



# CRITIQUE



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## CTU Members Vote **YES** On New Contract

CTU members approved a new contract, 2,962-434, in the April 15-18 ratification vote. The Negotiating Team reached a tentative agreement on April 2. The Executive Board reviewed it and voted to recommend a yes vote at its April 3 meeting. The Cleveland Board of Education voted to approve it at their April 23 meeting.

"The teams used a problem-solving approach on every issue in these negotiations," explained Shari Obrenski, CTU Director of Negotiations and 3rd Vice President, Senior/Special. "CTU negotiators focused on three main issues based on feedback from our members: changing the evaluation system including cutting excessive testing; reducing the 200 minutes; and improving classroom integrity. This contract positively addresses all three areas."

"We believe this contract is good for kids and fair for educators, and our members agreed by ratifying it," added President Quolke. "It will significantly decrease the amount of student testing, reduce the 200 minutes by half, separate student test scores from teacher evaluations, and strengthen classroom integrity."

CTU negotiators did not sugarcoat financial issues, explaining that Ohio school districts must certify to the state that they have adequate funds to pay for any raises negotiated in new agreements. With the 2016 operating levy due to expire in 2020, the District was limited in what monies they could guarantee, but there will be a 1% raise in the base pay and differentials for all members beginning in the 13th check next school year. And the quality first-dollar health care coverage remains the same with no deductible, no increase in office visit copays or prescription costs, and no change in the wellness program which allows members to pay for health care at 2013 rates — a bargain in today's health care market.



**SHARI OBRENSKI**  
CTU Director of Negotiations

Although the CTU negotiators considered taking the economic issues to Fact-Finding, based on the District's financial situation, they did not anticipate a positive Fact-Finder result. They also wanted the positive new contract language to take effect beginning in the 2019-2020 school year.

This is a one-year contract that will automatically become a two-year contract unless CTU or CMSD request to reopen negotiations by December 1, 2019. It will give the Union and the District time to work on the levy renewal in the fall of 2020, and bring more funds into the District before negotiating again. In the meantime, it

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### Say Yes Cleveland!



CTU President David Quolke introduced Diane Downing, Executive Director of Say Yes to Education Cleveland, to Chapter Chairs at the April 29 Divisional Meetings. Read more about the SYTE program on pages 10-11, including President Quolke's comments about the Cleveland program, and an interview about SYTE Buffalo with the Buffalo Teachers Federation President Philip Rumore. Photos from the Divisional Meetings are on page 8.

## Kick Off Your Summer at the CTU End-of-the-Year Party!

### Nautica Pavilion

(behind the Powerhouse on the West Bank of the Flats)

### Thursday, May 23, 2019

### 3:30-8:00 p.m.

Present your CTU membership card and receive a free drink ticket. Wear CTU apparel and receive an additional free drink ticket.

Sponsored by the CTU Social Committee,  
Cassandra Carter, Chairperson

Parking is located in the Powerhouse parking lot. Parking prices are subject to change.

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# THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN



**THUMBS UP** to the new **CTU-CMSD Collective Bargaining Agreement** and the **Negotiating Teams**. Using a problem-solving approach, the teams were able to make changes in key areas identified by CTU members: changing the TDES evaluation system; cutting excessive student testing; reducing the 200 minutes; and strengthening classroom integrity. Negotiating Team members felt the agreement was good for kids and fair for teachers, and CTU members agreed with their votes.



**THUMBS UP** to **Say Yes to Cleveland**, the life-changing, NY-based program that will provide scholarships for participating colleges and trade schools to all qualified CMSD graduates, and more importantly, provide necessary support services for students and families throughout their years in CMSD. And



**THUMBS UP** to the **16 schools that decided to be part of Phase I of implementation: high schools New Tech East, John Adams College & Career, John Marshall Civic & Business, Lincoln-West Global Studies, Max Hayes, and Rhodes College & Career, and PreK-8 schools Almira, Buhner, Joseph M. Gallagher, Marion-Sterling, Mary M. Bethune, Memorial, Michael R. White, Miles Park, Orchard, and Wilbur Wright.**



**THUMBS DOWN** to the **Lordstown General Motors plant closure**, another blow to economically challenged Trumbull County, leaving Lordstown, a city of about 3,400, facing an uncertain future. Trumbull County was a key voting block for President Donald Trump in 2016. Usually a Democratic stronghold, it flipped from blue to red in 2020 after Trump repeatedly promised to revive American manufacturing in the

area, saying those jobs “are all coming back.” A Drive It Home Ohio event was hosted by the Lordstown Teachers Association, OFT, and AFT to spotlight the effects of the closure. Besides the loss of the 1,400 GM jobs, Manufacturing Works projected the plant shutdown could lead to the eventual loss of as many as 43,000 jobs in Ohio and across the Midwest. Approximately \$800,000 in revenue to support Lordstown schools will also be lost.



**THUMBS UP** to **Wendi Kral, CTU Membership Chair, Scott Artbauer of the Cleveland Custodians Union**, and their committee for organizing the **Annual Charity Golf Outing**. Now in its eleventh year, all proceeds benefit the Tri-C Scholarship Fund and the CCU Scholarship Fund. The popular May golf outing continues to grow, and raises thousands of dollars each year. These scholarships will be important parts of the Say Yes To Education Cleveland’s “blanket” of scholarships and financial aid that will help make higher education possible for Cleveland kids.



**THUMBS UP** to **CTU’s Summer of Good Will**, organized by **Legislative Chairperson Elisa Kazek** and her Committee. Join your CTU colleagues in their effort to help build and strengthen relationships between the CTU and the Cleveland community — all while you’re enjoying some of the city’s best summer festivals!



**THUMBS DOWN** to the **Trump/Republican tax plan** that affected our 2018 tax returns. While the very wealthiest Americans and corporations made out like bandits, many working-class Americans were unpleasantly surprised to find they weren’t getting their usual-size return, or worse yet, owed the IRS a big chunk of money! The plan blew a huge hole in the federal

deficit, and despite Republican’s claims, it was most certainly not a big tax break for the poor and middle class.



And a double **THUMBS DOWN** to the **change in that same tax law, making union dues and other job-related expenses not deductible!** It’s

another Republican effort to weaken unions while financially bruising union members/workers. Strong unions helped build the middle class in America, and protected workers’ rights against corporate greed. In this era of unprecedented income inequality and attacks on labor, unions are more important than ever.



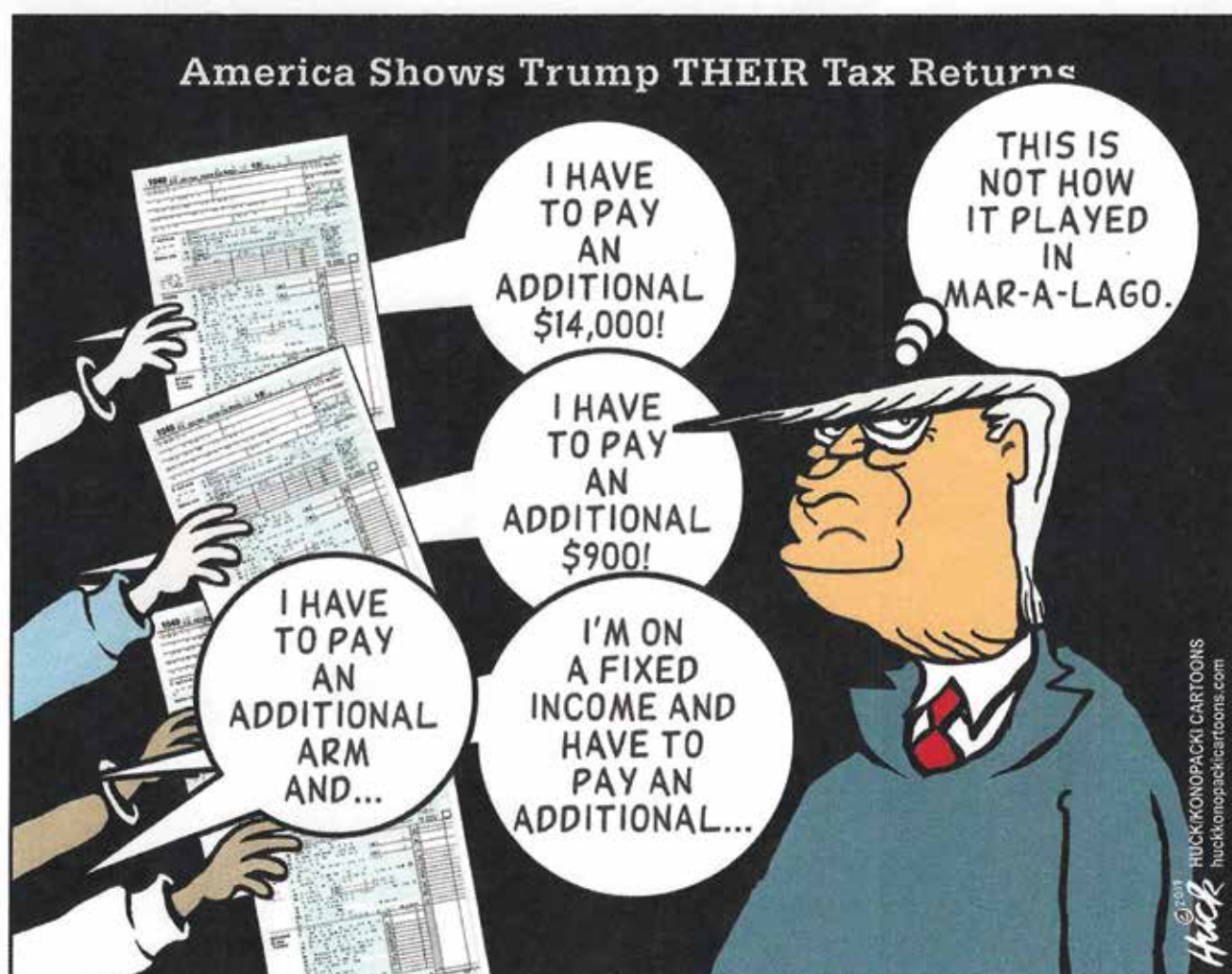
**THUMBS UP** to **CTU Committees and Chairpersons** for the outstanding array of workshops, informational sessions, and professional development they provided throughout the year for CTU members, especially **Cindy Antonio** and the Salary and Benefits Committee, and **Stephanie Henderson** and the Civil, Democratic, and Human Rights Committee. If you did not attend any this school year, make it a point to register and attend some of these valuable sessions next school year.



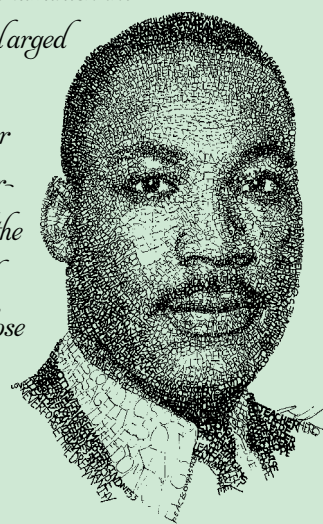
**THUMBS UP** to the CTU’s Office of Psychological Services UCC, Rapid Response, and CMSD First Responders for their participation in the 15th annual Into the Light Walk May 5 at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. The Walk’s purpose is to help dispel the stigma of mental health problems and prevent teen (and all) suicide. Each year CMSD First Responders assist over 800 students who are experiencing stress, trauma, and depression. The Walk supports LifeAct, a program that educates CMSD middle and high school students to recognize warning signs of depression and seek help for themselves or others. Thanks to those who participated in this worthwhile event.



