



MEMBERSHIP INPUT ESSENTIAL

CTU Preps for Negotiations

“The CTU Negotiating Team has been working all summer in preparation for upcoming negotiations,” reported Shari Obrenski, CTU’s Director of Negotiations and 3rd Vice President, Senior/Special. “We are optimistic but realistic, and will be ready, if necessary, for a difficult and contentious process.”

The Union’s team consists of Shari Obrenski, Director; David Quolke, President; Jillian Ahrens, 3rd Vice President, K-8; Mark Baumgartner, Trustee-at-Large; Cherylane Jones-Williams, Paraprofessional Chapter Chair; Michael Kulcsar, Treasurer; Mary Moore, 3rd Vice President, K-8; Tracy Radich, 1st Vice President; Kurt

Richards, 2nd Vice President; and Michelle Rzuclidlo- Rupright, Secretary.

The current Collective Bargaining Agreement expires on June 30, 2016. The CTU plans to begin formal negotiations by January 2016. “We want a new, ratified agreement that is fair to our members in place by the end of this school year,” added Ms. Obren-

ski. “With all that’s set to happen in Cleveland next fall, I know that’s what our political leaders want too. But we will be ready for any situation that we face.”

CTU Voices Matter

The Negotiating Team needs input from CTU members about their priorities for the next contract. The Team has been working to develop online surveys that will go to all CTU members this fall. It is vitally important for all members to respond honestly and thoughtfully to the surveys, so the Team will have a clear representation of members’ main concerns and issues before negotiations begin.

“The survey results will inform us about our members’ highest priorities when we go to the negotiating table for them, and what we need to fight for,” said President David Quolke.

The surveys will likely be set up through school email addresses, but the link will take the user to a secured site, and CMSD **will not** have access to the users or their responses. The more responses, the clearer the picture CTU negotiators will have about what issues members really want to be addressed in the new contract. The first surveys will go to all CTU members; later surveys may address specific is-



President David Quolke and Shari Obrenski, Director of Negotiations, review the agenda before a planning meeting with the members of the CTU Negotiating Team.

sues affecting different groups in the Union.

The Team is also looking at recent grievances to indicate other frequent issues and problems that should be dealt with in negotiations. The CTU has requested a variety of informa-

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GRIEVANCE UPDATE

The CTU Grievance Team worked during the summer months to address many issues from the 2014-15 school years. Through Step 3 in the Grievance Process, the Team was successful in correcting the Teacher Effectiveness Ratings for several teachers. If you were notified in your grievance response that your rating was to be corrected, but it didn’t change as promised, please email TDES@clevelandmetroschools.org.

Arbitrations

The Grievance Team has taken or voted to take several grievances to arbitration. Among them were cases involving teachers who had their SLO accepted and then subsequently rejected without any explanation or input

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CTU Welcomes 200+ New Members



CTU officers participated in the District’s orientation sessions for over 200 new CMSD teachers in July. Read more on page ??.

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THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN



THUMBS UP to Bill Kitson and United Way of Greater Cleveland

for their focus on educational issues, especially in our CMSD schools. They understand that the real building blocks to a better community for everyone include education, adequate income, and access to health care resources. Thank you for the extra care and support for CMSD kids and their families. (Read the article about United Way and CMSD on page ??.)



THUMBS DOWN to CMSD Payroll Department and anyone else at 1111 Superior who was responsible for the

non-payment of \$1,500 promised and due to Related Service Providers in the first paycheck of the school year. The cavalier attitude of "they'll get their money" is totally unacceptable. Short of holding Payroll hostage, the CTU was left with its legal options and followed the grievance procedure. Considering the District's continued unwillingness and/or inability to meet their own deadlines, follow their own rules, and show respect for the same employees they want to hold to high standards (while they ignore those standards for themselves), it makes a good working relationship between management and labor unnecessarily difficult.



THUMBS UP to the many CTU members who were willing and able to juggle their summer schedules

to attend the Step 3 and arbitration hearings that the District finally agreed to hold this past summer. The grievance process is still one of our most powerful tools as a Union, even though management has been less than timely in its responses.



THUMBS DOWN to the District's pattern of not answering grievances.

The CTU Grievance Team has been pushing to get responses and corrective action, but again, short of holding administrators hostage, CTU must follow the legal steps. The numbers are staggering. The District's inaction demonstrates either

contempt for or incompetence in dealing with many important issues. The backlog is overwhelming. The waste of time spent dealing with things that should and could have been settled easily — and in a timely manner — is shameful. In many cases where the CTU did get an answer, and the grievance was sustained (won by the CTU), the District simply did not implement the corrective action! Some of these are payroll issues, where members are due payment for work that they already did. This ineptness is not what voters expected when they passed the levy. The District's stalling will cost extra taxpayer dollars, as cases involving late payments have a 10% penalty. The brick wall that the CTU Grievance Team has been pushing against at 1111 Superior is not an example of collaboration, respect, or even basic competence.



THUMBS UP to the KeyBank Foundation and the Foundation's CEO Margot Copeland, who awarded a

\$1,000,000 grant to fund the KeyBank Foundation Scholars Program, a series of initiatives designed to increase the rate of on-time completion of undergraduate programs at Cleveland State University by CMSD graduates. The support programs, set to begin in the 2016-17 academic year for incoming freshmen and current CSU students who are CMSD grads, will include cohort and peer relationship-building activities; extra assistance with academic advisors; guidance in on-campus employment and scholarship opportunities; and instructional support for coursework. In 2013, the Keybank Foundation awarded \$1.3 million to CMSD and CTU that created the state-of-the-art facility on the CSU campus that houses grades 11-12 of the MC2STEM High School, and provided scholarships and early college credit for CSMD students. CTU thanks the Foundation for its continued support of our Cleveland students.



THUMBS DOWN to CMSD for not renewing Accelerated Reader for all schools, forcing schools to use

limited school budget funds to pay for it if they want to keep it. STAR testing through AR is how many teachers will be evaluated, but the District has taken away this guaranteed way of improving students' scores!



THUMBS UP to Ohio's Supreme Court and CTU President David Quolke,

in the successful decision earlier this year regarding the names of scab teachers from the Strongsville Education Association's 2013 strike. The 5-2 ruling by the state's highest court affirms the decision of the Eighth District Court of Appeals, which ordered the Strongsville Board of Education to release the names of replacement (scab) teachers. President Quolke had made a public records request for the names, addresses, phone numbers, employee identification numbers, and payroll information of the replacement teachers. The Board denied the request. This decision also upheld the lower court's order to pay \$7,973 as reimbursement for the court costs and attorney fees associated with this case.



THUMBS DOWN to CMSD Network Leaders who planned and scheduled

August 13 Professional Development without staff input, as per the CBA. Building autonomy? Really?



THUMBS UP to the hardworking

CTU chapter chairs who spent countless hours this summer, working to protect the language in the CBA from said Network Leaders. The CBA is an agreement between both Union and District, but that's not always evident in some of the actions we see.



And of course, **THUMBS UP** to our CTU members,

the true professionals who persevere despite difficulties and challenges, to do their best every day for Cleveland's children.



Stay in the Loop!

Does CTU Have Your Info?

Are you getting all the CTU information that is available? The CTU has been working to collect personal, non-CMSD email addresses for all members. Please be sure your chapter chairperson has your personal email address. With negotiations coming, the CTU wants to be sure it can quickly and efficiently get information to members without using CMSD email.

CTU also has direct emails sent via Action Network. These emails will have the CTU logo on the top.

In addition to email communications, CTU has a text messaging network available. To sign up for text messaging, send a text message with the word ctu279 (all lowercase, no spaces) to the phone number 69238. Go ahead, take out your phone and do it now! AFT-CTU will never charge you for text messages, but your phone carrier's message and data rates may apply.

President Quolke recommends that members regularly check the CTU website at www.ctu-279.org. The latest CTU/OFT/AFT news, forms, current and archived Quolke's Corners and Tracy Radich's News & Notes, and any other important information are posted on the website.



THUMBS UP!

CMSD Buys New Laptops for Intervention Specialists

by Mary Moore

After much conversation with CMSD regarding various obstacles CTU members faced when writing IEPs on IEPplus, the Special Education Department purchased 850 Dell laptops for all K-12 Intervention Specialists, including those at residential schools. Laptops for teachers at Promise Academy were not included in this purchase, due to an issue with how that school is funded. Laptops for all Pre-K Intervention Specialists have been or-

dered, but were purchased through a different funding source.

Most of the K-12 laptops have already been delivered to schools. There were a few instances where the staffing numbers were incorrect, and those schools did not receive enough laptops. Principals were instructed to send an updated list of their Intervention Specialists to Jessica Baldwin, so they can get the correct number of laptops delivered. If you are an Intervention Specialist and have not received a

laptop, please let your principal and chapter chair know immediately.

The laptops are in the CMSD network. You can get online using the laptop wherever WiFi is available. You can print to the district printers from the laptops. If you have any problems logging on, contact CMSD tech support at 216-432-6232.

Hopefully, the new laptops will help eliminate the problems Intervention Specialists experienced trying to access and use the IEPplus program from other computers.



What I Did During My Summer Vacation...

CTU Preps for Negotiations

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tion from CMSD under the Freedom of Information law. This data will be important for the Negotiating Team.

Bargaining Under the CLE Plan

This contract will be the second one negotiated within the parameters of Substitute H.B. 525, the Cleveland Plan, which is part of Ohio law. Even so, CTU leaders feel there is much room for improvement. CTU leaders expect two areas — TDES and CDCS — to be major issues of concern.

The Teacher Development and Evaluation System (TDES) has been a major problem area. Some “growing pains” are to be expected anytime a new system is put into place. And Ohio now mandates that all teacher evaluations include some form of student assessment data. But some CMSD administrators continue to use the evaluation system as a “gotcha” moment, or a retaliatory mechanism, instead of the professional opportunity for supportive, constructive criticism and sincere efforts to genuinely develop all teachers’skills, which was its stated goal according to the CBA. In too many schools, the “atmosphere of trust that promotes collaborative dialog and enhanced professional practice of all educators” (page 54 in the CBA), that the CBA acknowledges is necessary for an effective TDES, is nowhere to be found.

Another major area for negotiators will be the Cleveland Differentiated Compensation System (CDCS). The Joint Oversight Committee (JOC), with four CTU and four CMSD members, was to “identify the cycle of . . . activities that . . . will serve as a basis for compensation decisions,” among other important duties. But the CTU

members on the JOC have been frustrated by the slow pace of building out the compensation system. Non-attendance of some CMSD members was a problem last year, and although there has been better attendance recently, CTU members on the team are still not satisfied with the pace of development of the compensation system.

Other areas for negotiators to address besides evaluation and compensation include: benefits; investment school language; transfers and assignments; student discipline, assaults and alternative schools; sick leave and leaves of absence; grievances; progressive discipline policies; special

education issues; school budgets; and severance pay.

