

HOUSE SHOULD EXAMINE CHARTER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, TESTING

OFT Urges Education Committee to Broaden Scope of Hearing



OFT called on the House Education Committee to examine the accuracy of enrollments claimed by charter schools and their widespread failure to test students during hearings that began Nov. 15 on student enrollment and attendance data. House Speaker Jon Husted announced plans for the hearings after questions were raised about the accuracy of student attendance reported by the Cleveland Municipal School District.

OFT recently reported that White Hat Management, Inc., failed to test the vast majority of children it claims are enrolled in its Life Skills charter schools. White Hat is the largest operator of charter schools in Ohio. Earlier this year, the state's largest online charter school, ECOT, acknowledged that it tested only 18 percent of the

students for which it received public tax dollars last year.

"Any discrepancies in attendance or enrollment data should be examined," said OFT President Tom Mooney, "but we hope the Speaker does not plan to ignore these very serious questions about charter schools."

"The state is paying these vendors for services they may not be providing. All schools are required to administer mandatory state tests. Charter schools that fail to provide the contracted services should be closed," Mooney said. "If there is fraud, it should be prosecuted. We urge the House Education Committee to investigate these questions."

Following OFT's report, the Ohio Department of Education confirmed that

White Hat tested only 15 percent of Life Skills students in reading last year, and just 16 percent in math. Ohio's largest urban public school districts all tested more than 95 percent of their students.

OFT urges the committee to investigate:

- The high percentage of students not tested in certain charter schools, especially White Hat Management's Life Skills Centers and virtual schools.
- How charter schools track student enrollment and attendance to ensure accuracy.
- How ODE monitors and audits charter school enrollment and testing to ensure Ohio taxpayers are not paying for ghost students.

JOB SHARE WORKSHOP

CFT will hold its annual informational job share workshop on

January 10, 2006, 4:30 at the CFT Office, 2721 Central Parkway, Suite B (south end of Greater Cincinnati Credit Union building)

Job Share is a process where two properly certificated teachers write a proposal indicating their agreement to share one position at a school. The job share proposal must specify that each teacher will work 50% of the school year. However, teachers have the opportunity to configure their work year or workday to meet family and/or personal needs. Job share proposals must designate and identify how various teaching responsibilities and other working conditions will be shared.

Teachers participating in a job share are paid 50% of their scheduled salary and receive full time benefits. Teachers interested in job sharing must submit a written proposal to their principal for approval.

Members interested in participating in a job share for the 2006-2007 school year, should plan to attend the job share workshop.

Please call 961-2272 to RSVP for the workshop.

Reminder: Register for STRS Ohio E-Mail Updates

To register, go to: www.strsoh.org On the left side of the home page at this site you will find an Online Services list. Double click on Register for E-Mail Updates, provide your e-mail address, first and last name, and the last four digits of your social security, then click SUBMIT. You will receive an e-mail requesting confirmation of your interest in this service to complete the registration.

The STRS Ohio news e-mail list is designed solely to provide timely and accurate news and information about legislation, benefits and other issues affecting the STRS Ohio membership. Information regarding November's meeting will be electronically mailed by Monday the 21st.

To view past news e-mails, go to http://www.strsoh.org/past_news_e-mails/main.htm.



The Teacher's Voice: Curriculum Councils



Cincinnati Federation of Teachers negotiated the right for teachers to organize curriculum councils so teachers can have a voice in shaping their teaching lives. Before these structures existed, teachers' only input on curriculum was to call their curriculum manager. Now, curriculum councils work to "develop and maintain high quality curriculum, assessment instruments and practices, and select and/or create high quality teaching materials. Curriculum councils will provide teachers, through the Federation, for textbook selection committees and for development or revision of curriculum and assessment instruments." (p. 15 CFT contract)

Curriculum council steering committees meet the first Tuesday of the month and the full curriculum councils meet the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Each school must select a voting member to represent their school on each of the councils. Councils this year are asked to

write resolutions which state clearly problems as well as solutions. These resolutions are sent on to the interdisciplinary curriculum council (ICC) where issues will be discussed with Laura Mitchell and/or sent on to Educational Initiatives Panel (EIP). The EIP meets on the 2nd Tuesday and the ICC meets on the 4th Tuesday of each month.

Most curriculum councils post the minutes of their meetings on StaffNet. Councils also send their resolutions to the CFT Educational Policies Committee to be discussed. This committee can send resolutions on to membership meetings for action or information.

One of the first items that the ICC is working on is the role of the councils and Educational Testing Service (ETS) in developing new benchmark assessments and pacing guides.

Every building needs to be represented on each curriculum council so that teachers have a role in shaping their profession.

AFT Africa Aids Campaign

As we approach the holiday season and World AIDS Day on Dec. 1, we want to let you know that our efforts to assist teacher unions in Africa are continuing to produce positive results in the AFT Africa Aids Campaign.

In Kenya, for example, more than 1,300 teachers have been trained as AIDS educators and more than 81,000 teachers have received AIDS prevention education through programs developed with the support of the AFT-Africa AIDS Campaign.

In South Africa, the AFT-Africa AIDS Campaign has received significant new federal funding. Earlier this year, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control approved our request for \$1.5 million in additional funding to provide counseling, care and drug treatment for an additional 800 South African teachers and their spouses infected by the HIV virus. This brings the total federal funding for our AIDS project in South Africa to \$4.5 million, which will be used to provide HIV prevention and care to 350,000 teachers and students along with anti-AIDS drugs for 1,800 teachers and their spouses.