And a final **THUMBS UP** to the **CTU Social Chair Cassandra Carter** and her Committee for the revitalizing, refreshing, collegial events they provide for CTU members throughout the year — especially the annual favorite, the End-of-the-Year Party! Join your CTU brothers and sisters to celebrate the beginning of summer break on May 23 at Nautica Pavilion from 3:30-8:00 p.m.



*The labor movement did not diminish the strength of the nation but enlarged it. By raising the living standards of millions, labor miraculously created a market for industry and lifted the whole nation to undreamed of levels of production. Those who attack labor forget these simple truths, but history remembers them.*



MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., speech to AFL-CIO, Dec. 11, 1961



## Join Your CTU Colleagues!

# CTU Summer of Good Will

**Looking for some summer fun? Elisa Kazek, CTU's Legislative Chair, has a suggestion: join your CTU sisters and brothers at a festival in Cleveland during the summer break!**

"The CTU Summer of Good Will is a great opportunity to positively engage with other CTU members and the Cleveland community to gain support for the teaching profession, while enjoying some of Cleveland's best summer festivals," said Ms. Kazek.

At this time, the CTU plans to have a presence at these events: Edgewater Live, Puerto Rican Fest, Waterloo Arts Fest, Cudell Fine Arts, Wade Oval Wednesdays, and the 121st Congressional District Labor Day Parade. If you are interested in representing CTU at an event and would like more information, contact Elisa Kazek by email at [ekazek@ctu279.org](mailto:ekazek@ctu279.org) or call her at 216-861-7676 ext. 273.

All members are encouraged to spend some time at the CTU table at

one or more of the summer events. Be sure to wear your CTU gear!

### And on a Personal Note . . .

While my Committee and I are getting ready for the Summer of Good Will activities during the upcoming break, I'm also recovering from surgery, finishing radiation treatments, and beginning maintenance chemotherapy treatments for breast cancer.

**I urge every CTU member: get your annual health screenings — don't delay!** Last year I had to reschedule my annual mammogram, and ended up putting it off for several months. That one time

"The Summer of Good Will activities are good opportunities for fellowship and building bridges with the Cleveland community, and having fun, too," added Ms. Kazek. "We all

I delayed was the time I got the bad news that I had cancer. Luckily, it was still treatable. I hate to think what might be if I had put it off even longer. No one likes medical tests, but they can save your life.

CTU sisters: woman up, get your annual mammogram, Pap test, and any other test your doctor recommends! Same to you, CTU brothers: man up and don't put off that prostate exam or any other test your doctor says you need.

Every member should take advantage of the CMSD Wellness

share a mutual interest: the success of Cleveland kids. Please consider joining us to represent CTU at a festival this summer."

Program, too — it's a great way to save money on health care premiums. Plus, it may add years to your life by catching any medical problems early.

Enjoy the summer break, hope to see you at the Summer of Good Will festival events, and in case you haven't done it yet, call your doctor today to schedule any exams or tests you may be due for — don't wait. It may cost you everything.

— Elisa Kazek

## AFT+ Benefits for Union Members



**Are you aware of the many benefits your CTU/OFT/AFT membership automatically brings? Through its AFT+ benefits program for members, the American Federation of Teachers provides health, legal, financial, educational, shopping, and travel benefits, among others.**

If you plan to do any traveling during the summer break, check out the AFT+ travel and entertainment

benefits. You can get details about the offers at the website [www.aft.org/member-benefits](http://www.aft.org/member-benefits). Below are some of the travel and entertainment benefits that are available to you as a CTU member through the AFT+ benefits program.

**Car Rental:** AFT members and their families save up to 25% with car rental discounts.

**Emergency Assistance Plus:** Emergency Assistance Plus provides valuable and reassuring medical as-

sistance for AFT members and their families while traveling in the U.S. or abroad, including medical evacuation, medical assistance, assistance for companions or pets, auto retrieval and travel assistance. EA Plus offers a 24/7 toll-free number to call for help, no matter where in the world you are. A risk-free, 30-day no-obligation trial is available..

**Entertainment Discounts:** Members can save on movie tickets, sporting events, theme park admissions and much more.

**Extra Holidays by Wyndham:** As an AFT member, you will receive up to 20% off the "best available rate."

**Hotel Discounts:** Save up to 20% off the "best available rate" at more than 7,700 participating hotels in locations worldwide when you book online or call using the AFT discount code.

**Motor Club:** Participants in the Union Plus Motor Club can get help with vehicle-related problems, anywhere in the country, with emergency roadside assistance 24/7/365. And it costs less than other auto clubs.

**Moving Van Discounts:** Enjoy a stress-free and affordable experience with Union Plus discounts on full-service moving vans through the leading national moving brands, Allied Van Lines and North American Van Lines.

**Truck Rental by Budget:** Make your do-it-yourself move cost even less with a discount at one of the nation's largest truck rental facilities. Union families save 20% off normal Budget truck and van rental rates for a local or one-way move, with advance reservations.

**Southwest Airlines:** AFT Members can receive discounts on flights through our SWABIZ account. SWA is offering an 8% discount off Business Select fares, 6% discount off Anytime fares, and a 3% discount off select Wanna Get Away fares for travel, along with other benefits.

**Vacation Rentals:** AFT members will receive 25% off vacation rentals when booking online.

Let your union membership work for you through the AFT+ benefits program, already available to you through your membership in CTU!

## CTU Members Vote YES On New Contract

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includes many CTU-favorable provisions that will be good for educators and students beginning in the 2019-2020 school year.

### Some Contract Highlights

The Teacher Development and Evaluation System (TDES) was changed to incorporate Senate Bill 216 into the contract, including changes to the educator Growth Plan. The 50% Student Growth Measures will be eliminated from the Final Effectiveness Rating; TDES will be the sole criteria.

High Quality Student Data will be incorporated into the rubric instead. The number of TDES events will be reduced for most members. For RSPs, the order of events was changed. Specific reductions in student testing were included in the agreement.

Teachers, paraprofessionals, Sign Language Interpreters (SLIs), and Related Service Providers with a 2018-2019 Final Effectiveness Rating of Skilled will have one year off of TDES next year; those with Accomplished ratings will have the next two school years off TDES.

Paraprofessionals who agree to

cover for another para or work beyond their 7¼ hours will be paid for their extra time. The ability of substitutes to participate in VPD/Community Engagement Days was clarified.

The District will reduce its number of school networks from seven to six. The reduction will free administrative staff to form an Office of Contract Implementation to focus on streamlining and accelerating grievance payments, addressing assaults in a more uniform manner, and handling other contract-related issues more effectively and efficiently.

Several improvements and changes were made to strengthen the District's HumanWare/Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) initiatives. In addition, the NOW (anti-bullying) and WAVE (anti-violence and mediation) coordinator positions were collapsed into one new position, the SEL coordinator.

The agreement has other language changes that will improve working conditions for CTU members. All members are encouraged to **read the copy of the agreement** that they received, if they have not already done so. The changes will take effect beginning next school year.





# REPORT

## CTU Wins Preschool Grievance, Sets MOU for Contract Implementation

**Jillian Ahrens and Mary Moore, 3rd Vice Presidents, K-8 and CTU Grievance Co-Directors, reported that CTU won a class action grievance in April regarding bonuses paid to preschool teachers and paraprofessionals for their Step Up to Quality ratings of four or five stars. CTU Secretary and preschool teacher Michelle Rzucidlo filed the class action grievance on behalf of all affected CMSD preschool staff.**

The District said they believed the bonus, part of the last collective bargaining agreement, was to be a one-time payment. The Union argued that the intent during negotiations was that the bonus be given annually, each time the preschools were rated. Based on the language in the CBA saying SUTQ paperwork was to be completed yearly, the CBA meant for it to be a yearly payment, depending on the current SUTQ rating.

Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) is a five-star quality rating and improvement system administered by the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. SUTQ recognizes and promotes learning and development programs for preschools that meet quality program standards that exceed licensing health and safety regulations. SUTQ's rigorous standards are based on national research identifying standards which lead to improved outcomes for children.

"After we won the grievance, which was for the 2017-2018 school year, that began the arduous process of verifying which preschool staff were due bonus payments," said Ms. Ahrens. "Michelle Rzucidlo did a lot of work to confirm who should be paid, and help get payments made this spring."

The grievance initially included preschool staff in 50 CMSD schools, but the outcome affects all preschool teachers and paras.

### MOU to Help Implement CBA

A one-year, trial-basis Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was established to create an Office of Contract Implementation (OCI). One of CMSD's seven networks of schools will be collapsed; the schools will be incorporated into the other net-

awards. That has been a continued issue — timely payments to CTU members after they win grievances with financial awards. Even CEO Eric Gordon has been frustrated with slow payments, and hope-

**The person CEO Gordon selects to lead the OCI will be critical in determining its success.**

*— Jillian Ahrens, CTU 3rd Vice President and Co-Grievance Director*

fully this will help solve the problem."

"Now we won't need to go through several departments, but we'll have one office, one place that will handle all Step II grievances," added Ms. Moore. "The goal is to ensure payments for grievance awards are made in a more timely manner."

Another important function of the OCI will be to clarify Article 15 staff assault/menacing appeals. At Level I, the principal makes the determination about whether an action was a serious assault or battery. In the new CBA, the staff member will now appeal to the OCI within five days of the principal's decision. The OCI will then make a decision within two days of the appeal.

In the previous CBA, the appeal went to the Network Leader but the timeline was too short for an appeal. Too often some Network Leaders would say the appeal was out of the timeline and would deny the grievance regardless of the severity of the offense. And from network to network, the Network Leaders' decisions could be different for similar offenses. This change will provide more consistency and fairness for both students and staff

any fact finding hearings. Since 2013, if the principal determined the preliminary investigation would move to fact finding, a designee — too often the same principal — held the fact finding and made the decision. Now all fact findings will be held by the OCI. As in Article 15 decisions, this can provide more consistency and fairness for staff regarding Article 18 determinations. In addition, administrators in the OCI will report to Chief Karen Thompson directly, and not have to deal with layers of bureaucracy.

"The person CEO Gordon selects to lead the OCI will be critical in determining its success," emphasized Ms. Ahrens. "That's why we signed a one-year, trial MOU regarding the OCI," explained Ms. Moore. "If it works as it's supposed to, it will be beneficial to our members. If not, then it's not set in stone."

The Grievance Chairs added that the new CBA includes other changes to "clean up" the assault appeal language, clarifying the number of days to appeal and setting a clearer timeline.

### Grievances Answered Quickly

Ms. Ahrens and Ms. Moore reported that they have been getting prompt answers to grievances at the District Level, crediting CMSD's Luther Johnson, Executive Director, Labor Management.

Both Co-Directors urged members to **read the new contract!** "You don't know if your rights are being violated if you don't know what they are," said Ms. Ahrens.

"We recommend every member take time to read through it, and familiarize themselves with the working conditions and protections the new CBA provides," said Ms. Moore. "There are positive changes in our new contract that will benefit all CTU members."

### Your Right to File A Grievance

Is there a situation in your work place that you feel is unfair or wrong? Read the contract, and if you feel it has been violated, file a grievance! That is your right as a union member.

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

Enforcing the contract begins at the building level, where all CTU members

**A** one-year, trial-basis Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was established to create an Office of Contract Implementation (OCI).

works, and resources from that network will be used to staff the OCI.