Good for Teachers and Kids

“When we talk about good conditions for teaching,” said President Quolke, “we are also talking about good learning conditions for our students. All CTU members need to be proactive in getting that message out to the Cleveland community. Creating a district where teachers are treated — and compensated — fairly and professionally, with opportunities to develop and refine their teaching skills, is a system that’s good for Cleveland students, too.”



Members of the CTU Negotiating Team met regularly during the summer months to prepare for the upcoming negotiations, as the current contract expires June 30, 2016



Meet the New CTU Publications Chair

Hello and welcome back to a new school year! I am the newly appointed Chair of Publications for the CTU, Christy Rorick. I am an Intervention Specialist at H. Barbara Booker, teaching students with an ED placement in grades 3-5. This comes after a move from being an Intervention Specialist at Robert H. Jamison since the start of my career, teaching students with Multiple Disabilities/Autism.

This has been a big change for me; however, it is a change welcomed with excitement and nervousness, but fresh beginnings. As this school year began, we all faced new beginnings and new challenges, among those things we are carrying over from the previous year. It is my hope that you had a wonderful summer and are rested and ready for the new year.

Since being appointed in this new position, I have been busy learning the ropes and gathering ideas about how we can improve and make additions to the *Critique*. We have ideas about the possibility of expanding the way the *Critique* is distributed, adding an electronic version, and incorporating a section titled "Your Voice Matters." These are just a few ideas. I am looking forward to hearing from CTU members about their ideas and what they would like to read and be more informed about.

The idea of "Your Voice Matters" was taken from an AFT conference, TEACH, that I attended over the sum-



mer. Randi Weingarten and her team of AFT professionals reported live and recorded interviews of people stating why their "Voice Matters." It was an opportunity for teachers, parents, students, and other stakeholders to tell (and boast a little!) about the great work they are doing in their schools and communities. Although the entire conference was an excellent experience, this particular piece was very empowering.

The Publications Committee believes that we all need to be empowered, and that **our voices do matter**. To honor the AFT's hard work and dedication to that work, we would like to carry that to our members by conducting interviews, reporting quotes, or posing questions that give you a voice.

You will be receiving more information soon about participating in the CTU version of "Your Voice Matters."

CTU FaceBook and Media Recommendations

In an age when so many of us spend an increasing amount of time each day reading email, texting, searching for information on the internet, and utilizing social media, it is clear that many of us are consumed by technology. Now that we can do all of these things from our phones, we have unlimited 24-hour access to these media.



As media has become so powerful and easy to access, concerns have also arisen. Considering what is happening nationally regarding social media, the CTU feels that it is important to share recommendations with our members regarding the use of FaceBook and all social media as well as texting, emailing, etc.

1. **Do not friend students and former students** (while they are still students of CMSD) on social media sites. Social media sites are just that . . . social. Keep relationships as educators on a professional level.
2. **Think before you type.** Is what you are about to post/send/text something that you would say to a student, their parents, your boss, and your spiritual advisor? If no, then do not post it/send it/text it.
3. **Look at the photos you have posted.** Are they appropriate to be seen by a parent, your boss, your spiritual advisor?
4. **Do not post anything about your students**, specifically or in generalities.
5. **Always remain mindful that what you say is public and lasting.**

While the CTU knows of everyone's first amendment right to free speech, we also know we are on duty as educators 24/7. FaceBook, Twitter, etc. are public and anything that you put in writing can become public. Don't let what is a tool for communication, reconnection, and contact with those who do not live nearby be the cause of unnecessary problems.

CTU Assists With Severance Pay

Cindy Antonio, CTU Salary and Benefits Committee Chairperson, has been working at the request of President David Quolke to help over ### CTU retirees access their severance pay. Some of the retirees left the District as long ago as 20??, and had thousands of dollars in severance pay due to them, but had not accessed it. Ms. Antonio has been able to help more than ??? retirees get the severance pay they earned while working for CMSD.

Severance pay is based on unused sick leave. The Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) states: "Upon retirement, with a minimum of ten years retirement credit with the District, all bargaining unit members will receive cash payment equal to the value of 30% of their accumulated sick leave credit. This payment will not exceed \$30,000" (CBA page 119). Severance pay is disbursed in one of two ways as per the CBA.

Two Methods of Payment

For employees who attain age 55 or older in the same calendar year as their date of retirement, and who have unused sick time and will be receiving severance pay from the District (30% of unused sick leave up to \$30,000), it is **mandatory** for those employees to enroll in the 403(b) plan from the financial company VALIC. Their severance pay will be depos-

ited into that 403(b). Again, the only 403(b) Tax Sheltered Annuity that is used for this severance plan by CMSD is VALIC. If a retiree does not have an account with VALIC, they must establish one before they can access their severance money from CMSD.

This plan can save retirees from paying significant taxes on their severance pay.

If the retiree has a 403(b) plan with another company, they still must establish an account with VALIC. Once the VALIC account has been set up and CMSD deposits the severance pay into the VALIC account, the retiree can leave that money in the VALIC account, or transfer it to another 403(b) account

with another financial company, or choose to withdraw all or part of it.

This plan can save retirees from paying significant taxes on their severance pay. When it is deposited into the 403(b) account, the severance money is not taxed until it is withdrawn from the account. Usually, retirees are in a lower tax bracket than working members, and will likely pay lower taxes on the severance money whenever they do withdraw it.

Also, if they wish to move it to another qualified 403(b) account with another company, the transfer of funds between different annuity

providers is not a withdrawal, if it is moved from one qualified 403(b) provider to another. Note: As always, you should consult with your financial planner or annuity provider on what best meets your financial needs before making any final decisions, and to be sure of any unintended consequences.

The second severance pay method is for employees who will not attain age 55 in the calendar year of their retirement. It is not mandatory for these retirees to enroll in a 403(b) to receive their severance pay. They can opt to receive their severance money in a lump sum payment paid no later than 2½ months after their effective date of retirement. However, this method will likely result in a significant amount of that lump sum payment being withheld immediately as taxes.

These retirees may also select the first option, to have all or a portion of their severance payment deferred into a tax sheltered annuity, which could save them a considerable amount on taxes. Again, each retiree should check with their individual financial provider about any restrictions regarding withdrawal of the money and penalties that might apply to them.

CTU and CMSD negotiated the Severance Pay Deferral Plan in 2007, and it was approved as part of the contract effective July 1, 2007. It is a way to help retiring members save money on taxes on their severance payments.

GRIEVANCE UPDATE

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from the building team, and teachers who were denied their Due Process Rights.

Last year the Team was successful in getting a building staff payment for a shortened lunch and extra assignment without having to go to arbitration. This year, the Team is scheduling an arbitration for the



JILLIAN AHRENS

entire staff of another building due to CTU members being given more assignments than contractually allowed and receiving no compensation for the extra assignment(s).

Other cases include a member who was identified for transfer without the proper use of the BEST rubric, and various compensation issues.

Mediation

The Grievance Team has agreed to go to mediation to resolve the MD/AU classification issues that were grieved. This grievance refers to combining students identified as having multiple disabilities with those students identified as having autism. Our CBA calls for these groups of students to be in separate classes, but the District combined them and gave them a class limit of eight students.

Step 3 Grievances

Jillian Ahrens and Mary Moors reported that the Team completed over 75 Step 3 hearings this past summer. Most of the TDES and Student Growth Measure issues from

2013-14 have been resolved. There are several remaining compensation issues that have not been answered, and the Team will be scheduling them for either Step 3, arbitration or mediation.

Unanswered Grievances

If you have a grievance that you filed during the 2013-14 or 2014-15 school years that has not been answered by the administration, please email Jillian Ahrens and Mary Moore to let them know if the issue has been resolved, or if you wish to take it to the next level.

If you want the grievance to proceed to Step 3, please complete the CEO Appeal form and return it to Jillian and Mary. If you received an answer that you do not agree with and want to proceed to the next level, please email us and let us know that you wish to take it further.

Please refer to Article 6 in the Collective Bargaining Agreement, Problem Resolution, Grievance Procedure and Time Limits, for a complete explanation of the grievance process. If you have any questions, contact the

CTU Grievance Team Co-Directors Jillian Ahrens at Jillian.Ahrens@clevelandmetroschools.org and Mary Moore at Mary.Moore@clevelandmetroschools.org.

The other members of the CTU Grievance Team are: Cherylane Jones-Williams, Cheryl Neylon, Shari Obrenski, Kurt Richards and Jim Wagner.



MARY MOORE

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Informational Update 2015-16

There were many grievances and concerns last school year around special education issues, including assignments, caseload and instructional limits, grades, and services for students. CTU's Co-Director of Grievances Mary Moore (also a special education teacher) provided the following information for the new school year. Hopefully any building or scheduling problems can be worked out early in the school year.

Special Education Assignments

Caseload limits for Cross Categorical are 12 students for K-8 classes, and 16 for high school. These are also the instructional limits. The age range for Cross Categorical is 60 months. We have no Cognitively Delayed or Specific Learning Disability classrooms in the District at this time. CD and SLD students are usually in the Cross Categorical classes.

For low incidence classrooms the limits are as follows: Hearing Impaired, Visually Impaired, Orthopedic Impaired, Other Health Impaired have a caseload limit of 10 and an instructional limit of 8. The age range is 48 months.

Emotionally Disturbed have a caseload limit of 12 and an instructional limit of 10. The age range is 48 months.

Multiple Disabilities have a caseload limit and instructional limit of 8. The age range is 60 months.

Autistic, Deaf, Blind, Traumatic Brain Injury have a caseload limit and an instructional limit of 6. The age range is 60 months.

The District created classes that combine Multiple Disability students and Autistic students. There is no language in our CBA for this category (MD/AU). The CTU is scheduling mediation to resolve the issues associated with the creation of this category.

There are no limits in the CBA for special education Preschool. However, ODE states that there cannot be more than 8 students with disabilities in a class. ODE also has regulations about student/adult ratios in all types of preschool classes.

Services for Students on IEPs

The IEP team makes the decisions about how a student on an IEP is served consistent with the requirement that all students be served in their Least Restrictive Environment. All such services are on an individual basis according to their IEP. Deci-

sions about placement must be done individually.

If there are concerns that the IEP does not reflect the best placement for the student, the IEP team needs to reconvene and a decision must be made by the team. The team consists of the parent of the child, not less than one regular education teacher of the child, not less than one intervention specialist of the child, a representative of the school district, and others as appropriate (SLP, PT/OT, etc.).

EschoolPlus

No one should have grades put in under their name if they are not the one who determined the grades! Principals are responsible for correcting any discrepancies in class lists as soon as possible.

