District would not oppose changes to state law affecting the way all Ohio teachers — including CMSD teachers — are evaluated.

In Cleveland, we developed our Teacher Development and Evaluation System (TDES) in 2010. Our current CEO Eric Gordon was then our Chief Academic Officer, and was the District's lead person in developing that system. In 2010, our TDES System

conformed with the OTES system. While our TDES system varies from OTES in some areas, our system does conform with Ohio law.

The new CBA that we ratified in February 2017 contains language providing flexibility that **if state law were to change regarding the percentage of Student Growth Measures (SGMs) used in teacher evaluations, then those changes would apply to our teachers in Cleveland, as well.** CMSD's lead person in this negotiation was CEO Eric Gordon, and the CMSD's lead attorney was Susan Hastings from Squire, Patton, and Boggs. Ms. Hast-

ings was the lead attorney in developing the Cleveland Plan legislation and was their lead attorney in our 2013 negotiations as well. Mr. Gordon and Ms. Hastings were very clear that our negotiations must comply with the Cleveland Plan.

Additionally, every negotiation I have led since being elected President in 2008 ultimately needed approval of the Mayor and his appointed School Board. There is no doubt in my mind that when we reached agreement in February 2017, **CTU had the word of CMSD leadership, the Mayor, and the Board of Education that if**

CTU had the word of CMSD leadership, the Mayor, and the Board of Education that if ORC 3319.112 changed the evaluation system, these changes also applied to Cleveland, and they would not violate the integrity of the Cleveland Plan.

ORC 3319.112 changed the evaluation system, these changes also applied to Cleveland, and they would not violate the integrity of the Cleveland Plan.

However, as is often the case, getting Cleveland teachers included in the legislation was anything but easy. Prior to being introduced in SB 240,



the teacher evaluation language was originally placed in SB 216, legislation dealing with a number of education deregulation pieces.

However, shortly after SB 216 (regarding changes in state-mandated testing) was introduced back in October 2017, CTU had concerns that Cleveland teachers may be excluded or "carved out" of the language intended to improve teacher evaluations across the state. Lessons were learned since the initial implementation of OTES and TDES, and the solutions and improvements crafted by the Educator Standards Board (ESB) — made up of teachers, superintendents, ODE representatives, and other stakeholders — were recommended for **all teachers in the state of Ohio.**

I began to hear discussions that Cleveland should be "carved out" because of the Cleveland Plan. However, the Educator Standards Board never considered or even hinted that Cleveland teachers should be excluded from the recommendations intended to improve the evaluation system for **all** Ohio teachers, including CMSD teachers.

Even after I shared with legislators how CEO Gordon told me he did not request this carveout language, and that the Mayor's appointed School Board had just signed an agreement that any Ohio Revised Code changes to Student Growth Measure percentages would apply to Cleveland, I continued to hear messages that "CMSD

wanted to be carved out."

Finally, on November 7, 2017, Senator Lehner convened an interested party meeting with representatives of CMSD, ODE, the ESB, the Ohio Senate, CTU, and the Ohio Federation of Teachers. During that meeting,

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