"The Office of Contract Implementation will handle special transfers, procedural protections, and MOUs," explained Ms. Ahrens. "It will facilitate all payments due to CTU members from grievance

regarding Article 15 determinations.

There was also a problem regarding consistency in Article 18, staff discipline. Again, depending on the network, the Network Leaders' decisions were different for similar offenses. Now the OCI will also handle all CTU member disciplin-

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## New CBA Strengthens HumanWare Initiative

The new contract includes four positive changes that will improve CMSD's HumanWare Initiative, stated Jillian Ahrens, CTU 3rd Vice President, K-8, and CTU's Co-Lead on the CMSD-CTU HumanWare Executive Team.

"Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) affects students' success and well-being in school and in life, both now and in the future," said Ms. Ahrens. "SEL competence has far-reaching consequences for our students in all areas of their lives, including academics."

The CBA includes four changes in the SEL area: SEL curriculum; SST Coordinator prep time; SEL Coordinator position; and SEL training.

### SEL Curriculum

The CBA ensures that all students from preschool through twelfth grade will have access to high-quality, evidence-based SEL curriculum and lessons. A few schools were selecting SEL programs that were not necessarily evidence-based for use with their students.

CMSD, CTU and CASEL (Collabor-

ative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) are working together to provide a menu of high-quality, evidenced-based SEL programs from which schools can choose.

Right now, the District-provided SEL programs are PATHS for grades PreK-5, Second Step for grades 6-8, and Facing History for grades 9-12. Resources and training for implementing these programs (which are all high-quality and evidence-based) will be provided by the District.

Additionally, through the AAP process, a school will be able to apply for a waiver and select a different program from the menu of approved HumanWare programs. However, the school will have to use its own budget to pay for adequate training and resources necessary to implement the alternative program.

The Ohio Department of Education recognizes the importance of SEL curriculum, and is expected to establish SEL standards for school districts by fall of 2019. District curriculum must meet the ODE standards.

### SST Coordinator Prep Time

The CBA now includes preparation time for the Student Support Team (SST) Coordinator, in addition to one period per week for the SST meeting. The CBA includes different options for providing this time. It can be extra planning periods in the schedule, part of the administrative 100 minutes, or compensated time.

### SEL Coordinator

The SEL Coordinator (one per school) is a new differential stipend position. The position will be posted and will follow the personnel selection process in the CBA. This position will combine the two positions of WAVE Coordinator (Mediation) and Anti-Bullying Coordinator.

The SEL Coordinator will be responsible for coordinating (but not providing) SEL training as needed by staff at their building, monitoring implementation of SEL initiatives, coordinating with the HumanWare Department, and overseeing a mediation program and an anti-bullying program in their school.

### SEL Training

The District and Union agreed to begin "a full spectrum of Restorative Practices including current HumanWare/SEL initiatives." In the 2019-2020 school year, CMSD's HumanWare Department will provide training on SEL curriculum, the new state SEL standards, and HumanWare initiatives prior to implementation. This training will include initial and refresher training for SSTs, PATHS, Second Step, classroom meetings, Planning Centers, restorative practices, and trauma-informed practices for all staff.

## Why SEL Training?

## Profound Benefits Can Last A Lifetime

**Social and emotional learning (SEL) programs show immediate improvements in mental health, social skills, and academic achievement. But that's only the beginning. Recent studies and meta-analyses confirm that the SEL skills students learn will continue to benefit them in a variety of areas for months and even years. What did they find?**

Students exposed to SEL in school continue to do better than their peers on a number of indicators: positive social behaviors and attitudes, skills such as empathy and teamwork, and academics. They have fewer conduct problems, less emotional distress, and lower drug use, among many other

benefits. And the study found the benefits evident up to 18 years later.

Students who participated in evidence-based SEL programs showed an 11 percentile-point gain in academic achievement compared to students who did not participate in SEL programs. Students participating in SEL programs also showed improved classroom behavior, an increased ability to manage stress and depression, and better attitudes about themselves, others, and school.

Another study found statistically significant associations between SEL skills in kindergarten and key outcomes for young adults years later in their education, employment, criminal activity, substance use, and mental health. Early prosocial skills decreased the likelihood of living in or being on a waiting list for public housing, receiving public assistance, having any involvement with police before adulthood, and spending time in a detention facility.

Another study found that the measurable benefits of SEL exceed the costs, often by considerable amounts. The analysis showed an average benefit-cost ratio of about 11-to-1 among the six evidence-based SEL interventions studied. **This means that, on average, for every \$1 invested in SEL programming, there is a return of \$11.**

The data is clear: Social/Emotional Learning is a valuable part of the curriculum, with significant, lifelong benefits for students.

[Source: Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)]

## Grievance, MOU

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have a right to the working conditions and protections negotiated in the CBA. You can ask your Chapter Chair or call the CTU office at 216-861-7676 for help filing a grievance.

Remember, all grievances are filed electronically. Instructions are on the grievance forms available on the CTU website, [www.ctu-279.org](http://www.ctu-279.org). Electronic filing helps establish a timeline and prevents lost paperwork.





## It's License and IPDP Time Again!

Did you just renew your license? Then it's time to write your new IPDP!

The CTU IPDP Team advises every licensed educator to make sure they always, always have a current, approved IPDP (Individual Professional Development Plan) on file. Do not wait until it's time to renew your license. An approved IPDP is necessary before taking any classes or earning any CEUs. Otherwise, without a new IPDP, the classes or CEUs may not count toward your next renewal.

An IPDP help guide is available on CTU's and CMSD's websites. It's 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 user name and/or password, contact a member of the CTU IPDP Team: Bonnie Hedges ([bhedges@ctu279.org](mailto:bhedges@ctu279.org)), Tracy Radich ([tradich@ctu279.org](mailto:tradich@ctu279.org)), or Jim Wagner ([jwagner@ctu279.org](mailto:jwagner@ctu279.org)).

And remember, having a valid license, certificate, or permit by the first day of school is a requirement for employment in Ohio schools. Educators who are renewing, have lived continuously in Ohio for the past five years, and have a BCI check on file will only need to have an FBI background check. If you have not lived continuously in Ohio for the past five years, both BCI and FBI checks are required.

CMSD Safety & Security does fingerprinting at East Professional Center. Contact their office at 216-838-0420 to check on summer hours.

The renewal process is part of your professional responsibilities. Don't put your job in jeopardy — be sure to renew in plenty of time.

# PARA NEWS

## Renew Your Permit Now

Cherylane Jones-Williams, Paraprofessional Chapter Chair, reminds all paras to check their Ohio Department of Education-issued Educational Aide Permit to see when it expires. Para credentials expire yearly, unless you are eligible for and hold a multi-year permit.

If your permit expires this year

(June 30, 2019), you must renew your permit in your ODE SAFE account as soon as possible! If you aren't sure when it expires, license information can be viewed in your Workday profile by choosing Career, then choosing Certifications.

Remember, you must have a valid permit to work in any classroom in the state of Ohio. You can renew a permit for one year (\$25) or four years (\$100).

Before you renew, you will need a current FBI/BCI check. If you have lived continuously in Ohio for the past five years, you will not need a BCI check. An FBI check is required every five years for every applicant.

CMSD provides FBI/BCI checks at the CMSD office of Safety and Security at East Professional Development Center on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9-11 a.m. and 1-3 p.m. During the summer months, call their office at 216-838-0420 to check on summer hours. FBI/BCI checks must be paid for with a money order only made out to CMSD. The BCI check is \$22. The FBI check is \$25.25.

You can renew your license online at the ODE link: <https://Safe.ODE.State.OH.US/Portal/>



**CHERYLANE JONES-WILLIAMS**  
*Paraprofessionals Chair*

**Home.** Select RENEW and use the credential code CMSD IRN 043786. Once you have completed all required information, you will need a credit card to pay the fee online and complete the application process.

"We urge all paras to be proactive about renewing their Educational Aide Permits," said Ms. Williams. "Get it renewed now, so you won't have any problems when school begins in August."

If you have questions or need help with the renewal process, contact Cherylane Jones-Williams at 216-861-7676 x241, Debbie Paden at 216-861-7676 x252, or Mark Baumgartner at 216-861-7676 x272.

### CTU Social Media

#### Share with CTU Colleagues

Share information and ideas with your CTU brothers and sisters on social media. The Union has an open Facebook site for members, friends, and the public, and it has a closed site just for current CTU members. Look for them on Facebook at Cleveland Teachers Union 279 and Official CTU 279 Members.

There are Cleveland Teachers Union Pinterest pages too, including one specifically for new teachers. Lots of great ideas! Take some time over the break to investigate these sites, if you use social media.

## Excellence in Teaching Winner:

# Josette Compton

by Christy Brown

Josette Compton is a ninth-grade English teacher at Cleveland High School for Digital Arts and a 2018 Excellence in Teaching Award Winner. Teaching is not Josette's first career; she has previously worked as a magazine journalist. Her accomplishments include writing for Entertainment Weekly, XXL, and Interview magazines.

Josette's writing career began at the young age of 15 as a teen columnist for *The Plain Dealer*. After a layoff and inconsistencies with freelance magazine journalism about four and half years ago, Josette started her teaching career. It is her experiences in journalism that inform her teaching practices in the classroom in the areas of writing, reading comprehension, and visual storytelling.

Josette states, "Winning the Excellence in Teaching Award was significant in that it acknowledges the effort I put into my work as an educator." She believes that winning the award validates her giving the students 200% of herself and that teaching is a career that requires such effort. She is hard working and committed to being a transformative leader and reimagining how students learn.

Winning the Excellence in Teaching Award often brings additional opportunities that stretch beyond the classroom. Since winning

the award, Josette has received requests for consultation on lesson planning and sharing instructional practices. Also, before coming to CMSD, Josette served as a Teach for America (TFA) corps member in Atlanta and now has been asked to speak on a panel for Teach for America's (Greater Cleveland) Annual Impact Cleveland event. This event brings together alumni across the country to discuss leadership, educational entrepreneurship, and ways in which to transform public education for non-dominant students.

As part of being an award winner, Josette has agreed to share her practice. You can find suggestions, strategies and resources at the Excellence In Teaching website, [teachexcellenceaward.org](http://teachexcellenceaward.org).

Josette has also decided to launch a nonprofit organization that will specialize in working with non-dominant teenage girls. The focus of the nonprofit is to work with girls interested in digital arts and inspire them to pursue STEM fields such as architecture and engineering. While she is currently pursuing her doctorate at Northeastern University in Digital Arts Integration, the nonprofit will parallel with this with the hope to inspire innovation outside the traditional classroom. Although she is dedicated to teaching, writing is a passion and Josette intends to return to the creative writing field one day.



CMSD CEO Eric Gordon and CTU President David Quolke congratulate one of the EIT winners, Josette Compton, at the Excellence in Teaching Awards Ceremony.

Teaching has taught me a lot about how systems work, how injustice works, and the potential of all students to learn advanced skills in a short amount of time.



# District Moving to 24 Paydays in 2019-2020 School Year



Full-time CTU members are currently compensated each year in 26 equal installments. The CBA ratified in February 2017 approved the move to 24 paydays (24 equal installments) instead of 26. However, there were concerns about the transition in 2018-2019, and CTU agreed to delay the implementation until the 2019-2020 school year.

“When we were negotiating this change, we addressed our concern of having a potential 3-week pay gap at the beginning of the school year,” explained President David Quolke. “We also addressed the District’s concern of having 27 pay periods in a fiscal year [that ends on June 30], which would result in moving the last June pay date into July. Going to a 24-pay cycle resolved both of these potential problems.”