Be sure to send emails with student names and ID numbers to your principal if you have any problems, so you can create a paper trail of your attempts to correct any issues. Sometimes these changes are fluid. A student who has an IEP for ED may spend most of first quarter in the ED classroom, but second quarter in the general education classroom. Each case is different and needs to be seen as such.

Planning Center

The CTU and the District agreed that students on IEPs have the same rights to the Planning Center as any other students. We also know that we should not deny these students their services when they are in the Planning Center. Therefore, the CBA calls for there to be an Intervention Specialist in the Planning Center two periods per day. These ten periods per week must be considered as part of the teacher's assignment, and not scheduled during their planning or lunch.

If there are no students on IEPs in the Planning Center during their scheduled time in the room, it is considered an additional planning period for the teacher. If this has not been scheduled in your building, please remind your principal and chapter chair that it is required.

Special Education Concerns

If you have a concern regarding special education assignments, schedules or services in your building that isn't being corrected within contractual limits, contact Mary Moore at Mary.Moore@clevelandmetroschools.org as soon as possible, so it can be addressed. Remember to use and save emails to keep a record of the problem, and the requests and attempts to correct it.

CDHR Year In Review

The Civil, Democratic and Human Rights Committee, chaired by Stephanie Henderson, provides information to CTU members in various professional development (PD) sessions throughout the school year. The professional development focuses on assisting CTU members by providing relevant information on issues that deal with life inside and outside of the classroom that directly relate to the Civil, Democratic and Human Rights focus of our Union.

Check the list of dates below and mark your calendars for this year's CDHR sessions. Remember, pre-registration is required, so look for the flyers in your building and register early to guarantee your seat!

2014-15 Recap

Last school year, the PD began with Strategies to Improve Building Climate. Yuri Thorton, from the Closing The Achievement Gap office, presented on the topic of Creating Positive School Climate. Julliette Madigan spoke on Rapid Response and Crisis Management.

Kurt Richards, 2nd Vice President, and Mark Baumgartner, Trustee-at-Large, presented our CTU history

to members, and reviewed the importance and relevance that Unions brought to the work force. Voter Suppression was a hot topic that Petee Talley was not only able to deliver but also teach to some members. Michelle Crew represented the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and offered insight as to how her office can assist when workers are having concerns at the job.

Are you aware that there are so many internet crimes that a task force was created with this as their main objective? Leah Hackney, from Ohio Internet Crimes Against Children, informed participants that 57% of youth today view their cell phone as the key to their social lives. She taught our members

about several sites and apps that children use on the internet that can compromise their safety, and how law enforcement is monitoring social media. Hackney provided so much information that an additional session was requested for this school year.

Cleveland Metropolitan Schools are very diverse, so Stephanie Henderson invited Lisa Gayner, the Director of Diversity Management at Cleveland



A presenter speaks to a rapt CTU audience.

State University, to provide information on the topic of diversity. Ms. Gayner encouraged participants not to make judgments based on the color of someone's skin or gender. She explained that in society today, people must have more cultural agility to successfully and respectfully navigate their way through the diverse groups of students and families that we work with on a daily basis. Look for addi-

Save These CDHR Session Dates!

The CDHR committee requests that you save these dates for the upcoming professional development series for the 2015-2016 school year. All sessions are scheduled for Wednesdays at East Professional Development Center.

September 16, 2015
October 14, 2015
November 11, 2015
December 9, 2015
February 10, 2016
March 9, 2016
April 13, 2016
May 11, 2016

tional professional development in this area this school year. Mark Davidson of the Maltz Museum provided a Jewish-American history lesson that emphasized the contributions of the Cleveland Jewish Community. He suggested that we bring our scholars to the museum to learn more about the contributions of the Cleveland Jewish Community. The NuMillenium Music Group also provided relaxing music for everyone to enjoy.

Dr. Tanisha L. Knighton presented



Stephanie Henderson congratulates winners of CDHR door prizes.



CDHR Chairperson Stephanie Henderson and Committee have another informative schedule planned for 2015-16.

CTU, Custodians' Scholarship Golf Outing

CMSD Locals 279 (CTU) and 777 (Custodians) spring golf outing, held last May at Bob-O-Link Golf Course in Avon, raised over \$7,000 for their joint scholarship. The 2015 scholarship recipient was Taylor Watson from James F. Rhodes High School.

The annual event is organized by CTU's Membership Committee, led by Chairperson Wendi Kral. The Committee expressed

Thanks to participants, sponsors, and presenters of the Annual Golf outing, including this foursome (right) with representatives from our Ohio Educational Credit Union.

"Where is the ball?" Aerial Morrison, Brian Barnes, Dan Coughlin and Robert Delgado (below) at Bob-O-Link Golf Course.



their thanks to all who participated, assisted or donated to this worthwhile cause. The major donors were NTA Life (National Teachers Associates Life Insurance Company) and CEO Eric Gordon, each donating \$1,000, and AXA Financial Services, who donated \$500.

Over 80 golfers participated in the popular event. Mark your new CTU calendars for May 21, 2016, the date of next year's golf outing!

on Human Trafficking to a full room of CTU members at East Professional Development Center. Members were provided with relevant information about the horrors that some young people encounter as they are treated as sex slaves. Participants commented on how much they had learned and how the information in the session could be beneficial to assist in providing insight on students who may need to talk about this issue.

Each session concluded with a raffle of gift certificates that were provided by various vendors or purchased by Chairperson Henderson.

The committee wants to acknowledge the following individuals for supporting and participating in five or more sessions during the 2014-15 school year: Lousie Bohanon, Mary Clement, Regina Franklin, Elaine Hall, Linda Hamby Walker, Kim Harrell, Cheri Jacobs, Laronda Kelley, Don P. Matthews, Georgia Moore, Vanessa Nelson, Hong Nguyen, Millie Rolon, Marcia Shepherd, Carolyn Smalls, Shelly Rogers, Gwen Taylor, Karen Washington, Inell Williams, and Monica Williams.

Innovation Fund (IF) Report:

SY 2012 to present

by Mark Baumgartner and Debbie Paden

The Innovation Fund (IF) grant program, developed by the AFT, was originally funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, to sponsor innovative ideas around education reform. The AFT now funds the grants and supports the IF program without Gates funding.

Only a small number of locals have received funding for this grant. The first year that the CTU was awarded the grant, in 2012-13, only six locals nationwide received IF funding. Each grant was for three years. In Cleveland, the Innovation Fund is a collaboration between CMSD and CTU, and the project has the support of the AFT. Debbie Paden is the CTU Coordinator for the IF grant.

The original CMSD/CTU Innovation Fund grant was a three-year grant of \$159,000 awarded for each of the three school years, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15. The CMSD/CTU grant was recently extended for an unheard-of fourth year, 2015-16.

Cleveland teachers who participated in the IF grant wrote exemplar lessons aligned to the Common Core. These teachers became Curriculum Unit Teacher Developers. They developed a Unit of 8-10 lessons aligned to the Common Core. These lessons are available in SchoolNet for CMSD teachers, and in Share My Lesson (SML) for national distribution at www.sharemylesson.com. The tag line on Share My Lesson for the Cleveland units is Building Better Classrooms. As of August 3, 2015, there were 194,850 hits for Building Better Classrooms.

Eighteen teachers per year participated in the grant, split between ELA and Math only. At the end of the three years, a total of 54 teachers have participated in the grant, and over 420 lessons have been produced (about 140 per year). The IF project and

the teachers received national recognition for their work from Education Week and Achieve the Core.

Fourth Year Begins

Earlier this year, the American Federation of Teachers approached the CTU about funding for an unprecedented fourth year. Cleveland and Boston were the only unions to receive funding for a fourth year. CTU was awarded an additional \$75,000 for Year 4, giving the IF grant a four-year grand total of \$552,000, which makes it more than a half-million-dollar grant.

Funding for this fourth year will be provided for 18 teachers, only in Math in grades 8-12. AFT needs more math lessons for Share My Lessons that are high school exemplars. If you are interested in writing math lessons for grades 8-12, contact Mark Baumgartner or Debbie Paden at the CTU office. Compensation is \$4,500 per teacher. About 14 math teachers are still needed for this project for SY 2015-16.

Mrs. Paden reported that all 54 teachers for the past three years have done a great job being Teacher Curriculum Unit Developers writers. These teachers spent the entire school year writing the unit lessons, and in doing so, developed into a cohort of professionals to bounce ideas around with their peers, participate in professional conversations around Common Core and their work, develop a deeper understanding of the Common Core shifts, and use the EQuIP rubric to determine if the lessons were meeting the standards. They attended meetings with an outside facilitator who guided them on curriculum writing, the Common Core, and development of a cohesive unit.

A national expert vetted their lessons using the EQuIP Rubric. All teachers earned a 2 or a 3 on the EQuIP rubric, which meant they were publishable. This process took

many revisions until the drafts became final products. National experts provided written feedback during the process.

Debbie Paden has run the day-to-day operation of the grant for the past three years, and will continue to run it for the fourth year. Mark Baumgartner was the original grant writer, and continues to oversee the grant for the CTU as the Program Director.

YEAR TWO

3rd Grade – Math Units

Introduce a Whole & Creating Equal Parts Susan Ehlert

3rd Grade – ELA Units

Balto & The Great Race Melissa Hardy
Our World and Culture Nicole Vitale
Bunnica Anna Singleton
Matrin Luther Kind and the Dream Rosalind DuBose-Butler
Yippee-Yay Diane Opfer

4th Grade – Math Units

Draw, Points, Lines & Rays Nicole James-Jones
Fractional Equivalence Using Area Models
& Number Line Diagram Stephanie Wojtowicz

4th Grade – ELA Units

Tales of Fourth Grade Nothing Linda Palombo-King
Molly's Pilgrim Lori Tanski

5th Grade – Math Units

Fractions Christine Hites
Operations & Algebraic Thinking Michelle Lopez
Decimals Brian West
My Life with Fractions Mary Flahive

5th Grade – ELA Units

Number of the Stars Areial Chapman
From the Mixed-Up Files of
Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler Megan Scully
Pink & Say Patricia Lewis

YEAR THREE

6th Grade – Math Units

The Number System/Ratios and
Proportional Relationships Nicole James-Jones
Writing and Solving Equations Unit Parthenia Croskey

6th Grade – ELA Units

Courage Has No Color Natosh Avery Czuba
Walter Dean Myers Harlem Unit Maureen Jordan
Walk Two Moons Patricia Lewis
Wonder Megan Scully
Heroism Anna Singleton
Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life . . . LaWanda Burton-Smith

7th Grade – ELA Units

Elijah of Buxton Bethany Lutwin
The Dark is Rising Michael West

Algebra 1 – Math Units

High School Algebra I: Transforming Quadratic
Equations Completing the Square Unit Endora Kight

9th Grade – ELA Units

Young Voices Unit Courtney Maher
The Art of Giving: A Multi-Genre
Comparative Literature Study Michelle Perez

Geometry – Math Units

Similarity Transformations Michelle Robb

10th Grade – ELA Units

Macbeth Amy Furmanek

Algebra 2 Functions – Math Units for Grades 10-12

Quadratic Functions Mohana Aravamudham

11th-12th Grade – ELA Units

No Name Woman Christine Sims
Fast Food Nation & Nickel and Dimed Elizabeth Thompkins

INNOVATION FUND TEACHERS
2012-2015

YEAR ONE

Kindergarten – Math Units

Geometry Keisha Pitts-Bullard
Getting to the Core through Children's Literature Linda Jakob
I Spy Lisa Cline
Number Pattern Adia Hoxha

Kindergarten – ELA Units

All About Me Tracy Reid
Animals in the Winter Debra Wightman
Jan Brett Author Melissa Hardy

1st Grade – Math Units

Addition Fun Stephanie Bluffstone
Math Strategies & Literature Thomisa Zawadzki
Strategies for Understanding Place Value Roberta Beisel

1st Grade – ELA Units

Amusement Park Rides Nicole Vitale
Cinderella Around the World Kathryn Jeffery

2nd Grade – Math Units

Two Mini Addition & Subtraction Units Raquel White
Graphing Mary Kay Cerrito

2nd Grade – ELA Units

Compare & Contrast Sara Baldassar
Investigating the Wolf Lorna Gamble
Winter Holidays Around the World Julie Reffner



Thank you!