These projects could not have been implemented without the support of AFT members and locals who have raised funds for the AFT-Africa AIDS Campaigns. Together, we have spread the word about the importance of efforts to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS in Africa and helped to generate more than \$5 million in federal funding for

these programs, through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

To read more about how AFT-Africa AIDS Campaign contributions have been used in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Kenya, click here. <http://www.aft.org/partners/africa-aids/recent.htm>

More than \$180,000 has been raised by AFT members through the sale of commemorative pins and wristbands. Click this link to see the order forms. <http://www.aft.org/partners/africa-aids/downloads/OrderForms.pdf>

Please consider making a tax-deductible contribution to the AFT-Africa AIDS Campaign during the holiday season. Each contribution from AFT members makes our efforts to secure federal funding more effective. Please make your check out to the AFT Educational Foundation and send it to:

**AFT-Africa AIDS Campaign
c/o AFT Educational Foundation
555 New Jersey Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20001**

Your support will help teacher unions in Africa develop the programs they need to provide their members with effective tools to protect themselves and their communities.



COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT CORRECTION

Training Increments

We need to call your attention to an oversight in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) as printed. Section 700.c (page 69) should have included this sentence as the last sentence under Training Increments – “No such increments shall be awarded after September 1, 2000.” This sentence was included in the 2000 CBA, no changes were made in the last negotiations concerning this, however the sentence was inadvertently omitted from the 2004 printing.

In short, those members who secured the training increment prior to September 1, 2000, retain that increment but no such increments will be awarded after September 1, 2000.

Many changes were ratified in the most recent negotiations. Members of each bargaining team reviewed at least seven drafts of the new contract language over the summer of 2004. As we caught problems, they were corrected in the next draft yet this oversight somehow remained in the final printing.

Regrets.

SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS SPEAK OUT by Valerie Mendez

There are currently 68 Speech Pathologists serving students in the Cincinnati Public Schools. We want you to know all about us and what we can do to support your student's success.

SLPs have skills that support students in areas that are critical to meeting State Academic Standards such as language comprehension, reading and writing. Communication affects all aspects of the curriculum. To find out more, please ask your building SLP for a handout regarding the SLP role in the public schools.

We support students in many areas of communication across the curriculum: Speech, Listening, Attention, Comprehension, Reading, Writing, Hearing, Stuttering and Voice. In order to do this we need the input and cooperation of teachers, parents and administration in

establishing conditions in schools. ILT's can insure that every SLP has adequate physical space to assess and provide the best service to each and every student.



The Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs) and the Speech Language Pathology Advocacy Committee are working hard to address concerns of parents and teachers regarding SLP service delivery to students with communication disabilities in our district. SLP services for many students are funded through CAFS. The more students serviced at the school level, the more funds we are generated through the CAFS program. We would like to increase the number of SLPs in our district in order to meet the growing demands in our schools. We are asking to have conditions for caseload and environment that will allow us to serve our children with disabilities and intervention students appropriately and effec-

tively.

Did you know that the average caseload of students on an Individualized Education Plan for Speech Pathologists in our district is 65 students? Students who need individual or small group services often do not get what they need. Although we serve intervention students, their numbers are not considered in assigning these caseloads.

SLP's are gathering information to help the District and community to understand what is needed for appropriate/effective service delivery. We have been operating in an old model that simply does not work effectively any more. If you have any individual stories or concerns to share, please contact the SLP Advocacy Committee via email : slp@fuse.net

High School Teachers—Interested in a Study Program in Japan?



In June 2006, the Toyota International Teacher Program will send 20 high school teachers on a fully funded, 10-day cultural/educational study program to Japan. They will learn about the country, its history, culture and key international issues. Teachers will be selected from 10 states:

Colorado, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio and Tennessee.

This program includes a 10-day visit to Japan, all expenses paid, for 20 high school teachers, (travel dates: June 23-July 5). An application and program description can be found at www.iie.org/programs/toyota Applications are due by January 9, 2006.

FOR SALE

Classifieds



FOR SALE

One vacation week at The Imperial Hawaii Resort at Waikiki Honolulu

1 Bedroom/2 Bath with kitchen/balcony overlooking ocean and Honolulu

July 15-22, 2006

Many organized activities

\$950

Contact Susan Fischer 513-688-1550

Too much debt?



We can help.

Most people don't plan to fail, they fail to plan.

- Pay off credit cards and loans efficiently
- Build savings for your children's education
- Provide for your family's financial security

Call today for a free, customized Financial Needs Analysis

Your Local Representative: Laura Elsbrock ★ 1881 Dixie Hwy, Suite 130
Ft. Wright, KY 41011 ★ 859-426-0090

Apartment for Rent



Large first floor apartment in Westwood. Quiet residential street. 2 family Victorian house with a Large fenced yard and front porch. High ceilings, freshly painted rooms, hardwood floors and comfortable steam heat. Washer & dryer on first floor.

Call 513-608-9362

Cincinnati Federation of Teachers Association of CPS Office Personnel

2721 Central Parkway, Suite B
Cincinnati, Ohio 45225
513-961-2272
Local 1520, AFT-OFT / AFL-CIO

Non-Profit Organization
US Postage
PAID
Cincinnati, Ohio
Permit No. 1834