Beginning this summer (2019), CMSD will begin transitioning all CTU members to 24 equal bi-monthly payments. Paydays will be on the 5th and 20th of each month unless that day falls on a weekend or holiday, in which case the payday will be the preceding business day.

Be aware, beginning after the May 17 payday, your pay dates will begin to change! These adjustments will facilitate a smooth transition to 24 pays, and prevent a three-week or longer pay gap as the District implements the new 24-pay schedule. Be aware of these new pay dates, so any necessary adjustments to automatic payments from your financial institution can be made before May 31.



Your total salary will not be affected by the change; it will simply be divided into 24 pays instead of 26 pays. The last six pay dates for the 2018-2019 school year, and the 24 pay dates for the 2019-2020 school year are listed at right.

## Last Six Pay Dates for 2018-2019 (Traditional Calendar)

Friday, May 17, 2019  
Monday, June 3, 2019  
Thursday, June 20, 2019  
Friday, July 5, 2019  
Friday, July 19, 2019  
Monday, August 5, 2019

## Last Six Pay Dates for 2018-2019 (Year Round/Extended Year)

Friday, May 3, 2019  
Friday, May 17, 2019  
Monday, June 3, 2019  
Thursday, June 20, 2019  
Friday, July 5, 2019  
Friday, July 19, 2019

## 24 Pay Dates for the 2019-2020 School Year (Traditional Calendar)

Tuesday, August 20, 2019  
Thursday, September 5, 2019  
Friday, September 20, 2019  
Friday, October 4, 2019  
Friday, October 18, 2019  
Tuesday, November 5, 2019  
Wednesday, November 20, 2019  
Thursday, December 5, 2019  
Friday, December 20, 2019  
Friday, January 3, 2020  
Friday, January 17, 2020  
Wednesday, February 5, 2020  
Thursday, February 20, 2020  
Thursday, March 5, 2020  
Friday, March 20, 2020  
Friday, April 3, 2020  
Monday, April 20, 2020  
Tuesday, May 5, 2020  
Wednesday, May 20, 2020  
Friday, June 5, 2020  
Friday, June 19, 2020  
Friday, July 3, 2020  
Monday, July 20, 2020  
Wednesday, August 5, 2020

## 24 Pay Dates for the 2019-2020 School Year (Year Round/Extended)

Monday, August 5, 2019  
Tuesday, August 20, 2019  
Thursday, September 5, 2019  
Friday, September 20, 2019  
Friday, October 4, 2019  
Friday, October 18, 2019  
Tuesday, November 5, 2019  
Wednesday, November 20, 2019  
Thursday, December 5, 2019  
Friday, December 20, 2019  
Friday, January 3, 2020  
Friday, January 17, 2020  
Wednesday, February 5, 2020  
Thursday, February 20, 2020  
Thursday, March 5, 2020  
Friday, March 20, 2020  
Friday, April 3, 2020  
Monday, April 20, 2020  
Tuesday, May 5, 2020  
Wednesday, May 20, 2020  
Friday, June 5, 2020  
Friday, June 19, 2020  
Friday, July 3, 2020  
Monday, July 20, 2020

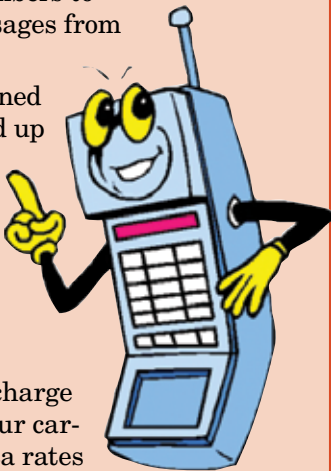


## CTU Text Alerts

Stay informed with the latest CTU news over the summer break! A text service is available for CTU members to receive text alert messages from the CTU and AFT.

Are you already signed up? Great! Not signed up yet? Take out your phone now! Send a text message with the word ctu279 (lower case, no spaces) in the message box to this number: 69238.

AFT-CTU will not charge for this service, but your carrier’s message and data rates may apply.



## Keep Current at CTU



Be sure the Union can contact you — keep your information current! If your address, phone number, and/or personal email has changed, contact Yolanda at the CTU office at 216-861-7676 to update your information.





Tracy Radich, CTU 1st Vice President and member of the Negotiating Team, discusses union issues with Lavonne Halaburda of H. Barbara Booker at a quiet moment during the Meetings.

President David Quolke introduced Diane Downing, Executive Director of Say Yes to Education Cleveland, to CTU Chapter Chairs and Executive Board members at the Divisional Meetings. The annual one-day conference is part of CTU's continuing training for CTU Chapter Chairs, the front line of our Union.



Bill Stencil, CMSD Executive Director, HumanWare, presented information about CMSD's important Social/Emotional Learning (SEL) program included in the new CBA.



Diane Downing of SYTE Cleveland spoke to Chapter Chairs and answered their questions about the program.

## CTU Divisional Meetings April 29, 2019



Shari Obrenski, 3rd Vice President, Senior/Special, and Director of Negotiations, spoke about CBA provisions in the Social/Emotional (SEL) area. Along with the two 3rd Vice Presidents, K-8, she is responsible for the Divisional Meetings each year.

Jillian Ahrens, CTU 3rd Vice President, speaks with Michael Berman of Alfred A Benesch. The Divisional Meetings were an opportunity for Chapter Chairs to get new information and answers to questions they may have.



Mary Moore, 3rd Vice President, K-8, and Co-Director of Grievances, addresses K-8 Chapter Chairs about the new CBA. As a 3rd Vice President, she is one of the organizers and presenters of the Divisional Meetings.



Jillian Ahrens, 3rd Vice President, K-8, and Co-Director of Grievances, describes welcome changes to TDES. She is one of the three 3rd Vice Presidents who organize and present the CTU Divisional Meetings each spring.



Mark Baumgartner, CTU Trustee-at-Large and Director of Professional Issues, explained the positive TDES changes in the new contract. The changes will begin next school year.





# What Are the Duties of the CTU Secretary?

**What does the CTU Secretary do? According to the CTU Constitution, s/he has four main duties, listed below.**

The Secretary records all minutes of all meetings of the Local and of the Executive Board, including Delegate Assemblies. S/he records the monthly attendance record of the Executive Board members at Executive Board and General meetings, and in April, s/he makes available an attendance record, accumulative to date. S/he has charge of all outside correspondence that has to do with the business of the Local. S/he keeps up-to-date an authoritative copy of the Constitution with all amendments as duly passed.

CTU Secretary Michelle Rzucidlo has served in that position since 2002. She is elected with other officers in the

city-wide March elections every two years in even-numbered years. The former building chair began her elected position at the CTU as a member of the Nominations & Elections Committee almost 20 years ago, and currently teaches a special education preschool class at Mary B. Martin.

Besides keeping the minutes and recording attendance for Executive Board meetings and Delegate Assemblies and handling CTU correspondence, she also serves as the official secretary during negotiations. Her minutes have helped determine the intent of negotiations and have been integral in the interpretation of the contract.

In a recent class-action grievance regarding bonus payments for preschool staff's Step Up To Quality evaluation ratings, her precise notes on the topic proved that the bonus was to be paid annually based on the yearly ratings, and was not a one-time payment as the District tried to claim. This one decision affected all preschool teachers and paraprofessionals. Details matter in her job!

Ms. Rzucidlo keeps copies of all Memoranda

of Understanding between the CTU and CMSD, copies of all past collective bargaining agreements between CTU and CMSD, old CTU calendar books, and copies of every CTU publication.

Besides the above Constitutionally-related duties, Ms. Rzucidlo serves as a Vice-President of the Northshore AFL-CIO, Co-Chair of the Peer Assistance and Review program, and Chairperson of OFT's Union Leadership Institute. She is the CTU's Constitutional "expert" and proofreads much (but not all) CTU correspondence.

Along with CTU Treasurer Michael Kulcsar, she was Co-Chair of the CTU Leadership Committee since 2004. This Committee is responsible for planning, arranging, and implementing the annual two-day training retreat for all CTU chapter chairs and officers. She

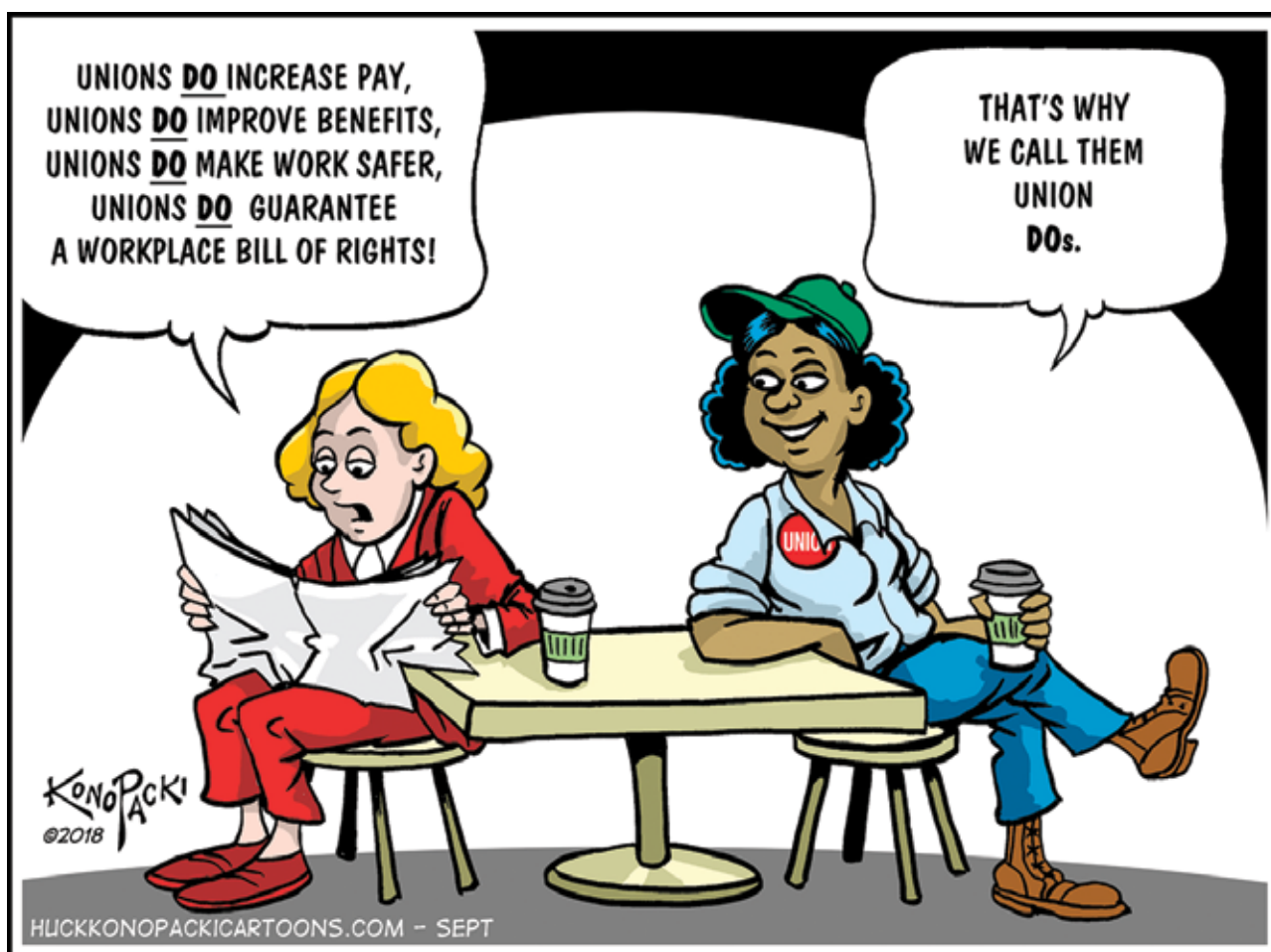
has also served as a workshop presenter on a variety of topics.