YOUR SUPPORT OF Northeast Ohio children
is much appreciated!



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We always need volunteers to help us get the school supplies and learning tools that children need to be successful.

Financial donations allow us to buy core supplies, fund special programs and stay in operation throughout the entire year.

To sign up to volunteer or make a donation, visit our website
www.clevelandkidsinneed.org

Cleveland Kids In Need Resource Center

3631 Perkins Avenue, Ste. 1-C ♥ Cleveland, Ohio ♥ 44114
216.361.0840

Politics and Public Education: Why You Need COPE

by Kurt Richards

As CMSD educators and CTU members, we are well aware of the role politics plays in our professional lives, our job security, our livelihood, our retirement systems, and what happens in our classrooms on a day-to-day basis.

Politics in education brought us these gems: No Child Left Behind; vouchers and charter school laws; Substitute H.B. 525 (the Cleveland Plan); anti-union attacks like Ohio's S.B. 5/Issue 2 and Right-to-Work laws; other relentless attacks on collective bargaining rights; the testing craze; and cuts to education funding. Right now CMSD and CTU are preparing for negotiations as the current Collective Bargaining Agreement expires at the end of the school year. At the same time, Ohio and the nation will be gearing up for the elections of 2016, including a Presidential election and the renewal of the Cleveland school levy.

These elections will have critical consequences: the continued implementation of the Cleveland Plan; budget priorities, both nationally and statewide; voter suppression efforts; the future of pensions and social security programs; teacher professional issues, including student testing and teacher evaluations; fair redistricting; and collective bargaining versus right-to-work, to name a few.

Most of the wealthiest Americans are not on our side. They have deep pockets, and they are prepared to spend record sums to elect politicians who support their anti-worker agenda. Our strength is in our membership. In 2012, CTU volunteers worked to elect or reelect some friends of labor, notably Senator Sherrod Brown and President Barack Obama. CTU members also helped to pass the first school operating levy in Cleveland since 1996. The year before that, thanks to the tremendous efforts of CTU members, Ohioans overwhelmingly rejected S.B. 5/Issue 2.

Don't get comfortable. As I've said before, this is a marathon, not a sprint. We will need you this year and next. I'm confident our members will be there again when we call on you to volunteer and to show up in the community.

CTU also needs your continued support for its COPE program. Union members don't have the bankrolls that the one-percenters have; instead, our strength is in our numbers. The CTU counts on the voluntary contributions of members to fund its political activities. There are restrictions on the use of union dues for political purposes, so that makes COPE (Committee on Political Education) contributions even more valuable.

Help your Union protect your interests and your professional future by contributing generously to COPE. The easiest method is payroll deduction, for 20 pays during the school year.

Ask your CTU chapter chairperson for a blue COPE card today, and contribute a few dollars per paycheck. If you already contribute, please consider increasing your deduction by a dollar or two this year. It's a small amount individually, but together with the contributions of your Union brothers and sisters, it gives the CTU the capacity to be a more powerful force for public educators.



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Huck

Principals’ Report Card 2014-15

School	Principal	Overall Rating	Should be Rehired
New Schools Network			
Bard Early College	Dumaine Williams	A	Yes
Digital Arts	John Buzzard	F	No
JFK Eagle	Margaret Schauer	B+	Yes
JFK PACT	Richard Reynolds	C-	Yes

Achievement Network			
Benjamin Franklin	Rachel Snider	F	No
Clara E. Westropp	Francie Watson	C-	Yes
Denison	▼Leslie Rotatori-Traner	C+	Yes
Garfield	Damon Loretz	B-	Yes
Louis Agassiz	▼Christine Hericks	B-	Yes
Louisa M. Alcott	Eileen Mangan-Stull	B+	Yes
Oliver H Perry	Shannon Caldwell	F	No
Paul Dunbar	Sofia Piperis	C-	Yes
Riverside	Paige Baubiltz-Watkins	F	No
Success Tech	▼Sara Kidner	C	Yes
Waterson-Lake	▼Brigitte Pronty	C+	Yes
William C. Bryant	▼John Lepelley	C-	Yes
Whitney Young	Karen Byron-Johnson	N/A	N/A

Best Practices: Academic & Culture Network			
Buckeye-Woodland	Doris Redic	D	Yes
Buhrer Dual Language	Jose Gonzalez	B+	Yes
Clark	Amanda Rodriquez	C+	Yes
Daniel E Morgan	Dessie Sanders	C	Yes
Euclid Park	Jennifer Woody	D	Yes
H. Barbara Booker	Nicholas Scheibelhood	D+	Yes
Iowa Maple	Natalie Smith-Benson	F	No
John F. Kennedy	Maryum Sims	D	Yes
Joseph Gallagher	▼Jennfier Rhome	B+	Yes
Marion C. Seltzer	Denise Urban	F	No
Mary M. Bethune	Robert Early	A-	Yes
Paul Revere	▼Chris Myslenski	D+	Yes
Scranton	Troy Beadling	B-	Yes
INA @ Thomas Jefferson	▼Natividad Pagan	D+	Yes
Willson	▼Katherine Bush	C	Yes

Investment 1 Network			
Alfred Benesch	Luciana Gilmore	C-	Yes
Anton Grdina	Harold Booker	D-	Yes
Case	▼Widelene Desarmes	C	No
Collinwood	Maria Carlson	D	Yes
Franklin D. Roosevelt	▼William Hayes	B	Yes
John Adams	▼Damon Holmes	B+	Yes
Kenneth Clement	Jacky Brown	B+	Yes
Lincoln-West	Irene Javier	C+	Yes
Luis Munoz Marin	▼Jefferey Keruski	B+	Yes
Mound	Velma McNeil	D	No
Robert H. Jamison	Sharon Cooper	C	Yes
Robinson G. Jones	Melissa Watts	B+	Yes
Walton	Elizabeth Fennell	D-	Yes

Investment 2 Network			
Adlai Stevenson	Christopher Wyland	A-	Yes
Almira	Laverne Hooks	C+	Yes
Bolton	Reginald Shaw	B-	Yes
East Tech	Paul Hoover	B+	Yes
Fullerton	Kevin Payton	D	No
George W. Carver	▼Richard York	F	No
Glenville	Dr. Samuel Scavella	D+	No
Glenville	Jacqueline Bell	B+	Yes
Marion Sterling	Adrianna Chestnut	C+	Yes
Michael R. White	Ariel Hayes	B	Yes
Patrick Henry	Monique Martin	C	Yes

School	Principal	Overall Rating	Should be Rehired
New & Innovative Network			
Campus International	Julia Beers	B	Yes
Design Lab Early College	Eric Juli	D	No
Douglas MacArthur	Victoria King	A-	Yes
New Tech Facing History	Marc Engoglia	B+	Yes
Ginn Academy	Nicholas Petty	A-	Yes
John Hay Campus	Dr. Walton-Poon	A-	Yes
John Hay Campus	Ed Weber	F	No
John Hay Campus	Tianna Maxey	A	Yes
MCySTEM	Feowyn MacKinnon	A-	Yes
New Tech East	Christy Nickerson	C-	Yes
New Tech West	Erin Frew	B	Yes
Promise Academy	▼Cordelia Harris	A-	Yes
Tremont	Lori Haag	B	Yes
Valley View	Terrance Menefee	B+	Yes
Warner	Audrey Staton- Thompson	C	Yes

STEAM Network			
Andrew J.Rickoff	Gloraine Smith	D	Yes
Charles A.Mooney	Brynn Morgan	B+	Yes
Charles Dickens	Lisa Braxton	B-	Yes
Charles Eliot	Marwa Ibrahim	C	Yes
CSA Lower	Alisha Starks	A-	Yes
CSA Upper	Kendra Holloway	B-	Yes
Garrett Morgan	Andrea Bishop	B	Yes
Hannah Gibbons	Tamea Caver	D+	Yes
Jane Addams	Ann McGhee	B	Yes
Martin L. King, Jr	Latonia Davis	D+	Yes
Max S. Hayes	▼Phillip Schwenk	D-	No
Miles Park	Tamika Taylor- Ivory	D+	No
Nathan Hale	Joelle McIntosh	A	Yes
Newton D. Baker	▼Juilane Fouse- Shepard	B+	Yes
Orchard	Mary Ann Knapp	A-	Yes
Washington Park	Donald Strika	D	No

TBT Network			
Artemus Ward	▼Neil Murphy	A-	Yes
Downtown Ed Center	Wayne Marok	C+	Yes
East Clark	Lisa Adams	F	No
Harvey Rice	Yvette Brown	D-	No
James F Rhodes	Charlene Hilliard	C-	Yes
John Marshall 3th Grade	Lisa Williams-Locklear	B+	Yes
John Marshall	Tiffany James	C	Yes
Mary B. Martin	Lauren Seymour	D+	Yes
McKinley	Victoria Janke-Mousty	C	Yes
Memorial	▼Carol Winter	C-	No
Miles	Roy James	D+	Yes
School of One	Wayne Marok	B	Yes
Sunbeam	Joshua Gunvalsen	B-	Yes
Wade Park	▼Janet McDowell	C	Yes
Waverly	Sommer Edwards	C	Yes
Wilbur Wright	Vimeal Finley	C+	Yes
Willow	▼Angela Powers	B+	Yes

Supervisors			
Basic Skills	Curtis Hutchison	A-	Yes
Sign Language Interpreters	▼Dawn Hayden	B+	Yes
Nurses	Debbie Aloschen	A	Yes
Psychological Services	▼Dr. Linda Nieheiser	C+	Yes
Peer Coaches- ELA	Susan Wagner	A-	Yes
Peer Coaches-Math	Elizabeth Nelson	B-	Yes
OP/TP	Sheila Virden-Reid	C	Yes

▼ Denotes Retired, Resigned, or Changed Schools/Positions



WELCOME!

to New CTU Members



CINDY ANTONIO
Member-at-Large, K-8



MARK BAUMGARTNER
Trustee-at-Large

Over 200 new hires attended the New Member Orientation on July 27, 2015, as part of the Blue Institute at Corporate College. The Collective Bargaining Agreement ensures that “the CTU is to be included in all new bargaining unit member orientations throughout the school year.” CTU Membership Chairperson Wendi Kral welcomed the group and President Quolke presented opening remarks.

