

February/March 2018

Akron Education Association
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AEA *briefs*

THE AKRON EDUCATION ASSOCIATION IS A UNION OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS ADVOCATING FOR SHARED LEADERSHIP AND QUALITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS. WE ARE COMMITTED TO USING OUR VOICES TO MAKE EDUCATING ALL CHILDREN A PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITY. OUR BELIEF IS TO PUT CHILDREN AT THE CENTER OF EDUCATION. WE ENDEAVOR TO WORK TOGETHER WITH PARENTS, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS AND SUPPORT SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION.

Dear Colleagues,

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. It was the age of wisdom. It was the age of foolishness," said Dickens. Some would say those words ring true when looking at what we are currently experiencing within Akron Public Schools. We have many exciting, positive changes happening across our district. College and Career Academies of Akron will be implementing Freshman Academies in all of our high schools next year, with Academies going wall-to-wall in 2019/2020. The LeBron James Family Foundation is partnering with Akron Public Schools to open the I Promise School next year. We have seen an incredible amount of engagement from our families and business community surrounding these initiatives, with announcements regarding new partnerships happening on a regular basis. Even with all of this good news, however, we cannot ignore some of the glaringly concerning challenges which we face.

We cannot build a better and brighter Akron Public Schools for our students and families, while ignoring the cracks in the foundation on which we are building. The issues surrounding student behaviors, specifically student assaults on teachers, are obviously the issue at hand.

As most of you know, the Union filed 22 grievances in October on behalf of members who were verbally or physically assaulted by students. It is AEA's belief that the District is not handling disciplinary referrals involving these assaults against its members in a proper manner. We believe that long-standing negotiated procedures, within the Collective Bargaining Agreement and the District's Code of Student Behavior, are not being implemented by the Office of Student Support Services.

I want to thank all of you for supporting your union and participating in the Safe Schools Rally held at the Board on 2/12/18. I addressed the Board that evening, and my remarks are included in this publication. Since that time, the Board agreed to sit down and review the issues surrounding the grievances. AEA leadership has met with the Board on several occasions and we are hopeful that we can come to an agreement short of arbitration. Should we not, we will move forward with arbitration in May of this year.

We will keep you updated as we move forward with this issue.

Sincerely,

Pat

*Pat Shipe, President
Akron Education Association*

Physical assaults against teachers average 22 a year, spokesman says

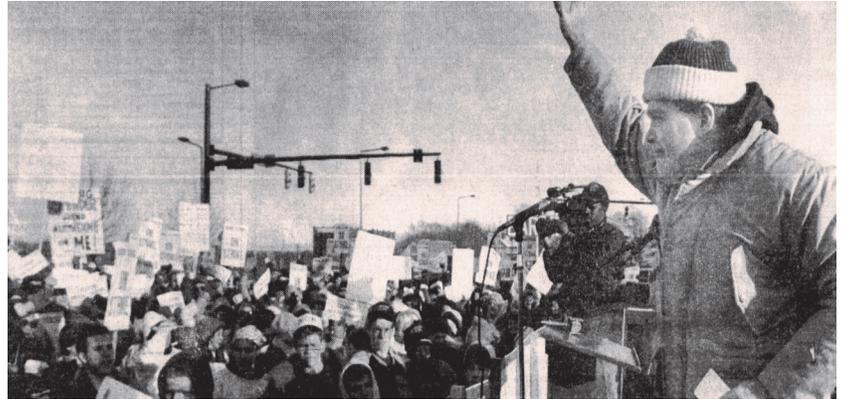
During the Akron teachers strike, the Beacon Journal is attempting to answer the public's questions about the strike and Akron schools. Here are answers to some of the questions phoned



ing a bachelor's degree and the top 100 maximum salaries for teachers holding a master's degree. The minimums ranged from Shaker Heights, at \$21,436 a year, to Twinsburg, at \$18,050.

sponsible for public relations but also handles communications among schools as well as other administrative tasks, such as liaison between employees and insurance companies. Mrs. Robb said