She and Mr. Kulcsar are in charge of the planning, proofreading, and printing of the ever-popular CTU calendar books. Have you noticed the monthly quotes on each page and on the back of your calendar book? Ms. Rzucidlo selects those quotes every year. (She appreciates having good quotes sent to her for future consideration.)

Ms. Rzucidlo's main job every day at the CTU office is answering phone calls and emails when members have questions or concerns. And from spring through fall, you may find her cheering on the Indians at Progressive Field or one of the 26 cities/32 ballparks she has visited for a Major League baseball game.



**MICHELLE RZUCIDLO**  
CTU Secretary



## SOLIDARITY FOREVER

### Why I'm A CTU Member



**CENTRALIA SCOTT**  
Paraprofessional at H. Barbara Booker

←  
"As we age, the CTU-negotiated healthcare coverage cannot be surpassed. Friends and family close to me are agonizing and struggling with prescription costs, co-pays, and various medical expenses. Under our medical plan, I feel my quality of life and overall healthcare is a cut above the rest. Thank you, CTU!"

→  
"I loved how we — CTU members — talked and rallied together when we went to Columbus and flooded the outside of the county building." Solidarity!



**STEPHANIE SANDERS**  
Paraprofessional at Robert Jamison



The bottom line: CTU teachers will be able to spend more time doing our jobs — teaching kids — instead of dealing with many non-academic issues that get in the way of students' academic success.

SYTE and CTU

## Say Yes Begins in Cleveland

by David J. Quolke  
CTU President

**Cleveland is only the fourth school district to partner with Say Yes to Education (SYTE), after Buffalo and Syracuse, New York, and Guilford County, North Carolina. CMSD and SYTE will begin Year One of a four-year implementation plan next school year. Phase one of SYTE was linked with the AAP process this spring, requiring a 70% affirmative vote of CTU members. CMSD schools interested in becoming part of the 2019-2020 SYTE Cohort 1 had to include that in their approved Academic Achievement Plan (AAP).**

Congratulations to six high schools and ten PreK-8 schools who will be in the first year of Say Yes! The high schools are: New Tech East, John Adams College & Career, John Marshall Civic & Business, Lincoln-West Global Studies, Max Hayes, and Rhodes College & Career. The PreK-8 schools are: Almira, Buhner, Joseph M. Gallagher, Marion-Sterling, Mary M. Bethune, Memorial, Michael R. White, Miles Park, Orchard, and Wilbur Wright.

I attended the official announcement ceremony at John Marshall on January 18, 2019, an event that celebrated what promises to be a

or families with the appropriate assistance, and get students back on track in school.

The bottom line: CTU teachers will be able to spend more time doing our jobs — teaching kids — instead of dealing with many non-academic issues that get in the way of students' academic success.

Another important part of the program's success is described as a "theory of action" that will bring together all community components and stakeholders as partners. The goal is for all parts of the Cleveland community — educational, social ser-

and families.

Enabling the sharing of pertinent data — data that's regularly updated and monitored — between CMSD schools and Cleveland community agencies can help identify problems early, and then provide immediate referrals. The goal is to create an ongoing support system that is owned by the entire Cleveland community, and not tied to a reform 'superhero' or program, or a limited pot of funding. This makes the program more effective and sustainable.

CTU members have been asking how SYTE will be phased into the schools, and what it will mean for them.

Let's be clear: SYTE is not coming in to replace anyone or take any jobs. Family support specialists — specialized social workers — will be hired in groups over four years as SYTE is phased in in stages. The District used to have its own school social workers, who were based in the schools and could cut through red tape to help students and families in need. Unfortunately, they were part of budget cuts made years ago due to funding shortages. There is a need for them now, and SYTE will fill that need.

Additionally, CTU leadership worked hard and advocated for buy-in from our members in the SYTE process. An application form was in the schools, and each school had to take the initiative to be part of the first phase of the program. Participation was linked with the AAP process, requiring a 70% approval from CTU members.

As a Say Yes chapter, Cleveland must roll out core services within six years of the program's launch. These services include a family support specialist in each school, mental health services, out-of-school learning opportunities including after-school and summer programs, and pro-bono legal clinics.

With the help of \$15 million in SYTE seed money, Cleveland plans to accelerate its rollout to all CMSD and eligible partnering charter schools over the next four years, beginning with the 2019-2020 school year. The Cleveland rollout plan will include 15% of schools in 2019-20, an additional 25% in 2020-21, 30% more in 2021-22, and the remaining 30% in 2022-23.

The business and philanthropic communities have already made significant contributions, raising over \$90 million to support the Say Yes Cleveland Scholarship Fund since the January announcement. The total

goal of the public campaign is \$125 million, which is necessary to provide scholarships for 25 years. Cleveland is far ahead of projections, thanks to generous donors and organizations.

A website, [sayyescleveland.org](http://sayyescleveland.org), has facts about the program, information about scholarships, and a scholarship application form. Parents of eligible seniors who will graduate this year must complete a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) and a Say Yes application. The Say

### For many of our CMSD students, this opportunity will be life-changing.

Yes scholarships can only be used for tuition and fees. They do NOT cover non-tuition expenses such as room, board, books, etc. Students can use institutional aid and other non-Say Yes scholarships for these purposes. In fact, students are encouraged to apply for additional scholarships. The total amount of the Say Yes Cleveland Scholarship, which is available for in-state public postsecondary institutions, depends on cost of tuition and fees, amount of federal and state grants provided to the student, and the student's family income.

For many of our CMSD students, this opportunity will be life-changing. And it can be a game-changer for the Greater Cleveland area, as the community unites to make sure every child has the opportunity and support to earn a postsecondary credential. This can help rebuild the city, the quality of life for residents, and the regional economy.

While the planning and application process to become a Say Yes chapter has been going on for almost two years, the hard work starts now. Say Yes Cleveland Executive Director Diane Downing, who has a long history in government and business in the Cleveland area, will lead these efforts. I encourage CTU members to browse the site and learn more about Say Yes Cleveland. This is an amazing opportunity for our students, their families, and for the entire Cleveland community. CTU is proud to be part of it.

The goal is to create an ongoing support system that is owned by the entire Cleveland community, and not tied to a reform 'superhero' or program, or a limited pot of funding.

game-changer for CMSD students and Northeast Ohio. SYTE is a New York-based program that promises free last-dollar tuition for all CMSD graduates to participating colleges or recognized job certificate programs. But that significant promise is only the tip of the iceberg — it's much more than that.

The biggest part of the program will be the "wrap-around" services that will be phased in at every CMSD school over the next four years. These services will try to keep every student on track for post-secondary success, whatever that means for each individual student, whether it's college or a trade.

The people who will be integral in providing this ongoing support, from preschool through graduation, are the family support specialists (FSS). These specialized social workers will be in every school, and will provide an expanded support system available to every student and their families. They can address the social and emotional challenges some of our students face outside the classroom more quickly and effectively, provide students and/

vices, medical and health, community groups, and others — to work together, to share data, and to provide ongoing, comprehensive supports as needed for every student throughout their years in CMSD schools. In Syracuse and Buffalo, this included not only the family support specialists, but also after-school and summer programs, physical/mental health support and mobile clinics, and pro bono legal clinics. It became everyone's job to address and overcome any barriers to student success.

An SYTE student tracking data platform will track 30 indicators, including social/emotional as well as academic. If a student demonstrates a need or problem, the FSS will look into it, and provide access to resources that are immediately available in the community to address the issue. In other words, the SYTE model will use technology to monitor how every CMSD student is progressing or not. It will take data from different organizations and systems in the Cleveland community, and allow them to "talk to each other" for the benefit of students

# SAY to Edu



## An Interview

with Buffalo Teachers Federation President Philip Rumore

In 2012, Say Yes Buffalo became the second Say Yes chapter to partner with an entire city school district. Other cities where Say Yes has had a presence are Cambridge, MA; Hartford, CT; New York City, NY; Philadelphia, PA; and Syracuse, NY.

Buffalo is currently in its seventh year in the Say Yes program. In April 2018, Buffalo received an additional \$25 million gift to help establish an endowment that will ensure students in Buffalo have free college tuition for generations to come. The anonymous donation, courtesy of “a Western New Yorker who has always had a soft spot for education and kids determined to succeed despite the odds,” was meant to guarantee the Say Yes scholarships last in perpetuity: Say Yes FOREVER.

In April 2019, as Cleveland begins to phase in the Say Yes program, the CTU Critique spoke to Philip Rumore, President of the Buffalo Teachers Federation, about the program.

**Critique:** How would you describe the impact of Say Yes to Education (SYTE) on Buffalo students and their families?

**President Rumore:** When I was first approached about the Say Yes program, there was an assumption that the union would not be supportive. But we saw too many of our students with great potential who could not afford to go to college or trade school after graduating from high school. I saw the Say Yes program as giving our kids and their families hope for post-high school educational opportunities. Say Yes makes it possible for many more Buffalo students to attend two- or four-year post high school educational institutions and trade schools.

Say Yes is a lot more than just the scholarships, though. The real core of the program is getting important services to the students and families who need them most. Say Yes provides a critical linkage between the schools, the city, the county, and other entities in the community. In Buffalo, we were fortunate to have a cooperative county executive who helped open up available services to students and families.

An important part of that linkage is

and their families is a central part of the program.

**Critique:** How does Say Yes work with the Buffalo Teachers Federation and union educators?

**President Rumore:** As the teachers’ union leader, I think it’s most important that whoever heads the Say Yes program must have a good working relationship with the union leadership. That way, any issues that arise — and they will — can be resolved quickly by a conversation. The Buffalo Teachers Federation has a place on the Say Yes Operating Committee, and we meet at least monthly with the other critical players. The teachers’ union president must be involved in those meetings and in any decision making, to work out issues before they become problems. That’s important to the success of the program.

In the schools, the Say Yes program should have no conflict with any teachers’ jobs or other union members’ jobs. The Say Yes staff, called Family Support Specialists (FSS), are stationed in Buffalo schools to help students with attendance, behavior problems, or any other issues, in order to get them back on track academically. Whoever the

Say Yes is a lot more than just the scholarships, though. The real core of the program is getting important services to the students and families who need them most.

the Say Yes person in each school who works closely with teachers and administrators to identify students who need help, then get them and their families what they need. Easy access to those services that improve the quality of life for all Buffalo students

FSS is, they are not there to do the job of a teacher or school counselor. Students are referred to them, and the FSS helps the student or family access needed services.

Say Yes is not like other so-called “educational reform” programs that

come into schools with all the answers, and try to put all of education’s problems on teachers. It’s not an educational panacea that claims to cure all ills. I see it like a vitamin pill, providing additional help for kids who need that help. The FSS also works closely with families who need assistance, to connect them more easily and quickly with appropriate social service agencies.

In many schools, I’m not sure the average teacher really notices Say Yes. It’s not in the forefront; it’s meant to be there on an as-needed basis, an additional resource to provide critical help when needed.