Topics discussed included Political Action and COPE with Kurt Richards, Special Education issues with Mary Moore, and Differentiated Compensation, Grievances and Assaults with Jillian Ahrens. Michael Kulscar advised new members about the topics of Agency Fees and Healthcare.

Debbie Paden spoke about Resident Educator and Share My Lesson resources, and Mark Baumgartner tackled PEAC/PAR, ER&D and TDES. Bonnie Hedges explained IPDPs, Michelle Rzucidlo-Rupright familiarized the attendees with the CTU calendar book, and Cheryl Neylon's talking points were in regards to Substitutes.

Cassandra Carter, Cindy Antonio and Eliza Kazek each informed our new members about upcoming union events, workshops and mobilization efforts of the CTU. Wendi Kral also walked the new hires through a variety of handouts provided by the CTU or AFT including the New Member Booklet, the new member application and offers and benefits available through AFT Plus.

In the end, over 200 new member applications were collected and over 120 COPE cards were returned by our new members. Welcome to the Cleveland Teachers Union!



SEL Work in CMSD Classrooms Highlighted as

CMSD hosted CASEL's annual Cross-Districts Learning Event May 6-8, 2015. Given the importance of district-level leadership and coordination, CASEL, the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning, launched a national initiative in 2011 aimed at supporting districts' capacities to promote SEL for all students. Called the Collaborating Districts Initiative (CDI), this effort recognizes that positive student outcomes depend on improving classrooms and schools, which in turn depends on improving district-wide capacities and conditions.

The CDI is funded by NoVo Foundation and the Einhorn Family Charitable Trust and involves the American Institutes for

Research (AIR) as an external evaluator. Its two complementary goals are: to develop districts' capacities to plan, implement and monitor systemic changes that will impact schools and classrooms in ways that enhance students' social-emotional development and academic performance; and to document lessons learned that can inform future efforts to support systemic SEL implementation in other districts across the country.

The eight participating CDI school districts are: Anchorage, AK; Austin, TX; Chicago, IL; Cleveland, OH; Nashville, TN; Oakland, CA; Sacramento, CA; and Washoe County, NV.

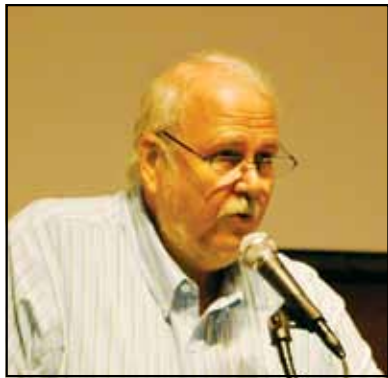
Keynote speaker Tim Shriver, CASEL

Board Member, discussed the importance of restorative practices and teaching the whole child. The conference was held at the Cleveland Marriott, with a dinner event at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Entertainment was provided by students from Cleveland School of the Arts, and desserts by the Jane Addams culinary students. Representatives from CASEL and the eight districts visited a dozen CMSD schools.

For more information about CASEL and this event, to hear the speakers or to download the SEL presentations, go to www.casel.org. Thank you to all CTU members who help develop our students' important SEL skills!



Jillian Ahrens, 3rd Vice President, Chapter Chairperson, present at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History



MICHAEL KULCSAR
Treasurer



WENDY KRAL
Membership Committee Chair



MICHELLE RZUCIDLO-RUPRIGHT
Secretary



KURT RICHARDS
2nd Vice President



MARY MOORE
3rd Vice President, K-8



Substitute Orientation

About 400 substitute teachers attended one of four half-day substitute orientation sessions held on July 8-9 at East Professional Development Center. Cheryl Neylon, CTU's Liaison for substitute teachers, provided the Union's portion of the session.

The agenda included: a review of the new CMSD substitute handbook; H.E.A.R.T. training; answers to frequently asked questions; and the CTU presentation for substitutes.

Skilled, knowledgeable substitutes are an important part of the educational process for CMSD students, and valuable members of our Union. These sessions help ensure that subs have the information they need.



Cheryl Neylon, Sergeant-at-Arms and CTU's Substitute Liaison, addresses substitute teachers at the orientation session.



Cleveland Hosts CASEL Conference



K-8, and Pat Forrai-Gunter, Nurses' representative, at the CASEL Conference dinner at the Ryer.



Dorothy Fair, Trustee, Senior/Special, chats with a student at the CASEL Conference.



Talented musicians from Cleveland School of the Arts entertained the guests.

Ohio's Corrupt Charter School System Hits **NEW LOW**

The Ohio Department of Education under Governor John Kasich is in turmoil. David Hansen, Kasich's hand-picked chief for school choice and charter schools, resigned in disgrace in July after it was revealed that he had withheld failing scores of charter schools in state evaluations, so the schools' sponsor organizations wouldn't look so bad. Hansen's wife Beth was Kasich's chief of staff, but she has taken a leave from that post to work for his Presidential campaign. Now there are calls for the resignation of Dr. Richard Ross, Kasich's state Superintendent of Education.

The *Plain Dealer*, which has been supportive in the past of Ohio's charter school program, called ODE's attempt to toss out the F grades of online charter schools, thus giving their sponsors easy A's, "unconscionable and unbelievable."

ODE announced in July that it would withdraw the online charters' original academic evaluations, in which had discarded the online charter schools' failing grades, when evaluating their sponsors. It was reported that ODE "would seek outside advice from experts on its next evaluation."

Some lawmakers, concerned citizens, and the news media called for an explanation from Dr. Ross as to why he allowed this to happen in the first place. Ohio law requires state evaluations of all online schools and requires those evaluations to be part of overall sponsor evaluations, and as the PD stated, "that means honest evaluations, not cooked grades."

A 2012 state law on evaluating charter schools requires ODE to include the grades of all online charter schools when grading their sponsors, the agencies with oversight over the charter schools. Ohio's online charter schools currently have 40,000 students on their rolls statewide, out of 117,730 students enrolled in Ohio charter schools overall. The intent of the law was that the pressure on sponsors would force them to provide better

oversight of their schools.

Plain Dealer education reporter Patrick O'Donnell revealed during the summer that ODE quietly ignored that law, which came as a surprise and a shock to members of the State Board of Education.

Mr. O'Donnell reported that David Hansen had "decided not to count the F grades of online charter schools, because struggles with online education 'mask' successes elsewhere, and

its online schools, including OHDELA, which is run by David Brennan's politically-connected White Hat Management, actually earned the lowest grades, F's.

The *Plain Dealer* editorial board wrote: "ODE's decision did not square with the intent or the spirit of the law. Ohio's horribly broken charter school law has betrayed Ohio's youngsters by allowing charter schools, which outside experts rate as worse, in many cases, than traditional public schools, to flourish."

Why the Lax Accountability?

Brent Larkin, the *Plain Dealer's* editorial director from 1991 until he retired in 2009, surprised many in the community with his scathing comments this summer about Ohio's charter school mess, the lawmakers who perpetuate the mess, and the

Ohio's charter school system is a national joke and a disgrace. Charter school supporters called Ohio "the wild, wild west of charter schools," and said "most of the charters in Ohio stink." It is, and they do.

because their grades dropped after changes in the state's grading rules." In other words, he chose to ignore (break?) the law as it was written. When this was discovered, he quickly resigned. Governor Kasich has tried to close the door on this issue, since Mr. Hansen resigned.

But the use of this tactic, which weakened the overall measure, gave the Ohio Council of Community Schools, the highest grade — exemplary. This was in spite of the fact that

profiteers who reap handsome financial gains from the mess. He said that some charter schools in Ohio are "so atrocious . . . that children consigned to those awful places probably can't spell the one word they need to know about their state government . . . C-o-r-r-u-p-t."

Ohio's charter school system is a national joke and a disgrace. Charter school supporters called Ohio "the wild, wild west of charter schools," and said "most of the charters in Ohio



stink." It is, and they do.

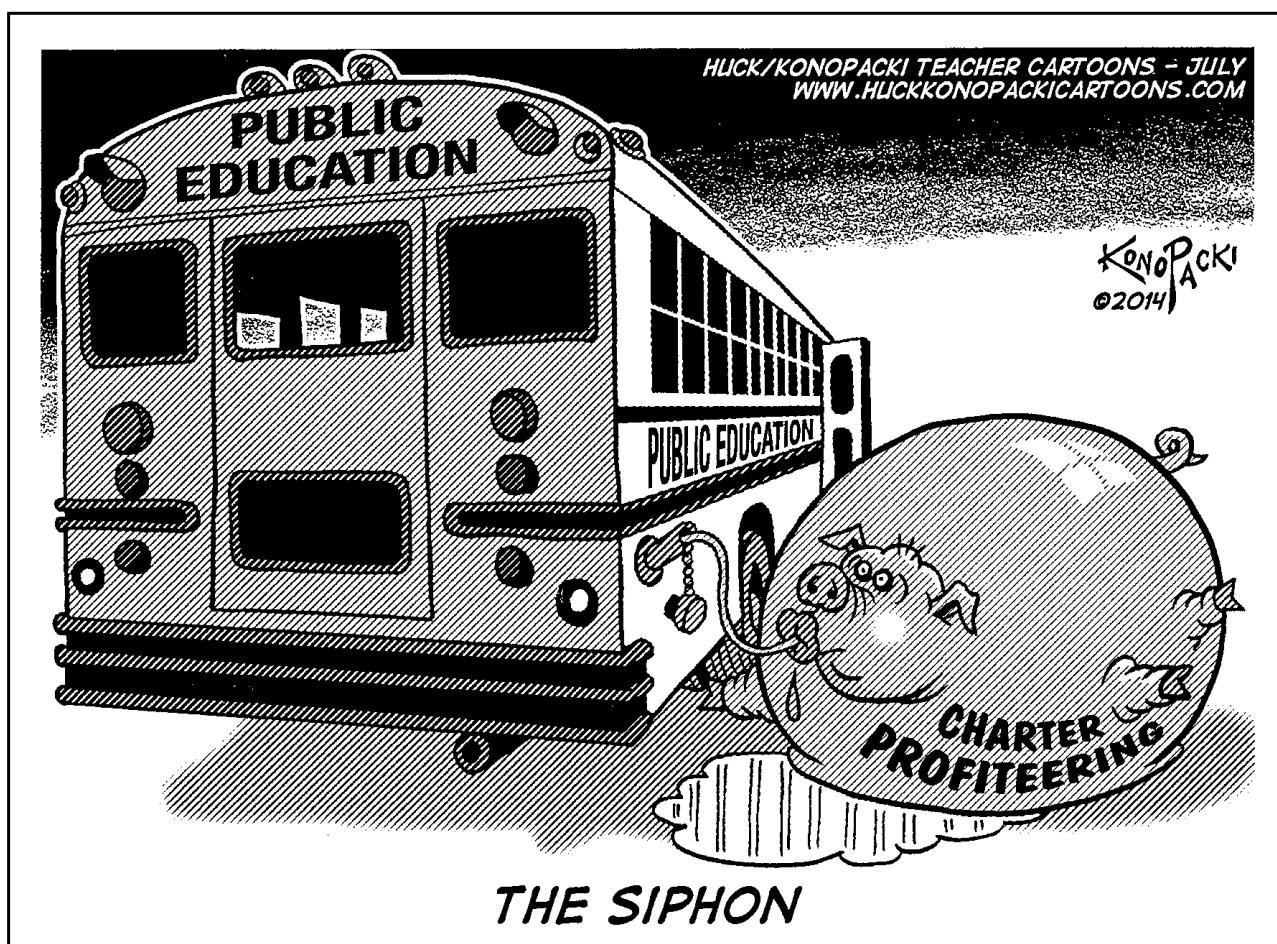
New House Speaker Cliff Rosenberg had an opportunity this past June to do something about it, but failed. After the Senate unanimously passed a charter reform bill that was supported by Kasich, that would have made taxpayer-funded charter schools more accountable and transparent, it was assumed the House would pass it too. But at the last minute, Mr. Rosenberg made a feeble excuse about "needing more time to study changes made by the Senate," then adjourned the House for the summer. The result? It will likely be at least another year, if ever, that a charter school accountability bill with some teeth might be passed in Ohio.

