



# NEWSLINER

## From the CFT President's Desk

Dear Colleague,

Welcome to the 2004-2005 school year. I hope that your summer recess was restful and relaxing. We have much to be proud of for our efforts in the school district. Due to your hard work in supporting the education of our students, not only have we emerged out of Academic Emergency, but we made so many gains that our district missed being categorized in the Continuous Improvement classification by a very small margin. As a district, we met the Attendance indicator, causing our placement into the Academic Watch category. With the impressive gains in all areas of student testing, the potential is great that we will gain Continuous Improvement status as a result of our work during this academic year. Despite many challenges, it is your tremendous work that makes the difference. Thank you.



Because of our significant gains, we are on a strong foundation to pass our Tax Levy Renewal this November. This Levy Renewal will **not** increase taxes; it will simply renew the tax revenue from a previous levy. Much is at stake. This revenue represents a total of \$65 million to the CPS Operating Budget. This revenue funds many services to our students including salaries teaching staff and other school personnel, instructional supplies, and other school resources necessary to better educate our students. This is the original levy that secured revenue for class size reduction in the primary grades. The momentum of academic achievement that students and teachers have worked so hard to attain would be dealt a serious setback if this Levy Renewal is defeated. We have many opponents, even two members of the current school board, who are willing to risk the loss of these services to our students. Given the oppo-



sition from sources whose own children would not be harmed due to a defeat, your help in communicating with parents and school community members will be more vital than ever before. While this campaign should be a "no-brainer," the reality is that we will have to overcome a number of obstacles to achieve success. The election of new politicians will also directly affect everything that we do in our schools, from the ways schools are currently funded **and** the amount of funding for education to the content of the tests required of our students. Please plan to commit some time to ensuring that the Levy Renewal passes and that we elect leaders who will, indeed, place our students first.

On behalf of the CFT/ACPSOP Executive Council and Staff, I wish you a successful and rewarding school year.

In solidarity,

Sue Taylor



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### SPECIAL DATES OF INTEREST

- Newsliner Deadline  
9/3
- Labor Day Picnic  
9/6
- CFT Membership Meeting  
9/8
- CFT Fall Celebration  
9/10

## Labor Day Picnic. . . September 6, 2004

CFT/ACPSOP, in conjunction with the Cincinnati AFL-CIO, invites you to attend the annual Labor Day Picnic at Coney Island -September 6, 2004. Cost is: \$2/adults; \$1/carload of children and \$3/ parking; (\$6.00 per person for Sunlight Pool, reduced prices on rides, mini-golf, paddle boats). Enter West Gate.

CFT/ACPSOP will provide food and drinks, or bring your own picnic basket. Look for the CFT/ACPSOP banners. Join your brothers and sisters for a day of family fun including hourly door prizes and children's activities. **+**CFT will grill from 11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.



## CFT/ACPSOP Office Staff 2004-2005

Please welcome Kelly Singleton to the CFT/ACPSOP office as lead secretary. Kelly comes to our office with a wealth of experience in CPS. Most recently she served as lead secretary at Jacobs Center. She was hired to replace the vacancy filled by the retirement of Carole Hargis. Kelly can be reached by email at: [ksingleton@cft-aft.org](mailto:ksingleton@cft-aft.org) or telephone at (513) 961-2272.

Ed Jaspers has begun in his new position as CFT Field Representative. CFT is very grateful for the services of Jerome Tuggle, who served as Field Rep for the 2003-04 school year. Ed also has a vast array of experiences with the school district and CFT. He and Marcia Hodges form a very strong team to serve you as Field Representatives. Ed can be reached at 475-6044, email – [ejaspers@cft-aft.org](mailto:ejaspers@cft-aft.org)

Marcia can be reached at 475-6046, email – [mhodges@cft-aft.org](mailto:mhodges@cft-aft.org)

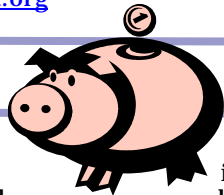
The CFT Executive Council has acted to appoint Ralph Jackson as Director of Organization for the 2004-05 school year. Due to some health concerns of his family members, Jerome has chosen to leave CFT to care for important family members. Though retired from the classroom, Ralph will remain a member to serve out his elected term as Vice President. Because of Ralph's deep commitment and knowledge of CFT, he will provide a smooth transition as the communication link with Building Reps and Area Coordinators. Ralph is available to coordinate Director of Organization activities during the course of the business day which will be very important in helping to finalize Collective Bargaining Agreement language and distribution of contracts to our members once CFT and CPS have agreed to final language.