Besides the in-school support, Say Yes provides after-school and summer programs, mentoring, paid student internships, mental health services, and legal aid. Say Yes also hires outside people to assess the program on an ongoing basis. The data is used to constantly evaluate and adjust things to ensure effectiveness and success.

**Critique:** Do you have any advice for

As the teachers’ union leader, I think it’s most important that whoever heads the Say Yes program must have a good working relationship with the union leadership. That way, any issues that arise — and they will — can be resolved quickly by a conversation.

– Buffalo Teachers Federation President Philip Rumore

the Cleveland Teachers Union and the Cleveland community as we begin the Say Yes implementation process?

**President Rumore:** Keep your eye on the ball! This program is not a quick and easy fix, or a cure-all. It takes time to implement it effectively, but it will benefit your students and their families. It’s a valuable program for the schools and for the entire community.

**Critique:** What would you say is the best part of Say Yes in your community?

**President Rumore:** The positive focus it brings to public education in the Buffalo community, and being able to do something really good for our



kids and families. Lots of good things were happening in the Buffalo district. Say Yes has helped foster a positive atmosphere in the community regarding our schools and teachers, and helped people in the community see the good work our teachers do every day.

**Critique:** Do you have any other comments about the program to share

with CTU members and/or the Cleveland community?

**President Rumore:** The most important thing is good communication among teachers, the union leadership, and Say Yes. The focus should be on understanding that issues will come up as the program is implemented, but you must look for common ground. Deal with problems quickly and work together. There will be bumps in the road, and you will need commitment from all sides to succeed.

Teachers are going through hell too often, as public education is being criticized and blamed for society’s problems. Say Yes is here to help teachers, by helping students and their families.



# AFT Launches 'Fund Our Future'

The AFT's longtime advocacy for public schools was turbocharged with a sweeping, multipronged campaign to fund the future of American public education. Amid the continuing wave of teacher activism shining a spotlight on massive shortfalls in education investment, the Fund Our Future initiative will focus on Congress, statehouses, and communities nationwide.

This ambitious new deal for public schools and colleges, launched March 4 by AFT President Randi Weingarten and AFT leaders from across the country, zeroes in on the concrete steps necessary to do three things:

- Reverse the economic austerity masquerading as reform that has stripped support from K-12 and higher education, hurting children

and sending tuition and student debt skyrocketing.

- Recognize those states that have made commitments to fund our future where the campaign will be to sustain and build on that investment.
- Fight for a national commitment to the programs that can provide necessary and equitable investment

in public schools and universities across America.

Fund Our Future will include an array of community- and state-based

legislative initiatives, and strategies paired with national demands to fully fund Title I; fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;

■ continued on page 15

Twenty-five states spend less on K-12 education than before the Great Recession, and 41 states spend less on higher education, while the federal government has continued to underfund its education commitment by hundreds of billions of dollars.

## State Appealing the Decision

# Judges Rule Ohio's Gerrymandered Districts Unconstitutional

In a unanimous decision on Friday, May 3, 2019, three judges — two appointed by Democratic Presidents, one by a Republican — found that Ohio's congressional map has been unfairly gerrymandered to favor Republicans for the last eight years. They ordered state lawmakers to draw a new map by June 14, 2019 — in time for the 2020 elections.

Ohio's congressional map, passed in 2011, split 23 counties and 73 cities, townships, and other political subdivisions. It created districts such as the northern "snake on the lake" stretching from Toledo to Cleveland, and the "Franklin County sinkhole," concentrating Democratic voters in one district to preserve two GOP districts around Columbus. The court found the splits unnecessary and politically motivated.

With a new and fairer map, Democrats will be competitive in parts of the state that have been written off as unwinnable for Dems, and that could change the state's 2020 political landscape. On Monday, May 6, Ohio's Republican Attorney General Dave Yost both appealed the ruling and sought to block it from being enforced until the appeal is heard.

In their ruling, the judges stated: "We are convinced by the evidence that this partisan gerrymander was intentional and effective and that no legitimate justification accounts for its extremity . . . Either the Republicans were exceedingly lucky, or their map drawers made exceedingly expert use of political data to manipulate district lines to secure the most

seats and the least amount of competition possible. The evidence in this case points to the latter conclusion."

In 2015, Ohioans voted to reform state-level districts for the lawmakers

they send to Columbus. They voted in 2018 to change congressional districts for the representatives sent to Washington, D.C.

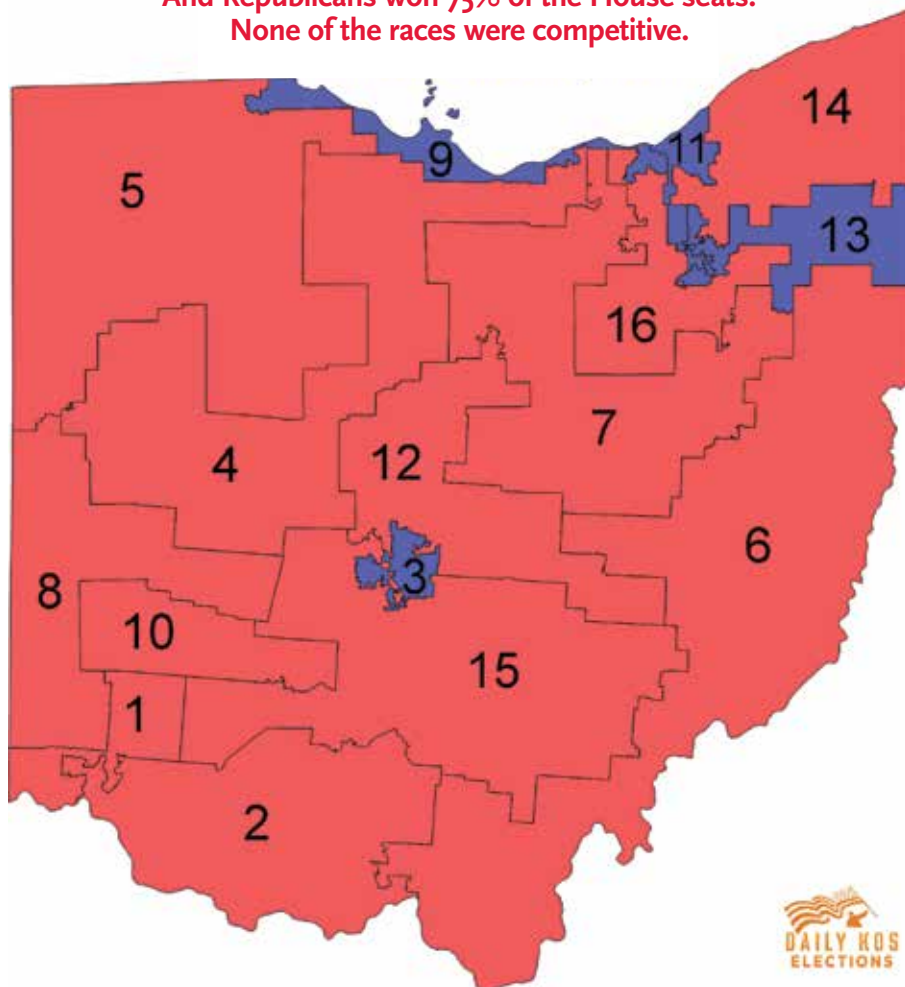
But those changes won't take effect

## The Ohio Gerrymander

*Created in 2011 by the Republican Party*

Result: in 2012, Democrats won the presidential vote, 50.6 to 47.6

And Republicans won 75% of the House seats.  
None of the races were competitive.



until after the 2020 U.S. census, so the first time Ohioans will elect representatives for new districts would have been in 2022. This trio of judges said a new map must be ready for the 2020 election. Democrats will likely pick up seats with a more equitably-drawn map.

Besides drawing a new map by June 14, the judges also ordered Ohio lawmakers to submit it to the court by June 21 along with a transcript of hearings and debates on the plan, data on population and county splits, and other information. If the judges find the new map unconstitutional, then the court could draw the new map.

Appeals for cases like this go automatically to the U.S. Supreme Court, which already is considering gerrymandering cases from Maryland and North Carolina. Arguments in those cases were heard in March, and rulings are expected by the end of June. In his request to block the Ohio ruling, Yost said decisions on the North Carolina and Maryland cases will impact Ohio's case.

What could the U.S. Supreme Court do? It could force Ohio to redraw its map, or allow Ohio to continue using its current map and start the new map-making process after the 2020 U.S. Census.

In Pennsylvania, their Supreme Court redrew that state's congressional map after throwing out the previous one as an unlawful partisan gerrymander, and it took effect in March 2018. And in Michigan, a three-judge panel struck down that state's map on April 25. Michigan is appealing that decision while working on a new map — just in case.



# Ohio's School Funding Struggles Continue

**Ohio's system of school funding, with its heavy reliance on property taxes, has been declared unconstitutional by the Ohio Supreme Court four times. However, the Court gave no specific remedy, and lawmakers and taxpayers continue to grapple with school funding decades after the DeRolph decision.**

## The Background

*DeRolph v. State of Ohio* was the landmark case in which the Supreme Court of Ohio ruled that the state's method for funding public education was unconstitutional. In March of 1997, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled in a 4-3 decision that the state funding system "fails to provide for a

property values went up, the school's revenue from a levy could not increase. This forces districts to go back to Ohio voters every few years with new levies.

In response to these conditions, Ohio school districts have sent almost 10,000 levies to the ballot in the past 30 years. Tired of regular levy requests but not understanding the details of the state's school funding

work that Reps. Cupp and Patterson did, the school funding formula did not create an additional revenue stream targeted solely for public education. Across the country, AFT locals have been urging state legislators to 'Fund Our Future' and invest in public education. OFT locals across the state are pressing for legislative changes that will adequately fund our schools and our communities."

OFT President Melissa Cropper stated: "Our current school funding formula is deeply flawed and unconstitutional in its reliance on property taxes. The new funding formula that

funding facts. In 2018, funding for Ohio's school districts was \$610 million lower than it was in 2010, a decrease of 6.7%. And while funding for traditional public schools declined, more and more taxpayer money was shifted to charter schools (\$935.5 million in 2018) and to private schools through vouchers (\$568 million in 2018). To make matters worse, funding for the Department of Higher Education has decreased by \$505 million (16.8%) since 2006, and Ohio currently ranks 45th in the nation for college affordability.

"While there are encouraging aspects of Governor DeWine's budget, especially potential investments in early childhood education and children services programs, we are concerned at the lack of additional revenue to fund these improvements," she explained. "We need better resources for Ohio students and schools, but not at the expense of other important services for Ohio's families and communities."

Since the 2005 tax changes, Ohio has lost \$6 billion in revenue per year. "Funding our future requires raising revenue to make serious investments in families, children, and communities. Minor investments will not move the needle," she stated. "We're counting on the legislature to put additional revenue behind Governor DeWine's priorities so that we can have bold investments that will fund our future by providing all Ohio children with the resources they need."

[Source: Ohio Federation of Teachers]

**Ohio's public schools are funded with a combination of local property tax revenue, and state and federal funds. This funding system creates great variations in the quality of educational services available to students, depending on their school district.**

thorough and efficient system of common schools" as required by the state constitution. The justices directed the state lawmakers to find a remedy. The Court revisited the case several times in the next 12 years; it then relinquished jurisdiction to the legislature. However, the underlying problems with inequalities in the school funding system remain to this day.

Ohio's public schools are funded with a combination of local property tax revenue, and state and federal funds. This funding system creates great variations in the quality of educational services available to students, depending on their school district. It leads to disparities in the availability of financial resources between more affluent districts with high property values and greater funding, and urban and rural districts with lower property values, funding shortfalls, and out-of-date, rundown facilities.