There are some good charter schools, and most of the teachers that work in charter schools are doing their best to educate children, under some very difficult situations, with no voice, no protections, and no collective bargaining rights to advocate for their students. So how do terrible charters stay in business? Mr. Larkin said, "The awful ones have figured out how to sprinkle so much money around Statehouse corridors they've purchased immunity from having to care about kids.

"In the past 17 years, Ohio's two largest charter school management companies, David Brennan's Akron-based White Hat Management and William Lager's Columbus-based Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow (ECOT), have funneled more than \$6 million to Republican candidates and causes. In the last election cycle, ECOT alone gave more than \$400,000. The payoff? About \$1.76 billion in taxpayer money has flowed into charter schools run by Brennan and Lager since 1998."

During the last four years of former House Speaker Bill Batchelder's term, which ended due to term limits in December, Ohio newspapers documented numerous occasions of him and his fellow Republican lawmakers trying to stymie any real charter school reform efforts. "When it came to charter schools, a good-sized check always trumped good government," Mr. Larkin opined.

And last February, Mr. Batchelder made it official when the lobbying firm that bears his name was hired by ECOT to water down any reform bill that might try to pass the Ohio General Assembly. In the meantime, unscrupulous people who care much more about money than about Ohio's kids continue to get richer and richer, on the dime of Ohio taxpayers.



AFT Endorses Hillary Clinton for President

The AFT Executive Council voted overwhelmingly on July 11 to endorse Hillary Clinton in the Democratic primary for President of the United States. The AFT is the first national union to endorse a candidate in the 2016 Democratic presidential primary.

"In vision, in experience and in leadership, Hillary Clinton is the champion working families need in the White House," said AFT President Randi Weingarten. "Hillary Clinton is a tested leader who shares our values, is supported by our members, and is prepared for a tough fight on behalf of students, families and communities. That fight defines her campaign and her career.

In Arkansas, she fought to expand access to early childhood education and care. As first lady, she fought for the right to affordable, high-quality healthcare and helped win that right for our youngest citizens. As a U.S. Senator, she fought for education funding and workers' rights, and she defended the public service workers who came to our nation's defense on September 11. And as Secretary of State,

It is just dead wrong to make teachers the scapegoats for all of society's problems. Where I come from, teachers are the solution. And I strongly believe that unions are part of the solution, too.

— HILLARY CLINTON

a much-needed bridge to the middle class. Hillary understands that to reclaim the promise of public education, policymakers need to work

families today, including poverty, wage stagnation, income inequality and lack of opportunity. Hillary is the leader we need."

About the union's endorsement, Mrs. Clinton said, "For nearly a century, the American Federation of Teachers has worked to expand opportunity for the people and communities they serve. I'm honored to have the support of AFT's members and leaders, and proud to stand with them to unleash the potential of every American.

"I know from my own family that teachers have the power to change lives. We need to make sure every child has access to a quality **public education** and teachers with the tools to help them succeed. Our country's future depends on the education we give all our children — and giving them the best means working with the teachers and school personnel who help shape their futures each day."

As in past elections, the AFT's 1.6 million members will be a powerful organizing force for AFT-endorsed candidates. Leading up to November 2016, AFT members are expected to make more than 1,000,000 phone calls and knock on more than 500,000 doors.

The AFT's endorsement came a month after Clinton attended an executive council meeting in Washington, D.C. At that meeting, she said, "It is just dead wrong to make teachers the scapegoats for all of society's problems. Where I come from, teachers are the solution. And I strongly believe that unions are part of the solution, too."

Candidates Bernie Sanders and Martin O'Malley also spoke with the executive council at that meeting. All potential and announced candidates from both parties were invited to complete a questionnaire, and those who returned the questionnaire were invited to meet with the council. No Republican candidates — not one — responded to the AFT's invitation.

The AFT has conducted a long, deliberative process to assess which candidate would best champion the issues of importance to our members, their families and communities. Members have been engaged online, through the "You Decide" website, through several telephone town halls, and through multiple surveys, reaching more than one million members.

Additionally, for several weeks before the endorsement, the AFT conducted a scientific poll of its membership on the candidates and key issues. The top issues members raised were jobs and the economy, and public education. Seventy-nine percent of AFT members who vote in Democratic primaries said the AFT should endorse a candidate. And by more than a three-to-one margin, these members said the AFT should endorse Hillary Clinton.

[Source: AFT Press Release]



with educators and their unions. She's ready to work with us to confront the issues facing children and their

she promoted democracy throughout the world, lifting up the worth and dignity of all people.

Pres. Weingarten added, "Hillary Clinton, a product of public schools herself, believes in the promise of public education. From early childhood learning through higher education, she sees how that promise can create real opportunity for kids, building

Hillary understands that to reclaim the promise of public education, policymakers need to work with educators and their unions.

— AFT PRESIDENT RANDI WEINGARTEN

WHAT'S REALLY in the Ohio Budget for Public Schools?

by Christie Rorick

Everywhere you look, it is being publicized that the state budget includes an increase in funding for Ohio schools. The reality is, Governor Kasich and other legislators want to mislead Ohioans into believing this to be true. At first glance it appears to be true; however, we know how the numbers game works.

While taking a closer look into the finer details of the budget, the funding is poured more directly into privatization. Though it is being reported that more money is being reported to public education in Ohio, Wendy Patton reported that funding for education gives the appearance to be on the rise compared to the dollars reported in FY2008-2009 budget. (*PolicyMattersOhio.org, April 28, 2015*)

She further goes on to say that what was not taken into account was the inflation that factors into this budget. With the inflation factor,

Wendy Patton states in her report that this new budget then actually would be a \$447 million loss. (*PolicyMattersOhio.org, April 28, 2015*)

As school districts across Ohio are being told they are going to see an increase in funding, many are slow to make any major changes due to skepticism, as the recovery continues from the huge loss many suffered in FY 2012-2013.

If this funding exists in the Ohio budget, where is it going? As mentioned above, most of the money is being poured into privatized education, meaning charter schools and voucher programs. Charter schools are receiving increased funding for upkeep and improvements to their physical spaces.

As reported on OFT's website, bricks-and mortar charters will receive an additional \$150 per pupil in FY 2016 and \$200 per pupil in FY 2017, up from \$100 previously. E-charters [online schools] will receive

\$25 per pupil (up from zero before). Online charter operations are required to have a physical site within 50 miles of their students.

Voucher programs additionally are taking public education funds directly from the students by increasing privatization even further. The OFT reported: "In fiscal year 2016, vouchers for private school tuition will take at least \$45.6 million from traditional public schools. That figure jumps to \$53.7 million in fiscal year 2017. These figures do not include the cost of the EdChoice voucher which is determined by the number of students who apply for the funds. These amounts also do not include the cost of the Cleveland voucher program which is funded directly by the state and not through the diversion of district funds.

Yet, even while decisions are being made by Ohio lawmakers to increase funding for charter schools and vouchers, there is no proof that they are increasing student achievement.

United Way: Building Blocks

“United Way of Greater Cleveland changed its focus in 2013, to try to make a big impact instead of several small differences in various places,” said CTU President David Quolke, “and our CMSD students and their families are the major beneficiaries.”

The United Way, serving the community for over 100 years, is this area’s largest private-sector funder of health and human services, and its annual campaign raises about \$40 million to fund programs for both large and small non-profits. Some of the donations are assigned to specific charities designated by the donors. The ultimate goal is to reduce poverty and improve quality of life in the Greater Cleveland area.

However, despite many efforts,

poverty and inequality persist. Recent donations had slowed. Two years ago, the agency turned to a different approach to distribute its funds that were not designated for specific charities or agencies.

The “Collective Impact Agenda” focuses on the most urgent needs in three areas: education, income, and health. A committee of 120 community impact volunteers studied proposals and made recommendations using this approach. The plan is to emphasize

and support programs that will change lives, in part, by helping children succeed in school, providing “sustainable impact,” and preventing poverty, not just fighting it. Agencies use United Way’s set of common standards to measure their success, and that determines whether funding is renewed.

“Our aspiration is for every child to graduate,” said United Way of Greater Cleveland President and CEO Bill Kitson. “Our Community Impact Agenda shows our commitment to provide a wholeistic approach to ensure children and their families have the education, income and health resources needed to succeed.”

Many of the selected agencies will do their work in and around CMSD schools, especially the Investment schools. The United Way has partnered with CMSD in the “wraparound schools” concept, to bring desperately-needed social services into schools with the most at-risk students. New funds will provide tutoring, mentoring, and mental and physical health services, encourage reading, and assist homeless families.

“I urge CTU members to be generous in this important campaign,” President Quolke added. “By working collectively to affect real change, we can help increase our students’ academic success, while significantly improving the quality of life for them and their families.”