Ralph can be reached at 475-6047, email – [rjackson@cft-aft.org](mailto:rjackson@cft-aft.org)

AFT is providing funding to hire Anne Froelich on a part time basis to coordinate campaign activities. Anne is a recent CPS retiree, having last taught at North Avondale. She will work to organize activities in support of the CPS Tax Levy Renewal effort, as well as John Kerry's campaign for President. Contact Anne at 961-2272.

Dean Dennis will also work part-time in the CFT office as Special Projects Coordinator for this academic year. He will work 10-15 hours per week after school hours to assist members with retirement questions, as well as special activities as assigned by the CFT President. Contact Dean at 961-2272, email - [ddennis@cft-aft.org](mailto:ddennis@cft-aft.org)

Join with the CFT/ACPSOP office in welcoming our new staff members. We will miss the skills of Carole Hargis and Jerome Tuggle very much. Your new and continuing staff, however, are very competent and will serve members very well.



## CFT Pay Plan Options 2004-2005

The Tentative Agreement, and, therefore, our new contract includes only **two** pay plan options. It is evident that our Treasurer's Office has incurred huge amounts of overtime of its employees (most of whom are our ACPSOP members) and that we needed to make some reasonable accommodations. Therefore, the Bargaining Teams agreed to eliminate the pay plan option that the least amount of members had chosen. The 12 Pay or Monthly Delivery Option was eliminated in the Tentative Agreement. Employees now must elect either the 21 Pay or 26 Pay Option.

Please be certain to fill out and turn

in your new pay plan card informing the Treasurer's Office of your choice. The Treasurer's Office will implement the 26-Biweekly Plan as the default for employees for whom they do not receive a new pay plan card by Monday, August 30, 2004.

During the course of last year, the Treasurer's Office informed CFT that it planned to eliminate the Early Release Advance Delivery Option or the option to receive all summer pay at the beginning of the 2004 summer for those on the 26 pay plan option. Please note that this option is not a contractual obligation but has been a practice that the Treasurer's Office has extended as a courtesy. When

informed of the Treasurer's intent not to offer this for the summer of 2004, we objected that employees had not been informed of this with enough notice to plan accordingly. The Treasurer's Office then informed us that they would offer this plan for the last time in June 2004 and then inform employees that this would no longer be made available.

When you receive your first check, please review it very carefully to ensure that the appropriate deductions are being taken. We have posted the newly negotiated salary schedules on our website at: [www.cft-aft.org](http://www.cft-aft.org)

## New CFT Collective Bargaining Agreement Document

Representatives of the CFT and CPS Bargaining Teams met twice over the summer to agree on final contract language for our new CFT Collective Bargaining Agreement. These meetings were difficult to schedule and more work remains to be done to agree on developing the "One Text" Tentative Agreement into final contract language. Our estimate is that it will take a minimum of another

month to reach agreement on the final wording and get the new contract to the printer for distribution. In the meantime, the Tentative Agreement language and the Fact Finder's ruling, distributed to members last spring, serve as the modifications to our Collective Bargaining Agreement. CFT is working diligently and securing the final agreement on language is our priority. We appreciate your under-

standing as we work through the document and we will expedite the distribution to members when the Collective Bargaining Agreement language is completed.



# Code of Conduct K – 12: Positive School Culture



On August 9th the Board of Education acted upon a new Code of Conduct for grades K – 12, entitled “Positive School Culture.” The purpose of the Code of Conduct is

as follows:

- To ensure that every student in CPS is continuously engaged in appropriate programs of academic instruction within safe and orderly environments.
- To provide clear and explicit expectations for social behaviors within all school settings.
- To specify guidelines for teaching and encouraging social skills necessary for meeting district behavioral expectations.
- To describe explicit methods of corrective instruction and consequences for responding to behavior infractions.

The new Code of Conduct requires that

a district-wide panel be convened to act upon recommendations for out-of-school suspensions. This will require schools to develop protocols for how to handle students pending the action of the new panel. Seven Alternative Learning Centers will be open in district schools to work with students pending their placement into an Alternative to Suspension program.

Teachers retain contractual rights with regard to removal of disruptive students. The following provision was negotiated:

“A teacher shall have the right to remove from class pupils exhibiting disruptive behavior, with reasons submitted in writing as soon as possible. Disruptive behavior includes the use of violence, force, coercion, threat, harassment, serious insubordination or repeated acts of misbehavior, any of which cause disruption or obstruction to the educational process. The right to remove students for cause extends to extracurricular activities affecting teachers while acting in the course of

their employment. Once removed, a student will not be returned to class until disciplinary action has been determined, specified in writing.”