## Adding to the Funding Mess...

School funding became even more problematic in 1976 with House Bill 920. This bill froze the revenue from property taxes. Generally, a millage tax will bring in more funds as property values in a district increase. But HB 920 required county auditors to cut the tax rate to bring in the same amount of revenue each year even if property values went up. This is called the property tax reduction factor or HB 920 factor. So even as inflation increased costs, and even if

system, voters question why schools are always running out of money.

## Cupp-Patterson: A Recent Try at Fixing Funding

Another bipartisan approach to "fixing" school funding began in early 2018. Representatives Robert R. Cupp (R-Lima) and John Patterson (D-Jefferson) worked with finance officers and educators across the state to try to develop a funding formula that would address the unconstitutional aspect of Ohio's current school funding system as well as focus on getting more dollars to districts that serve high percentages of families in poverty.

"The CTU and OFT were optimistic that this approach, along with Governor Mike DeWine's budget proposal that recommended an additional \$19 million for wraparound and wellness supports to Cleveland schools, would ultimately lead to better school funding in the state," said President David Quolke. "Unfortunately, the Cupp/Patterson school funding formula as it is currently structured, while finally creating a true school funding formula, would leave Cleveland and a number of other school districts that serve high populations of students in poverty — including Toledo, Dayton, Youngstown, Lorain, and East Cleveland — flat funded without any increases.

"At same time, it would increase funding for predominately wealthier districts. While I commend the hard

Representatives Cupp and Patterson released today is a step in the right direction, because it focuses on what our students need to succeed and excel. Ninety-five percent of the funding will go directly to support teachers and students in the classroom . . . [but] we'll be following closely to ensure that no school districts in Ohio are left behind as the funding formula changes. While aspects of the Governor's budget and the funding formula are positive developments for our students, we also need to ensure that additional revenue

**Funding our future requires raising revenue to make serious investments in families, children, and communities. Minor investments will not move the needle.**

— OFT President Melissa Cropper

is included in the budget so that these improvements can be fully implemented."

## Gov. DeWine's Budget Proposal

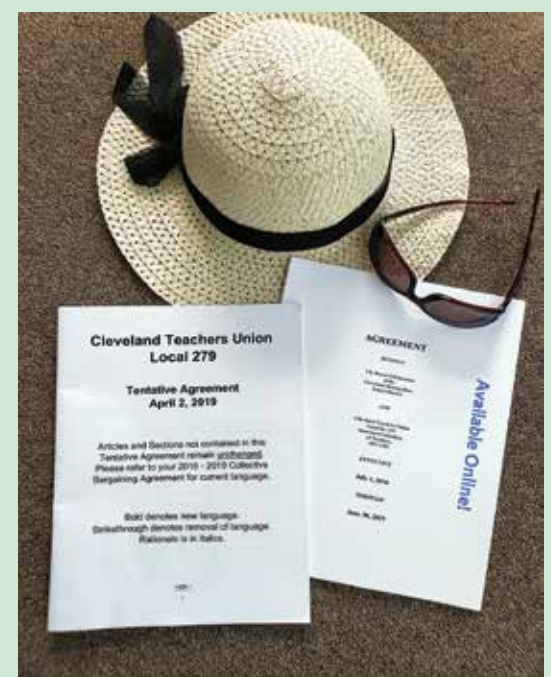
President Quolke commended Governor DeWine's budget proposal that would add \$19 million to Cleveland schools for wellness supports and wraparound services. But the budget does not include additional revenue.

"Funding for K-12 public education in Ohio has not only failed to keep up with our students' needs, it has moved in the wrong direction," said OFT President Melissa Cropper.

Here are the school

**In 2018, funding for Ohio's school districts was \$610 million lower than it was in 2010, a decrease of 6.7%. And while funding for traditional public schools declined, more and more taxpayer money was shifted to charter schools (\$935.5 million in 2018) and to private schools through vouchers (\$568 million in 2018).**

## CTU Summer Reading List





# Principals' Report Card

## 2018-19 — CTU Educational Issues Committee

*Note: The results of this survey are not necessarily scientific, as the number of responses varies by building, and may or may not be a representative sample. The responses may or may not reflect the overall opinion of all CTU members in the building.*

School	Principal	Overall Rating	Should be Rehired
<b>Achievement Network: Andrew Koonce</b>			
Adlai E. Stevenson	Chris Wyland	C	Yes
Benjamin Franklin	Rachel Snider	D	Yes
Clara E. Westropp	Krystle George	C-	Yes
Denison	Sonja Clark	D+	Yes
George W. Carver	Susan Harvey	C	Yes
James A. Garfield	Dora Bechtel	B-	Yes
Louis Agassiz	Angie Boie	C	Yes
Louisa May Alcott	Eileen Stull	B-	Yes
Marion Sterling	Kelly Gibbs	B+	Yes
Mary B. Martin	Dr. Gary McPherson	F	No
Paul Dunbar	Sofia Piperis	D+	Yes
Tremont Montessori	Natalie Celeste	C+	Yes
William C. Bryant	Amy Mobley	B+	Yes

<b>Best Practice Network: Jeffrey Graham</b>			
Artemus Ward	Chris Myslenski	D+	Yes
Buhrer Dual Language	Michelle Sanchez	B+	Yes
Clark	Amanda Rodriguez	C+	Yes
Daniel E. Morgan	Dessie Sanders	D	Y/N 50%
Euclid Park	Jennifer Woody	C+	Yes
International Newcomers @ Thomas Jefferson	Marisol Burgos	D	No
Iowa-Maple	Natalie Smith-Benson	D	No
Joseph M. Gallagher	Thomas Kubiak	C-	Yes
Marion C. Seltzer	Caitlin Kilbane	C-	Yes
Robinson G. Jones	Melissa Watts	B-	Yes
Scranton	Troy Beadling	C	Yes
Willson	Dawn Hayden	D+	No

<b>S.T.E.A.M. Network: Erin Frew</b>			
Andrew J.Rickoff	Shelby Schutt	C-	Yes
Charles A. Mooney	Michelle Person	A	Yes
Charles Dickens	Jocelyn Smith	D-	No
Dike School of the Arts	Alisha Starks	C-	Yes
East Tech High School	Temujin Taylor	D+	Yes
Garrett Morgan	Quenton Davis	B	Yes
Hannah Gibbons	Gregory Adkins	B	Yes
Jane Addams Business Careers Center	Wanda Grondin	B-	Yes
Martin L. King, Jr Academic Campus	Latonia Davis	C-	Yes
Max S. Hayes HS	Christopher Scarcella	D-	No
Miles Park	Tamika Taylor-Ivory	C-	Yes
Nathan Hale	Joelle McIntosh	B	Yes
Newton D. Baker School of Arts	Wendy Rose-Geiling	C	Yes
Orchard	Kathryn Francis	B+	Yes
Washington Park Environmental Studies	Tiffany James	C	Yes

<b>L.I.F.T. Network: Jacky Brown</b>			
Almira	James Green	B+	Yes
Bolton	Juliet King	D	No
East Clark	Dr. Charlene Hilliard	C	Yes
Glenville	Jacqueline Bell	A-	Yes
Glenville	Dr. Samuel Scavella	D-	No
Harvey Rice	Jason Tidmore, Sr	C	Yes
Kenneth Clement Boys Leadership Academy	Derrick Holifield	B+	Yes
Mary M. Bethune	Melanie Nakonachy	D+	Yes
Memorial	Maria Dinkins	B-	Yes
Michael R. White	Ariel Hayes	B	Yes
Miles	Roy James	D+	No
New Tech Collinwood	Mary Miller	C-	Yes
Patrick Henry	Brittany Anderson	C	Yes
Wade Park	Dr. Lee Buddy Jr.	C	Yes
Walton	Gretchen Liggins	B-	Yes
Wilbur Wright	Victoria Janke-Mousty	D+	Yes
Wilbur Wright	Vimeal Finley	B	Yes
Willow	Lisa Williams-Locklear	D-	No

<b>Redesign: Paul Hoover</b>			
Alfred A. Benesch	Dr. Erin Murphy	D-	No
Anton Grdina	LaTosha Glass	B+	Yes
Case	Janet McDowell	D-	No
Charles W. Eliot	Ivy Wheeler	C	Yes

School	Principal	Overall Rating	Should be Rehired
Franklin D. Roosevelt	Sherie Turner	D-	No
Fullerton	Kevin Payton	C+	Yes
H. Barbara Booker	Nicholas Scheibelhood	C	Yes
Luis Muñoz Marin	Ricardo Torres	D+	Yes
Mound	Velma McNeil	D+	Yes
Oliver H. Perry	Brittani Irvin	C-	Yes
Robert H. Jamison	Sharon Cooper	D+	No
Sunbeam	Katrinka Dean	F	No
Waverly	Sommer Edwards	D+	Yes
William Rainey Harper	Ajayi Monell	B+	Yes

<b>Innovative Network: Janet Tribble</b>			
Campus International K-8	Julia Beers	C	Yes
Cleveland Early College High School@ John Hay	Chaundria Smith	B-	Yes
Cleveland School of Architecture & Design @ John Hay	Tianna Ferguson	B+	Yes
Cleveland School of Science & Medicine @ John Hay	Michelle Perez	A	Yes
Design Lab Early College	Eric Juli	D-	No
Douglas MacArthur Girls Leadership Academy	Victoria King	B	Yes
Facing History New Tech HS	Marc Engoglia	C	Yes
Ginn Academy	Damon Holmes	C-	Yes
MC2STEM @CSU Rhodes Tower West	Feowyn MacKinnon	C	Yes
MC2STEM GE Lighting @ NELA Park	Feowyn MacKinnon	C+	Yes
MC2STEM @ Great Lakes Science Center	Feowyn MacKinnon	A-	Yes
New Tech East HS	Christy Nickerson	B-	Yes
New Tech West HS	Shawnamichelle Leonard	C-	Yes
Riverside	Neil Murphy	A	Yes
Riverside	Jessica Gamble	B+	Yes
Valley View Boys Leadership Academy	Terrance Mitchell	B	Yes
Warner Girls Leadership Academy	Audrey Staton-Thompson	D+	No

<b>Postfolio Network: Lorenzo Russell</b>			
Bard HS Early College Cleveland East Campus	Lea Dotson	F	No
Bard HS Early College Cleveland West Campus	Dumaine Williams	A-	Yes
Campus International High School	Ameer El-Mallawany	D+	Yes
Cleveland High School for Digital Arts	Jasmine Maze	C	Yes
Cleveland School of the Arts	John Lepelley	D	No
Davis Aerospace & Maritime HS	Timothy Jones	D+	Yes
James Ford Rhodes HS (11-12th Only)	Brian Evans	A-	Yes
JFK PACT	Theodore Robinson	D	No
JFK E3agle Academy	Andre Rudolph	B-	Yes
John Adams HS	Terrance Menefee	C+	Yes
John Adams College & Career Academy	Kristen Kelly	B	Yes
John Marshall School of Business & Civic Leadership	Sara Kidner	C	Yes
John Marhsall School of Engineering	Timothy Primus	B	Yes
John Marshall School of Information Technology	Chelsey Cook	C+	Yes
Lincoln- West HS (Grade 12 Only)	Iteisha Bankston	B	Yes
Lincoln- West School of Global Studies	Dr. Irene Javier	C+	Yes
Lincoln- West School of Science and Health	Michelle Kirkwood-Hughes	D+	No
Rhodes College & Career Academy	Alyssa Starinsky	A-	Yes
Rhodes School of Environmental Studies	Tara Drouhard	B-	Yes
Whitney M.Young Leadership Academy	Karen Bryon-Johnson	B+	Yes

<b>Supervisors</b>			
Attendance Liaisons	Lorri Hobson	D+	Yes
Basic Skills	Curtis Hutchison	A	Yes
Downtown Educational Center	Wayne Marok	A	Yes
Hearing Officer	Carol Lockhart	*	*
Home Instruction Tutors	Patricia C. Schultz	*	*
Itinerant	Marianne Wolf	A-	Yes
K-8 Lbdb Tutor (Hourly)	Karen Sheperd-Fountain	*	*
Itinerant Gifted	Lucille Komichak	*	*
Non-Public	Karen Sheperd-Fountain	C+	Yes
Nurses	Debbie Aloschen	B+	Yes
OT/PT	Karen Thompson-Repas	A	Yes
Psychological Services	Lakesha Buggs-Hall	B	Yes
Residential Schools	Dakota Williams	D	No
School of One	Wayne Marok	C	Yes
Sign Language Interpreters	Jessica Baldwin	D+	No
Speech/Language Pathologists	Samantha Brown	C-	Yes
Teachers on Assignment	Nicole Vitale	A-	Yes
Teachers on Assignment	Jacquinette Brown	A-	Yes
Transitional Services	Illus Taylor	A-	Yes



# AFT Launches 'Fund Our Future'

■ continued from page 12

increase investment in school infrastructure; secure operating funds at the national and state levels to counteract disinvestment in public colleges and universities; and forgive outstanding student loan debt under the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program.