Focus on Education, Income, Health

The United Way committee focused on problems in three target areas: education, health and income.

■ **Education:** too many students are not graduating, and many younger students are at risk of failing the third-grade reading guarantee test, despite our best efforts. They and their families need more support than teachers and schools can provide during the school day.

■ **Health:** too many people in greater Cleveland can’t get necessary health care because they lack transportation or can’t afford needed medication. Did you know life expectancy in the Hough neighborhood is **24 years less** than in Lyndhurst?


■ **Income:** Too many people in our community are hungry, poor, and need good jobs. What is United Way’s plan to address target critical areas?

In education, the goal is to prepare children to enter school ready to learn and graduate from high school. **Kindergarten readiness** means providing and supporting quality preschools, and programs that help teachers with students who have emotional and developmental issues impact learning. **Academic success** means programs that will help kids read at grade level, that address emotional and social barriers to learning, chronic absenteeism and tardiness, and eliminate summer learning loss. **High school graduation** programs will help students pass the standardized tests they need to graduate, prepare them for post-high school education, and reengage those at risk of dropping out.

Regarding income, the goal is to advance individuals and families to financial empowerment, by ensuring basic needs of food security and housing, helping people get and keep jobs, and teaching how to keep and save money through financial literacy and money management skills.

To build a healthy and resilient community, the focus will be to start healthy, stay healthy, and build strong

THE BUILDING BLOCKS TO A GOOD QUALITY OF LIFE



EDUCATION: Preparing our children to enter school ready to learn and graduate from high school.

Kindergarten readiness


- Ensure we have quality preschool for our kids
- Prepare our teachers to help kids who have emotional and developmental issues succeed in school

Academic success

- Help our kids read at grade level
- Address emotional and social barriers to learning
- Address chronic absenteeism and tardiness
- Eliminate summer learning loss

High school graduation

- Re-engage youth at risk of dropping out of school
- Help kids pass the standardized tests and prepare them for post-high school education



INCOME: Advancing individuals and families to financial empowerment.

Basic needs: Food security

- Provide access to short-term food and move people to food security
- Increase food security through access to income supports

Basic needs: Housing

- Reduce housing instability through a continuum of safe and affordable housing options

Earn it: Jobs


- Help people get and keep jobs through training
- Support sustained employment with services, e.g., child care, transportation
- Provide targeted job training to provide career advancement opportunities

Keep it: Financial literacy

- Advocate for fair consumer practices for low-income households including legal/mediation services

Save it: Future security

- Financial management education and coaching for low-income households



HEALTH: Building a healthy and resilient community.

Start healthy

- Protect people from trauma and mental and physical health consequences
- Help people live healthy lifestyles

Stay healthy

- Help individuals and families live well with physical and mental illnesses

Support strong systems

- Make health care accessible to all

to a Good Quality of Life

support systems. This includes programs that protect people from trauma and mental and physical health challenges; help them live healthy lifestyles, even with physical and mental illnesses; and make health care accessible to all.

The CMSD Campaign

This year's CMSD campaign will have two parts. October 12 to November 20, 2015 is the pledge drive, using employee payroll deduction pledge cards. Deductions will not begin until January; the pledge is in effect from January 1 to December 31, 2016. The pledge cards have specific agencies or charities that you can designate to as recipients of your donations, including a selection for CMSD Investment Schools.

November 20 to December 18, 2015 is the "Special Event" part of the campaign. Susan Gardner, United Way Campaign Associate and CMSD Liaison, said schools have come up with many innovative and fun ideas for special events that involve staff,

students or both groups.

Some special events have included bake sales, penny or change contests, pajama days (wearing pajamas to school for a small entry fee), special activities (dunk tanks, duct taping to wall, etc.) for adventurous staff or administrators, contests such as guess the baby pictures of teachers, and other innovative ideas. A possible social media challenge is also being considered, especially after the success of other recent charitable causes using social media.

"The goal is to be as fun and creative as possible, and involve students and staff, in raising awareness and funds for United Way," said Ms. Gardner. Each school will have a campaign "Champion" who will be in charge of all aspects of the Charities of Choice campaign in their school.

She also thanked CTU members and other CMSD employees for their generous support in the past. CMSD employees raised over \$100,000 last year. CMSD has traditionally been one of the most generous school districts in

the state when it comes to supporting local United Way efforts.

Let's continue to help the United Way of Greater Cleveland help our CMSD kids and their families. Please

donate generously to this campaign using the pledge cards, and support your school's efforts to raise additional funds for United Way. Your gift can and will help get things done.



HOW TO LIVE UNITED:
JOIN HANDS.
OPEN YOUR HEART.
LEND YOUR MUSCLE.
FIND YOUR VOICE.
GIVE 10%. GIVE 100%.
GIVE 110%.
GIVE AN HOUR. GIVE A SATURDAY.
THINK OF ME BEFORE ME.
REACH OUT A HAND TO ONE AND
INFLUENCE
THE CONDITION OF ALL.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

GIVE. When you invest in United Way, your gifts work to advance education, income and health in Greater Cleveland.

ADVOCATE. Lend your voice to champion a cause. Sign up for United Way Action Alerts at unitedwaycleveland.org and stay updated on advocacy opportunities right here in Greater Cleveland.

VOLUNTEER. Join us for a United Way Day of Caring and spend time completing much-needed projects in our community. We'll help you find a custom project best suited for your group.

United Way of Greater Cleveland
unitedwaycleveland.org

In Memoriam: Louis Stokes

(February 23, 1925-August 18, 2015)

The CTU joins the greater Cleveland community and the nation in mourning the passing of Congressman Louis Stokes, an important leader in the quest for civil rights, social and economic justice, and a champion of the poor.

Born in Cleveland, Louis Stokes was raised by his mother Louise, a maid, in the Outhwaite housing projects. His father Charles died when he was three. He was a graduate of Cleveland Public Schools and served in the U.S. Army in World War II. He said that the racial discrimination he faced in the Army had a crucial impact on him.

After his service, he attended Western Reserve University and then Cleveland Marshall Law School, receiving his law degree in 1953. He practiced law as a civil rights attorney in the Cleveland area for 14 years.

Working on behalf of the local branch of the N.A.A.C.P. in 1965, Mr. Stokes helped challenge the Ohio legislature's congressional redistricting, which had diluted black voting strength in Cleveland. With Charles Lucas, a black Republican, he wrote the brief that prompted a Supreme Court ruling leading to the creation of Ohio's first majority-black district, the 21st.

At the urging of his brother Carl, who later became the first African-American Mayor of Cleveland, he ran for that Congressional seat. On November 6, 1968, he was elected to Congress, becoming the first African-American member of Congress from Ohio. He never lost an election, serving for 30 years — 15 consecutive terms — in Congress, until his retirement.

Rep. Stokes served on many important committees, but thought his most significant role was as a senior member of the House Appropriations Com-



mittee, which helps determine how federal dollars are spent. "It's the only committee to be on," he once said. "All the rest is window dressing."

As a committee member, Rep. Stokes directed funds toward housing and urban development projects, job placement programs, and health clinics. As the chairman of the subcommittee dealing with the Department of Housing and Urban Development and several other agencies, he oversaw allocations of more than \$90 billion a year.

In 1987, as a member of the House Select Committee to Investigate Covert Arms Transactions with Iran, he confronted Lt. Col. Oliver North about his central role in the Iran-contra affair. Colonel North, a Marine working at the National Security Council, was involved in the clandestine sale of weapons to Tehran, Iran, and the diversion

of proceeds from those sales to anti-Communist rebels in Nicaragua, known as the contras. When Colonel North said he had acted out of patriotism, Rep. Stokes replied, "Others, too, love America just as much as you do."

Rep. Stokes was the dean of the Ohio Congressional Delegation, and a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus. He received numerous awards and honors, including The Congressional Distinguished Service Award in 2003.

In a statement, President Barack Obama said that the hardships Louis Stokes had faced while growing up in Cleveland imbued him with the belief that everyone should have the chance to succeed. "Lou leaves behind an indelible legacy in the countless generations of young leaders that he inspired," President Obama said.

Rep. Stokes remained convinced that lasting social and political change could be made best only inside the halls of power. "I'm going to keep on denouncing inequities in the system, but I'm going to work within it," he said. "To go outside the system would be to deny myself, to deny my own existence. I've beaten the system; I've proved it can be done. So have a lot of others."

Former Cleveland Mayor and Congressman Dennis Kucinich said, "Thank God for Louis Stokes. Thank God for his life, for his service to our community, and for his willingness to stand up for social and economic justice, and for bringing our community together."

The CTU mourns the loss of this great man, even as we remain grateful for his loyalty, service and dedication to the Cleveland community, to Ohio and to the nation. Louis Stokes will be dearly missed.





THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY DAVID J. QUOLKE

2015-16 Promises Challenges for CTU

■ continued from page 20

be found in the District's offices or the CTU's headquarters, but in the labor-management relationships in our schools and departments that turn the elements of [the Collective Bargaining Agreement] into success for students." I am optimistic that we can work together this year to achieve the promises made in the last CBA, and extend them in the next CBA through a successful negotiations process.

Legislative Update

If you followed statewide news this summer, you are aware that the biennial budget signed by Governor John Kasich on June 30 had many amendments that impact school districts, students and educators across the state.

Remember the emails and postcards we sent to our Senators, asking them to "Put the Pause on PARCC" (aka Safe Harbor)? Lawmakers were listening. The budget includes a provision that prohibits districts and schools from using value-added ratings from the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years for evaluations or employment of both teachers and principals, unless the district or school collectively agrees with its teachers or principals to use them. This does not eliminate growth measures as a part of evaluation, but does prohibit using PARCC and AIR assessments to create a value-added score. For teachers in Category A (in which value-added is 35% of growth measures and SLO is 15%), a new growth measure will replace the use of value-added as a result of PARCC or AIR scores.

The budget also eliminated PARCC, so a new assessment is needed. State Superintendent Dr. Richard Ross announced in July that ODE would work with AIR to create new assessments. (AIR is the company that designed the OAA and OGT tests, as well as the science and social studies test used in high schools this year.) This will be a newly-designed test. Dr. Ross stated that "districts will have more information about how the tests will work be-

fore the start of the new school year," and teachers, parents, and students will have an opportunity to prepare for the new assessments. All states are required to give a state-wide test under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which is currently being reviewed by the U.S. Congress. Until Congress changes that requirement, states must give a test in order to be eligible for funding.

There appears to be some hope on the horizon for changing some of the punitive aspects of No Child Left Behind, which is the current version of ESEA. The original ESEA was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson in 1965. Its original intent was to provide additional funds to public schools with large populations of economically disadvantaged students. It was reauthorized in 2001, and those changes became known as the No Child Left

In HB 70, I see much of what was in the original version of the Cleveland Plan, before the CTU went to the table and fought to change some of the original provisions such as "fresh start" (eliminating the entire CBA), firing teachers in low-performing schools, elimination of continuing contracts, the Board setting salaries, etc.

