

Editorial Response to Enquirer to "The Widget Effect" Report

After carefully examining the results of the "The Widget Effect" report I have concerns with some of the data released relating to Cincinnati Public Schools. Cincinnati's Teacher Evaluation System is one of the most comprehensive and rigorous peer evaluation systems in the nation; one that is often used as a model by districts across the nation. The Cincinnati Public Schools evaluation policy and practice was incorrectly stated in the report. The report stated that Cincinnati had one formal evaluation once every five years when in fact all certificated teachers in the district have at least one observation and evaluation every year. During any annual evaluation, if an administrator feels that a teacher may be having concerns with their performance as a teacher the principal then has the option to do a second observation in order to make recommendations for that teacher to be placed on a comprehensive evaluation for the following year.

The district also has what is referred to as a Comprehensive Evaluation which is completed every five years. During this comprehensive process a teacher must undergo four observations – three by a peer evaluator and

one by the current administrator. The teacher is then given a final rating based on the rubric scores of the four observations. If a teacher is having difficulties in any areas of the evaluation, then they may be put on intervention for the following school year to work with a consulting teacher. At the end of that process, if the teacher has not made the required progress then they are recommended for termination to the Peer Review Panel. So you can see that there are more than ample evaluations taking place to ensure that we have qualified teachers in the classrooms.

In the report it stated that just 2 teachers in CPS were dismissed for performance from 2004 to 2008. That may be the hard data of formal evaluations but in actuality there were many more teachers who chose to resign during that period from the district because of performance issues. Many of those teachers were Highly Qualified teachers according to the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). That means that they were teachers who had mastery of the academic content that they teach.

One thing that needs to be considered outside of the report is that there are many variables that may cause a

school to not make their annual yearly progress under the NCLB guidelines which could cause a school to be in either the Academic Emergency or the Academic Watch categories. It is difficult for me to just blame the teachers for most low performing schools. Most of these schools have high poverty rates that come with many of our societal problems today including low parental support, mental health concerns, drug and alcohol abuse problems, health issues including lead poisoning, high student mobility rates (which is increasing with homelessness due to our economy). One way that the district is providing services for students is through the Community Learning Centers (CLC). The one problem with the CLC's is that they are not in all schools. In order for all students to academically achieve we must address the student as a whole being. These are costly services that are not always available due to budget restrictions. Governor Strickland is addressing these issues with many of the components of his educational program in order to help all students be successful citizens.

Julia Sellers
CFT President



Arts Integration Pilot Project by Katie Hofmann, Curriculum Council Chair, Specialists

As part of the "Strengthening Arts in Education Committee" of the STRIVE initiative, four Cincinnati Public Schools will participate in an Arts Integration Pilot in the fall of 2009. The Arts Integration Pilot Project has been funded through the Fine Arts Fund in collaboration with the Arts Education Director Partnership of the major Cincinnati Fine Arts Organizations. These include: Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati Opera, Taft Museum, Contemporary Arts Museum, Cincinnati Ballet, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Carnegie Arts

Center, Children's Theater, Madcap Puppets, Ensemble Theater.

The teams of third grade teachers and the Arts Specialists at each school will attend Professional Development and plan for the Integration of the Arts into the third grade English/Language Arts Curriculum. Each school will have three Arts Organizations assigned to their team for a 10 week residency. Professional

artists will plan and work in the classrooms with teachers to use the Arts as a catalyst to make an emotional connection between the student and the content. The schools included in the pilot are: Bond Hill, Douglass, Hoffman/Parham and Roselawn-Condon.

It is the hope of the Fine Arts Fund to expand this project in the 2010-2011 school year to more Cincinnati Public Schools so that all CPS children will have greater access to the Arts in the community.



Greetings in solidarity, as newly elected Chief Labor Delegate for the CFT; I have been given the opportunity to contribute a regular column for the Newsliner. I am a nineteen year veteran of the district and I am presently assigned as an intervention specialist in the SED unit at Western Hills University High School. I will be writing "Labor at Large" to help keep CFT members informed about the issues the labor movement faces in our area today. In the past organized labor has been very supportive of the CFT. Communication should always be a two way street, so if you have any items for the column feel free to email me at the CFT office. I am hoping we can all work for a better future for organized labor in the Cincinnati area.

In Solidarity,
Robert Sturdevant

The Classifieds Are Back!!

Members Advertise **FREE** in
the CFT Newsliner!

Email ad to: cft@cft-aft.org

Subject line: Ad for Newsliner

All ads are subject to editing

The CFT Standing Committees Need Participants!