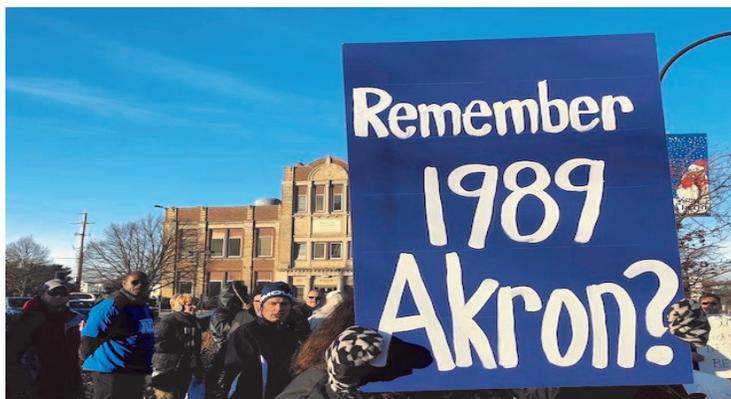
Above, Headlines from the 1989 strike. AEA negotiated language which required mandatory minimums be applied in the case of student assault on teachers.



Above, Akron teachers rally in 1989 for safer classrooms and buildings.



Above, Akron teachers rally in 2018 for safer classrooms and buildings.



Above, AEA Safe Schools Rally, February 12, 2018

TEACHERS RALLY FOR SAFE SCHOOLS



Pat Shipe, President, Akron Education Association

Remarks to the Akron Public School Board of Education, February 12, 2018

Good evening. My name is Pat Shipe, and I am the President of the Akron Education Association. I would like to thank the members of the Board for the opportunity to speak here tonight regarding the very serious issue of classroom and school safety.

In addition to AEA officers, AEA board members, our building representatives and members, we are joined by Stephen Santangelo, Local 1, Service Employees International Union and its members. We are also joined by Sheila Dawkins-Flinn and members of the Ohio Association of Public School Employees, Local 689. Also present is Lola Booker-Brewer and members of the Association of Classified Personnel, and Jerry Yacenczko representing Ohio Association of Public School Employees, Local 778. Both inside and outside this building, are educators, secretaries, custodians, bus drivers, and cafeteria workers. We are joined by educational aides and assistants, office support staff, and PTA members. Joining us are psychologists, speech, physical and occupational therapists. We are also supported here by students, parents, spouses, families and community members.

By being here tonight, we hope to underscore the seriousness of incidents surrounding the safety of students and staff within our classrooms and buildings. Back as far as the late '80s and early '90s, AEA and past Administrations worked in close and respectful cooperation, to negotiate and implement procedures within both the Collective Bargaining Agreement and the District's Code of Student Behavior to ensure that all stakeholders had a voice in applying those practices which would safeguard the well-being of all of our students and staff within our school buildings, and would secure the best possible learning environment for our students. This language specifically addresses procedures which are to be taken by the Administration when either verbal or physical assaults are carried out by students on teachers and staff.

As you are aware, and contrary to recent remarks made by this Administration, the Collective Bargaining Agreement is not a “teacher contract,” but rather a negotiated “shared” document in which both the Board and AEA sign, and agree to adhere.

AEA and our members, with the cooperation of prior administrations, went decades without filing a single assault grievance. Much of that success was due to authentic collaboration between the Board and AEA through the Expulsion Review Committee. This committee was so successful, in fact, that the school board requested more teacher involvement when reviewing expulsion outcomes. We believe that the current Administration however, has taken away our participation in this practice by rarely, if ever, convening this committee and by drastically scaling back our participation in the process.

In addition, AEA not only recognizes the legal and due process rights of students with disabilities afforded by both federal law and the Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act, but we absolutely encourage this Administration to apply those rights to students who assault teachers and staff. We maintain that in many cases this process is not occurring. Unfortunately, in the last several years, we believe the current Administration is not implementing these procedures and, as a result, have left our students and educators exposed to unsafe and untenable teaching and learning environments.

While there is little doubt that tackling the issues surrounding disruptive student behaviors is a multi-layered challenge which should involve students, parents, families, schools, and community, we believe that the balance of burden to solve these issues is being placed squarely, and almost solely, at the doorstep of our educators by this Administration. We feel that this approach, taken by your administration has, quite frankly, become indefensible.