A six-figure advertising campaign will draw attention to the necessity of increased investment to give students a shot at a better life for themselves and their families. Community events, rallies, lobby days, and petition drives will take place daily, with the AFT serving as a national clearinghouse for advocacy. Already more than 90 events have been scheduled, including informational pickets, town hall meetings, forums, marches, protests and lobby days. Future priorities

will also provide the 2020 presidential and down-ballot candidates an opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to students, their parents, and their communities.

While some states have sustained their commitment to public schools and universities, many have not. Twenty-five states spend less on K-12 education than before the Great Recession, and 41 states spend less on higher education, while the federal government has continued to underfund its education commitment by hundreds of billions of dollars. That disinvestment in public schools and colleges has hurt students and faculty and led to overcrowded classrooms; schools without nurses, librarians, guidance counselors and supports to ensure children's well-being; deteriorating school buildings with outdated teaching materials

and technology; and unhealthy, unsafe environments. The testing fixation, coupled with austerity, has meant the loss of instruction in the arts, music and other programs; and disinvestment has led to huge increases in tuition and student debt as well as fewer course offerings and full-time tenured faculty.

Over the last year, resistance to this disinvestment has been building. From the teacher strikes in West Virginia through the more recent strike in Los Angeles (where teachers won a long list of important contract provisions such as caps on class size, a nurse and librarian in every school, and a 6% raise for teachers), local communities are strongly supportive of educators. People in at least a dozen

states recently voted to raise their own property taxes to invest additional dollars for public education and colleges, and Americans who responded to a 2018 PDK poll made clear that they have confidence in public school teachers: 80% said they'd rather strengthen public schools than move to private alternatives. Americans believe teachers are underpaid and said they would support them if they went on strike for better wages.

"Scarcity and the lack of appropriate investment is the root cause of every single one of the teacher walk-outs that are roiling this country," says Weingarten. "Teachers want what kids need, and that requires funding our future."

"Budgets are a reflection of our values," said CTU President David Quolke. "Cleveland citizens have supported our schools and students with the passage of recent levies. They made a choice to support public education in their city. But we need that same level of support reflected in state and national funding choices, especially in areas of poverty."

"Since I began my teaching career, adequate and equitable funding of Ohio public schools, especially in poor districts, has been an issue," added President Quolke. "We need to make a conscious choice, as a state and a nation, to make education funding — **for every child, in every public school** — a real priority. Or it will cost us all in the future."

Noting some important exceptions, where Fund Our Future would create opportunities to support sustained investment rather than address a complete lack of funding, President Weingarten said, "For far too long, our public schools and colleges have been shortchanged, particularly in relation to our nation's staggering wealth. After a decade of neglect and austerity, the American people have had enough — and want a reordering of priorities to make their lives better. That's why educators and communities have hit the streets over the last year to demand not just a small course correction, but a sustainable investment in public schools and colleges."

For more information on the campaign, visit <http://fundourfuture.aft.org>.

[Source: American Federation of Teachers]

Americans who responded to a 2018 PDK poll made clear that they have confidence in public school teachers: 80% said they'd rather strengthen public schools than move to private alternatives.

## THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY DAVID J. QUOLKE

# What Are Our Priorities — Really?

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they negotiate, and CMSD's operating levy is up for renewal in November 2020. How dysfunctional is Ohio's school funding system? If Cleveland voters don't renew the levy in 2020, the District will have to cut \$80 million from its budget.

In the state legislature, Representatives Robert R. Cupp (R-Lima) and John Patterson (D-Jefferson) worked to develop a funding formula that would address Ohio's unconstitutional school funding system. One of the goals was a formula that would get additional monies to districts that serve high percentages of families in poverty. We were optimistic about that effort, but unfortunately, the Cupp/Patterson school funding formula would leave Cleveland and other school districts that serve high populations of students in poverty, such as Dayton, East Cleveland, Lorain, Toledo, and Youngstown, with no funding increases. And it would actually increase funding for some wealthier districts. The Cupp/Patterson formula is a step in the right direction and I commended their hard work. However, the results did not help solve the funding inequities for many districts serving high levels of students living in poverty and did not create an additional revenue stream for public education.

Governor Mike DeWine's budget proposal recommended an additional

\$19 million for wraparound and wellness supports to Cleveland schools, which would be welcomed, but without additional revenue sources, these funds may come from cutting other necessary programs. Ohio needs legislative changes that will adequately fund our schools, not robbing Peter to pay Paul. Funding programs at the expense of other important services for Ohio families and communities is not a true solution.

In Lordstown, like other school districts where a large company or plant has moved or closed, the local school district is facing devastating cuts. President Donald Trump made campaign promises he did not and could not keep, and too many voters believed him.

Trump and the Republican-led Congress delivered an enormous tax break, most of which went to the wealthiest 1% and big corporations. What about the working class? Although unemployment remains low, average wages are not growing significantly, and many families continue to struggle as income inequality worsens. What does this say about our real priorities?

Instead of false promises, we need frank conversations about our priorities as a state and nation, and how our spending reflects those priorities or not. Do we really value public education over corporate greed and protecting the wealthiest Americans? As educa-

tors, our careers and livelihoods revolve around children. What do our state's and nation's financial priorities say about the value we place on every child having an opportunity to succeed?

It's time to have honest conversations with our elected leaders and representatives about what our budgets, including spending and taxes, say about our true priorities and the future of our community, our state, and our nation.

On another note, thank you for another year of your commitment and service in the important job of educating Cleveland's children, and your continued commitment to the ideals of unionism and the Cleveland Teachers Union. Have a restful, productive, enjoyable summer break.

In union,  
David J. Quolke



We need to make a conscious choice, as a state and a nation, to make education funding — **for every child, in every public school** — a real priority. Or it will cost us all in the future.

— CTU President David Quolke



# THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY DAVID J. QUOLKE

## What Are Our Priorities — Really?

**We've all heard quotes about budgets and priorities, how a budget is a reflection of what's really important to a person or a group. Jack Lew, former U.S. Secretary of the Treasury said, "The budget is not just a collection of numbers, but an expression of our values and aspirations."**

**Ohio continues to grapple with school funding inequities and shortfalls, along with many school districts across the country. What does that say about our priorities as a state and a nation?**

Last year I was invited to give testimony to the Ohio Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights regarding Education Funding in Ohio. They wanted to hear my opinion of Ohio's school funding system. How does Ohio's reliance on property taxes and levies work for our kids? How does the funding system that was declared unconstitutional four times — without a remedy yet — work for CMSD students?

I told them about beginning my teaching career in 1984, when Cleveland had passed a levy the year before. My first contract was for \$13,000. CMSD had 80,000 students and over 130 schools. There was a short strike in 1988, around negotiations issues.

Working conditions? Textbooks were often older than the teachers. Schools were roasting in the summer and freezing in the winter. Supplies were usually short. The state took over the system in 1996 after the District was released from a federal desegregation order, and the first levy since 1983 was passed. Mayoral control legislation was passed by the state in 1997.

Voucher and for-profit charter school legislation, with no regulation of academically and financially abysmal (even illegal) programs, was passed by

Ohio's majority-Republican legislators, and these programs siphoned additional funds out of CMSD schools.

In 2010, 16 schools were closed, and over 600 teachers and 100 paras were laid off. Another 800+ educators, including all social workers and half of the nurses, were cut in 2011. The District threatened to eliminate preschool, student transportation, and athletics. Even more layoffs, including many art, music, and physical education teachers, came next. Class sizes exploded to 40-50 students.

While Ohio lawmakers talked about valuing education and teachers, the reality was very different. These were the days of the Senate Bill 5/Issue 2 attack on union rights of teachers and public employees, the Cleveland Plan, and a huge increase in mandatory statewide student testing.

In 2012, with the help of many CTU volunteers, CMSD finally passed an operating levy — its first since 1983. Two operating levies in 29 years —

and they wanted to know how Ohio's school funding system with its reliance on property taxes works for Cleveland kids!

Unfortunately, this financial scenario is not unique to Cleveland. You can find similar stories in other Ohio districts, and in many other states. The past year, walkouts, strikes, and other teacher activism were on display. What is happening to address this?

The American Federation of Teachers began a campaign this spring called Fund Our Future, to illustrate the considerable shortfalls in public education investment. Fund Our Future initiative will focus on Congress, statehouses, and communities nationwide. It will focus on three things: reversing the economic austerity masquerading as reform; recognizing states that have made genuine commitments to funding and building on those investments; and fighting for a national commitment to provide necessary and equitable investment in public schools and universities nationwide. Stay tuned as this campaign presses for more investments in public education.

In Cleveland, the Say Yes To Education Cleveland program is bringing a promising, two-pronged approach to helping our students. The guarantee of scholarships to participating college



or trade schools for qualified Cleveland students is a potential game-changer for northeast Ohio. But the heart of the SYTE program is the student and family support system that will be put in place over the next few years to help keep students on track for success. It will require a coordinated, concerted effort from the entire community, but has the potential to increase the quality of life for many students and families in need.

Cleveland's business and philanthropic communities have stepped up in a big way, already donating over \$90 million to fund the scholarships to SYTE Cleveland. Their generosity will make a difference in the lives of Cleveland students. And 16 CMSD schools have agreed to join Phase I of SYTE Cleveland in 2019-2020.

In April, CTU members passed a collective bargaining agreement that will improve working conditions for teachers and learning conditions for students. It did not include a large raise; Ohio requires that school districts must certify that they have adequate funds to pay for any raises

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**THE CRITIQUE**  
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INTERNATIONAL LABOR COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION  
AFL-CIO/CLC

**"We must make our choice.  
We may have democracy,  
or we may have wealth  
concentrated in the hands  
of a few,  
but we cannot have both."**

**- Louis D. Brandeis**  
Associate Justice of  
the U.S. Supreme Court  
1916-1939

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