Our Collective Bargaining Agreement has, and continues to, provide for the right to remove disruptive students.

More information will be provided to members regarding this new Code of Conduct. While the Board has acted upon this, not all of the details for the new structures have been developed.

**While CFT supports measures to equip our students with necessary skills for academic success, we remain deeply concerned about the lack of transition time needed for schools to make the necessary adjustments. We also have serious reservations about implementing important, new structures without additional resources provided to schools.**

From Marcia & Ed,  
CFT Field Reps.



Welcome back!

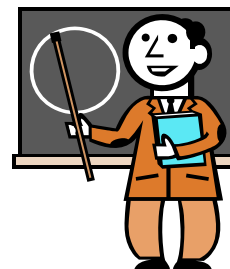
This looks as if it will be an exciting year with many changes and challenges.

Generally, Ed Jaspers will work with the schools east of Vine Street and Marcia Hodges will work with the schools on the west side of Vine. Please contact your building Representative as your first quest for help and, as always, we will be available to all members as you need us. You may reach us at 961-2272.

## Professional Issues - Denise Hewitt

In response to the harsh criticisms of the American schools in the early 1980's (A Nation at Risk, 1983), the American Federation of Teachers responded by embracing the professionalization of teaching as a means to improving the educational system. Such professionalism encompasses numerous expansions of teacher roles. Many of our professional programs are embedded in our Collective Bargaining Agreement. If you have questions, concerns or comments about TES, peer review, career ladder,

high school restructuring, Mayerson, I P D P's, professional development fund, curriculum councils, No Child Left Behind or alternative licensure programs feel free to contact me at dhewitt@cft-aft.org or call, 475-6042. Have a great year.



## Email Addresses & Web sites of Interest

Sue Taylor – [staylor@cft-aft.org](mailto:staylor@cft-aft.org)

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[www.cincinnatiaflcio.org](http://www.cincinnatiaflcio.org)

[www.aft.org](http://www.aft.org)

[www.oft-aft.org](http://www.oft-aft.org)

[www.cps-k12.org](http://www.cps-k12.org) – CPS Online

[www.mayersonacademy.org](http://www.mayersonacademy.org)

[www.kwfdn.org](http://www.kwfdn.org) – Knowledge-Works Foundation



# Testing Alert—A True Story



I am a 44-year-old electrical engineer in Cincinnati, who decided to change careers and teach high school science in Cincinnati Public Schools. After a successful, twenty-year prior career, two years ago I decided—with the concurrence of my wife—it was time to give back, to work in the same public school system which gave my family our educations.

I took the required courses and signed up for the exams mandated by the state of Ohio, tests that are part of the Praxis series produced and marketed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). I scored high on several science and math content exams but, much to my surprise and chagrin, I received a failing mark on the Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) Grades 7 – 12 test.

Without passing this exam, I knew I could never be a licensed teacher in Ohio. Teaching is the one profession where scores and grades matter. Wearing this scarlet letter of failure into a multitude of interviews for teaching positions, I hoped that someday I would pass. There was no

guarantee and interviewers looked skeptically on the idea that a person could improve their scores on such an ETS exam. At the same time, I suspected that the score was wrong because, I was always a good test-taker and I had written some of the best essays in my life on that exam.

Seven months after being told I failed, a caller from ETS left a message on my answering machine that my test was re-graded, yielding a passing score. Though the voice from ETS apologized for the “inconvenience” and promised a refund of testing fees, I was dismayed. I also bet that others were similarly affected. A call to FairTest.org and a brief investigation produced an article in the *New York Times*. A national torrent of stories soon followed. It turns out I was just one of about 4,100 test-takers in seventeen states who were erroneously told by ETS that they had failed. The scoring error occurred during eight different PLT administrations over a 15-month period. Ohio was the worst hit state with over 1200 (admitted so far by ETS) victims.

As policymakers invest more power in the testing industry, what assurance does the public have that any mandatory, high-stakes exam is actually fair, accurate, or valid? Almost weekly, the media report new examples of scoring errors, faulty exam questions and other testing flaws.

At present, there is less oversight of the tests required of teachers and students than there is of the food we feed our dogs and cats. There is no accreditation, no quality control assurance, and no accountability. As every teacher knows, testing which is irrelevant, inconsistent, and arbitrary violates the fundamental principals of assessment. As teachers, we have the obligation to speak up when we observe, or are victims ourselves, of these testing errors. I would like to hear from others who have had similar experiences. Please contact me at 221-3510 or perrea@fuse.net.

Cincinnati Federation of Teachers  
Association of CPS Office Personnel

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