I wish to be very clear. We find ourselves at this point, here tonight, because of serious behaviors committed by a small percentage of students against our educators, and certainly wish to acknowledge the majority of our students who come to school every day, ready to learn. In our opinion, it is quite irresponsible for this Administration to infer that our teachers would speak out in this manner over behaviors which do not rise to the level of a very serious nature. Our teachers have not, and will not, file grievances over simple name calling by students. In our opinion, it is quite disrespectful to infer that they would. It is our belief that these remarks by this Administration is simply an attempt to trivialize this matter and deflect attention off the true urgency of this issue.

That being said, I would like to acknowledge President Bravo’s recent announcement and this Board’s formation of a committee to look at student discipline, school safety and building climate. AEA remains willing to always discuss issues which so greatly impact our students. We must point out however, that AEA’s acknowledgement of the formation of yet another study committee, does not in any way address or end the very serious and dangerous concerns which we are presenting to you tonight.

In our opinion, it is critical that the Board take immediate action to enforce the district’s Code of Student Behavior and the provisions and language negotiated within the Collective Bargaining Agreement, a document which both AEA’s leadership and this Board agreed to and signed. We ask that you now honor that commitment. AEA will always be open to respectful, inclusive communication with this Board in the hope of productive collaboration which positively impacts our students. Absent authentic and realistic efforts, however, we will continue to be proactive and determined gate keepers to protect the well-being and success of our students and educators.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICIES/CONCERNS/ACTIONS

Following are some examples of recent student discipline issues. These incidents are only a few of the assaults and student behaviors reported to AEA this school year.

September, 2017

A fifth grade student pushed another student to the floor. The student then ran toward the teacher and pushed the teacher and yet another student in the process of running. The student was referred to the Board. The assault was termed a "soft" assault and the student was sent back to the building where the assault occurred.

September, 2017

A 10th grade student was fighting with another student. The 10th grade student then pushed the teacher to the floor causing the teacher to hit her head against a concrete wall. The teacher was sent to the emergency room. The student was referred to the board, temporarily removed from the building, and then returned to the building where he remains.

September, 2017

A kindergarten student was hitting a number of students in the classroom. When the teacher asked him to stop, he charged the teacher, hitting, pushing and grabbing. As the teacher tried to calm the student, he continued hitting and pushing the teacher into classroom furniture. When the principal arrived, the student began assaulting the principal.

October, 2017

A primary student wanted to leave the classroom. When the teacher told him he was not to leave the room, he punched her repeatedly, kicked her legs and head butted her in the stomach. When the teacher backed away from him, he began punching, hitting and kicking another student in the room. The teacher placed herself between the two students, and was again punched and kicked.

October, 2017

A 6th grade student became angry in a classroom and began yelling, cursing and flipping desks over onto the floor. The classroom was emptied as the student came after the teacher and shoved him and then elbowed him. The student left the classroom, and then returned and again pushed the teacher three times.

December, 2017

As a teacher was getting a student from his classroom for intervention, he picked up a stool and ran at the teacher, hitting her with the stool. He stated, "this time you've been warned, next time, I'll kill you."

January, 2018

An elementary student was in a physical altercation with another student. The teacher asked the student to move away to a door when he turned and pushed the teacher to the ground. The teacher suffered a laceration on her knee as a result of the fall.

January, 2018

An elementary student was being directed to complete his work. He refused and started to throw class supplies around the room. When the teacher asked him to stop and get back to work, he threw supplies at her and began hitting her numerous times. He then ran to his locker, grabbed his coat and book bag and ran out of the classroom.

Honor Labor!



Your Union At Work For You



UNRESTRICTED ABSENCES

At this time of the school year, we begin to see a rush to use unrestricted absence days. These days include personal days, attendance incentive days and 100+ bonus days. Please be mindful of the following limits on usage of these days so as not to lose the use of your earned days.

AEA Members may NOT use an Unrestricted Absence (AEA Personal & Bonus Days) as follows:

Immediately prior to or after a scheduled holiday and/or vacation period

Members shall be prohibited from taking the Personal Day during the months of May and June.