Behind Act.

After many hearings, a long markup and a week of floor debate, the U.S. Senate on July 16 resoundingly approved a bill that could help vanquish No Child Left Behind. In a rare bipartisan vote of 81-17, Senators approved the Every Child Achieves Act, a bill to replace NCLB and restore the law to its original historic mission. AFT President Randi Weingarten said it offers "a fundamental and positive change of direction for public education. The soul of the Senate bill



maintains the commitment to target funds to public schools educating large populations of disadvantaged students, and overhauls No Child Left Behind by resetting accountability by eliminating the test-and-punish policies that have narrowed the curriculum but not the achievement gap." Now educators, students and parents wait for the next steps in the process.

Ohio Budget and CMSD

Back in the Ohio budget, the new budget bill reduced the amount of time students will spend testing by eliminating the PBA (assessments given in February/March). Instead, assessments will be administered as late in

Kasich vetoed it. His line-item veto will cost the Cleveland Schools \$13.8 million.

In another slap to Cleveland schools, the budget expanded the Cleveland Voucher Program to include schools outside the city of Cleveland. The provision was added in the House version of the budget bill, but removed in the Senate version. It was included in the conference committee report. I reached out personally to Governor Kasich to request a line-item veto of this provision. We believe that the work we are doing in CMSD has increased the options available to our high school students. Schools such as Early College, STEM schools, Science and Medicine, Bard College, Architect and Design, Design Lab, and Ginn Academy have addressed the concerns of providing options to high-school students. Instead, this provision will pull students and funds out of the Cleveland Municipal School District. Despite the fact that the Governor used 42 line-item vetoes, he chose to leave this provision in the budget.

HB 70: Another Attack From Ohio Lawmakers

While the Ohio budget was being debated and passed, Ohio lawmakers were busy with HB 70, Community Learning Centers. The OFT had worked with legislators over the past two years on HB 70, modeling a concept based on Oyler School in Cincinnati. It was a chance for genuine reform, and Oyler's success had received national attention.

After hearing testimony supporting the bill, the Senate Education Committee inserted an amendment which had never been discussed, without allowing for any discussion or public testimony. It was passed out of the Senate Education Committee, passed in the Senate, and was sent to the House, where it was passed — all with no public debate!

HB 70 deals with Academic Distress Commissions, and affects school districts that have three years of "F" ratings. At this time, it only applies to Youngstown, but other districts could be impacted if they meet the criteria. Cleveland received a state waiver in 2013 because HB 525 is in effect in CMSD, and Dr. Ross said the Cleveland Plan "represents a coordinated effort to improve student academic performance."

Basically, HB 70 gives all authority

the year as possible. Results are to be returned by June 30.

With a stroke of his pen, Governor Kasich used his line-item veto power to veto a measure approved by both the House and Senate that would have compensated for the loss of revenue

We must be the voices for our students and for our profession. We must reclaim the promise of public education. We must insist that the promises the District leaders made to the Cleveland community — and especially the students — about "our greatest success" are kept.

from the phase-out of the tangible personal property tax in Ohio. Phasing out the TPP tax had been approved in a previous budget. Obviously, this tax cut will negatively affect many Ohio school districts, and the legislature had tried to compensate for this financial loss to school districts. Governor

for running the district to a CEO who is **appointed** by the Commission. It allows for the suspension, limiting or altering of collective bargaining agreements entered into on or after the bill's effective date. The CEO will have no checks or balances on his/her power, and will single-handedly control all



aspects of a school district.

The **appointed CEO** will have the authority to: replace school administrators and central office staff; assign employees to schools and approve transfers; hire new employees; define employee responsibilities and job descriptions; establish employee compensation; allocate teacher class loads; conduct employee evaluations; make reductions in staff; set the school calendar; and create a budget. (You can read more details of this bill in my Quolke's Corner on the CTU website at ctu-279.org.)

In HB 70, I see much of what was in the original version of the Cleveland Plan, before the CTU went to the table and fought to change some of the original provisions such as "fresh start" (eliminating the entire CBA), firing teachers in low-performing schools, elimination of continuing contracts,

the Board setting salaries, etc.

Our Union Voices Matter

I have no doubt that the current majority of the Ohio General Assembly is not on the side of educators in Ohio. And our Governor? In August, at a conservative education conference in New Hampshire, Republican Presidential candidate and Ohio Governor John Kasich said, "If I were not president, but if I were King of America, I would abolish all teacher's lounges, where they sit together and worry about 'woe is us.'" The comment drew some laughs from the Republican crowd.

Kasich spokesperson Rob Nichols tried to mitigate the remarks later by saying that Kasich was only using a metaphor: "Governor Kasich thinks teachers have far more support in their communities than they sometimes give themselves credit for, and they shouldn't pay attention to the small number of 'pot-stirrers' in their

ranks who try to leverage problems for political gain. Anyone thinking he was making a comment on buildings or school architecture or space usage might need to look up the word 'metaphor' in a dictionary." Despite the attempt at a disclaimer, I think we all know exactly what the Governor meant.

Still, I have hope for the future of education in our state and the Cleveland District. I was heartened to see the support of CTU membership at meetings last spring. There truly is strength in numbers, and the CTU will need all its members to show up at events this coming year. This is not the year to stay home when CTU calls on you. Your voices must be heard.

As educators continue to be scapegoats on various levels, a favorite phrase comes to mind: "The beatings will continue until morale improves." But despite the lawmakers and even some administrators who seem to

doubt it, educational reform that is real and substantive and sustained cannot be achieved without the buy-in of the educators who actually teach the children. We must be the voices for our students and for our profession. We must reclaim the promise of public education. We must insist that the promises the District leaders made to the Cleveland community — and especially the students — about "our greatest success" are kept.

This will surely be an exciting and challenging school year. Whether you are a returning veteran or one of the several hundred teachers new to CMSD, I hope this finds you settled in and well on your way to a successful, rewarding year educating Cleveland children. As part of the Cleveland Teachers Union, you are an important part of one of the most dedicated, talented, hard-working groups of educators in the country. Have a great school year.

Letter to the Editor

Thank You to CTU from a Charter School Teacher

Greetings, CTU educators and leaders. My name is Derek Podpeskar, and I am a high school science teacher with the I CAN network of charter schools. I wanted to write this to make you aware of the organizing efforts that are currently ongoing within our network. Like many of my colleagues, I want to make my school a better place for students as well as a better work environment for teachers. I believe the best way to do this is with a collective voice that can only be effectively provided through a teachers' union.

We have faced an uphill battle versus an obstinate upper management that tried to silence teacher voices by firing seven vocal union supporters after the 2013-2014 school year. After a successful filing with the National Labor Relations Board, I am pleased to inform you that all of our allegations were found to have merit, and all seven educators were offered their positions back and/or given back pay due to the wrongdoing of I CAN management.

We have won the right for union representatives to meet in our building, and to have an official notice of the decision read aloud to all teachers by I CAN management, as well as have it posted in the building. These are exciting times for teachers, students, parents and community at my school as well as other I CAN campuses. I wished to share the news as well as to thank CTU members and CTU leadership, who have not only lent their firm support throughout our campaign, but also donated their time by attending our meetings, making phone calls, going on house visits, and providing valuable insight and experience to our cause.

I cannot thank you enough. I hope to one day soon officially call all of you my union brothers and sisters.

Derek Podpeskar
I CAN Teacher



Everyday savings add up with union-member-only discounts from Union Plus on a long list of products and services including discounts on movie and theme park tickets, flower delivery, pet services and products, car rentals, wireless services and more. In addition, there's three credit card options designed to meet the needs of hard working union members.



Learn more at UnionPlus.org/AFT



THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY DAVID J. QUOLKE



2015-16 Promises Challenges for CTU

Every child deserves a champion — an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.

— Rita Pierson

If you are planning for a year, sow rice. If you are planning for a decade, plant trees. If you are planning for a lifetime, educate people.

— Chinese Proverb

Welcome to the 2015-2016 school year! I hope you enjoyed the summer break. Whether you traveled, took classes or attended professional development sessions, tackled projects at home, or simply relaxed and enjoyed the company of family and friends, hopefully you had a great summer and have transitioned into a successful, productive school year.

This school year promises to be another exciting year. A few more brand new schools have just opened, part of the District's plan to upgrade or replace older schools. New staff members and leaders bring their new ideas and energy. Others bring know-how and skills, ready to share insight, understanding, and the wisdom of experience. We will all be working to make a positive difference for Cleveland students and the Cleveland community.

Despite the difficulties we faced last school year, I am optimistic for the 2015-16 school year. But I am realistic too — it will be a challenging year.

This is the last year of our current Collective Bargaining Agreement, so this will be a negotiations year. CTU hopes to begin formal negotiations by the end of 2015, and will be surveying members soon about their priorities. We have hundreds of CTU members for whom this will be their first time going through a negotiations year. Get ready!

Due to the Cleveland Plan (HB 525), we must negotiate the contract within the constraints of this law. But that doesn't mean we can't come to a new agreement that is both good for kids and fair for educators. It's a promise I believe the Cleveland community was counting on when they overwhelmingly passed the school levy three years ago. When it came to voting yes, I believe they pulled the lever because we were together: the District, the Union, and the Cleveland community.

CMSD leaders have not yet lived up to all the promises they inherently made to the CTU and most importantly, to the students and the community, in the last CBA. We are waiting for the promise of significant progress on

the Cleveland Differentiated Compensation System. We are waiting for the promise of a Teacher Development and Evaluation System that emphasizes authentic development of educators' skills as well as fair, objective evaluations. We are waiting for the promise of less top-down, authoritative, "one-size-fits-all" mandates and leadership from downtown, and more real collaboration in which educators' diverse voices and expertise are genuinely respected and valued.

respected, will the District be able to develop the trust, enable the risk-taking, and encourage the shared responsibility that will lead to success for all our students.

CMSD leaders have not yet lived up to all the promises they inherently made to the CTU and most importantly, to the students and the community, in the last CBA.

In negotiations and in day-to-day situations in our schools, we must focus on finding solutions, not winning arguments. But only through real collaboration, in which educators closest to the classroom are heard and

These promises were made to the Cleveland community when CEO Eric Gordon and I both signed the statement in the last CBA that included: "Our greatest success will not

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THE CRITIQUE
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INTERNATIONAL LABOR COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION
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MEMO

to: Candidates, Politicians, Administrators, and Others

from: the Members of the Cleveland Teachers Union

When you bash, bully, blame, or try to silence the teachers' union . . . you are bashing, bullying, blaming, and trying to silence TEACHERS.

We are the teachers, AND we are the union. Our voices matter.