The membership has elected a new CFT Executive Council and many of the Committee Chairperson's are new. They are excited and invigorated to serve our members in their new roles, therefore; they are putting out the "ALL CALL" for committee participants. A description of each of the CFT Standing Committee is listed below, along with the Committee Chair. If you are interested in joining one of the following committees, please contact the Chairperson of each committee directly or call the CFT office at 961-2272.

- ♦ **The Legislation and Political Action Committee**—shall screen and initiate resolutions for consideration by the AFT, OFT and the local pertaining to all levels of government. It shall present the record of government officials, influence legislative bills and screen political candidates.
Committee Chair: Jane Simon, Schiel School.
- ♦ **The Collective Bargaining Committee**— shall prepare and substantiate contract proposals. Prior to the commencement of negotiations, it shall present these proposals for approval of the members.
Committee Chair: Katie Hofmann, Fairview/Clifton School
- ♦ **The Grievance Committee**—consisting of the chairperson and up to seven other members shall monitor the processing of teacher complaints and grievances; shall make the initial determination—subject to appeal—in regard to level three grievance appeals (arbitration); shall recommend to the membership policy on grievance-related issues. **Committee Chair: Lateefah Kituku, Bond Hill Academy**
- ♦ **The Educational Policies Committee**—shall develop and propose resolutions and positions on curriculum, teaching methods, and related issues. **Committee Chair: Amy Merz, Quebec Heights School**
- ♦ **The Social Activities Committee**—shall be responsible for the annual cocktail party for all members and implement any other social activities approved by the Executive Council or general membership.
Committee Chair: Kathy Gross, Auxillary
- ♦ **The Member Services Committee**— shall seek the cooperation of assorted businesses and monitor their services. **Committee Chair: Scott Grunder, Walnut Hills High School**
- ♦ **The Human Rights Committee**— shall recommend policy regarding racial, philosophical, gender, and ethnic identity. **Committee Chair: Beverly Pryor-Young, Quebec Heights School**
- ♦ **Retirement Committee**— meets to discuss CPS retirement and STRS retirement issues. **Committee Chair: Gwen Parham, Shroder High School**



Career in Teaching 08-09 Program Summary

During the 08-09 school year, there were two Lead Teacher open application periods. A total of 57 teachers applied. Of the 57 that applied 21 were successful and became credentialed Lead Teachers and 2 have gone on to phase III which is the TES comprehensive evaluation in 09-10. To pass phase III for lead teacher credentialing, applicants must attain advanced or accomplished levels through the Teacher Evaluation System. There were an additional 5 teachers that were credentialed in 08-09 after successfully completing their phase III comprehensive evaluation.

Congratulations to the following newly credentialed Lead Teachers:

Jean Bazeley	Shannon Benion	Tanya Ficklin	Audrey Gover
Carl Grueninger	Richard Hand	Melanie Hart	Daphene Horstmeier
Sandra Johnson	Kimberley Jones-Ross	Michael Jones	Kim Kemen
Christine Knestrict	John Lamping	Sarah Langenderfer	Maria Lee-Alvarez
Lauren McDole	Gloria Ononye	Eileen Pacquette	Shelia Radtke
Clare Sillett	Lillian Sims	Jenny Stehlin	Elizabeth Ventre
Alice Young	Tong Yu		

Updates

Teacher Evaluation System:

CFT is proud to announce that Wellyn Collins has accepted the position as the new TES Facilitator. She comes with an enormous amount of experience and will be a great asset to everyone who will be involved in the TES process!

GE Foundation Grant :

CFT is also very excited to announce that Denise Pfeiffer will be the next lead teacher on the GEF Grant Project Management Team. She transferred to this position from the IST where she had been a high school science coach for the past year. Denise will continue in this lead teacher position for the two remaining years of the grant. John Rowe who has been in this position will become a part of the SCPA staff teaching high school physics. He will be a strong asset to his new school. We know that the GE team will miss him.

Negotiations:

Watch for the CFT survey on bargaining and professional issues in your **home email inbox** or on the New and Improved CFT Web Page in July. If you have not provided CFT with your *home email* address, and would like to receive electronic updates from us, please send an email to cft@cft-aft.org , subject line: Keep me informed.

SAVE THE DATE!

***Come have a Picnic
with CFT/ACPSOP at
the Annual Labor Day
Picnic at Coney Island!***

When: Labor Day 2009,
September 7, 2009

Time: To Be Announced

Where: Coney Island

CFT/ACPSOP will provide food and drink tickets. Swimming and Rides available at reduced rates.

Watch for more information to come!

Cincinnati Federation of Teachers Association of CPS Office Personnel

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