Unused Personal Days are now eligible for payout in August along with the other unused Unrestricted days. Below are the payment amounts for the unused days.

Payment of \$100.00 for one earned but unused day

Payment of \$300.00 for two (2) earned but unused days

Payment of \$500.00 for three (3) earned but unused days

The number of members taking Unrestricted Absence on any one (1) day shall not exceed fifty (50) district wide. Please note that many AEA members wait until April to use their Personal Day. Personal Days may not be used in May or June. Most days in April, AEA members must be contacted to cancel or reschedule their Personal Day because we have already reached the daily limit of 50.

The use of a day of Unrestricted Absence is further limited during the month of June to a maximum per day of two (2) members per building or 10% of the total building staff, whichever is greater.

MUNIS TRANSFER PROCESS

Any requests for transfer must be submitted electronically through Munis. There will no longer be paper transfer forms available. If you plan to submit a request for transfer, and need help in filling out your electronic form, please be aware that there are four Munis Transfer help workshops available to all members. Help will be available to anyone needing assistance filling out the electronic form. Please note the dates below.

OTT SDC - Room 112	
Wednesday, March 14, 2018	3:00-5:00
Thursday, March 15, 2018	3:00-5:00
Thursday, March 22, 2018	3:00-5:00
Thursday, March 29, 2018	3:00-5:00

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

March 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Intra-Bldg Xfer requests	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9 Principal approves intra-xfer request by 3/10	10
11	12 Job Sharing List Posted	13	14	15 Notify HR of Principal Initiated Xfer of member	16	17
18	19	20 Vacancy List posted	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30 Good Friday Schools Closed	

April 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Withdraw from Job Sharing Team - Mon Before 2nd B Mtg in April	2 Inter-Bldg transfer request due	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 SPRING	10 BREAK	11 SCHOOLS	12 CLOSED	13 	14
15	16 Withdraw Member Initiated Transfer Request	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

May 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Job Sharing Notification to Member	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15 Building Reorganizations Completed	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 Memorial Day Schools closed	29	30	31		

AEA ENDORSES CORDRAY AND SUTTON



CORDRAY SUTTON
★ FOR OHIO ★



The Akron Education Association is proud to endorse Richard Cordray and Betty Sutton for their run as Ohio Governor and Lieutenant Governor respectively. Both candidates embrace strong public education, supportive and adequate funding for Ohio's public schools and a willingness to ensure that Ohio's educators have an authentic "seat at the table" when crafting educational policies.

Both Cordray and Sutton believe in creating an environment in Columbus where educators and public education are both appreciated and supported.



Richard Cordray and Betty Sutton meet with educators at the Akron Education Association.

The candidates believe that accountability and transparency remain elusive in Ohio's charter school program. An overwhelming number of charters continue to fail to educate students. "Our children deserve a world class quality education." said Sutton. Both believe that charter schools should be required to meet the same basic standards related to civil rights, health and safety laws, access and teacher quality, which public schools must maintain. Monumental to this position is a belief that it is time to end for-profit charter schools in the State of Ohio and stop the pay-to-play culture of corruption created by politicians in Columbus.

Many students and families within Akron Public Schools rely on Medicaid for access to health care. The Cordray/Sutton ticket supports Medicaid expansion within Ohio which would prioritize working families and their children. In addition, they oppose block granting state Medicaid funds as it is "a backhanded way to cut not just expansion but access" to much needed health care for Ohio's working families. In addition, both support more opportunities for advanced education, vocational programs, access to community colleges, apprenticeship programs and affordable college to support our students, educators and families.

Of great importance is Cordray and Sutton's support of collective bargaining and workers' rights. Both strongly oppose ending or limiting public and private sector collective bargaining rights. "The right to organize and bargain collectively is fundamental in Ohio and the United States for workers at every level of government. We proudly and strongly advocate for the right to organize and collectively bargain at every level, and would do so as Governor and Lieutenant Governor of the State of Ohio."

The Akron Education Association strongly supports Richard Cordray and Betty Sutton and requests your support and consideration in the next election.



AEA Leadership and teachers meet with Richard Cordray and Betty Sutton to discuss issues which directly impact our classrooms and students.