

**Toledo Federation of Teachers
AFT 250, AFL-CIO
111 S. Byrne Road
Toledo, Ohio 43615
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Data Collection: Bill Harju, Interviewer
Data Source: Francine Lawrence, President
Dal Lawrence, Past President

A. Demographics

Number of Schools: (75)

Elementary 45

Middle/Junior High 8

High School 7

Other 1 Secondary Alternative Learning Center; 14 Specialized Learning Centers

Total number of employees by classification: 4873

Certified: 2800 (Teachers, Librarians, Nurses, Speech Therapists, Special Education Teachers)

Classified: 1,375

Paraprofessionals: 420

Management/supervisory: 364

Executive Management 15

Current enrollment by level: 38,751 Enrollment has been stable between 38-40,000 for the past decade.

Elementary 23,439

Middle/Junior High: 5,350

High School: 9,412

Alternative Schools: 550

Current enrollment by race/ethnicity

Caucasian: 46.7%

Hispanic: 7%

Black/African American: 45.3%

Asian: 0.7%

Native American: 0.1%

Current enrollment Language: Very small ESL programs, centered at one site - students are bused from home school one day per week.

Average Class Size by level:

Primary: 22.2

Upper: 22.2

Middle/Junior High: Unknown

High School: Unknown

Private School enrollments in area/trends:

11,485 students in Private Schools. Primarily in Catholic Parochial Schools.

School District Budget

Total expenditures: \$266,100,000

Expenditures per student: \$5,812.42 - \$6,528.66

B. Significant Background Information:

. Union Structure/Roles

Officers (Names, longevity)

Francine Lawrence - 2 years (Assistant to the President for 23 preceding years)

Vice President - C. J. Washington 5 years

Executive Secretary - Sylvia Washburn - 15 years

Treasurer -Cliff Mallett - 5 years

Sargeant at Arms - (2 positions)

Debbie Sachs - 6 years

Jo Ray Bates - 4 years

Recording Secretary - Ann Kubciz - 6 years

Executive Body

TFT has a Board of Directors of 33 individuals including the officers, 18 directors, a retiree representative, three paraprofessional representatives, and the editor of the TFT Bulletin and the TFT Focus. The directors are elected at large for three year terms with six elected each year. The retired teacher representative is elected annually by retired teachers. The three paraprofessional directors are elected for three year terms by paraprofessionals. In addition, the Board has four appointed members who must run for election sometime during the three-year term or they are out. The Board meets twice per month during the school year, and is on call during the summer. The TFT has a strong president constitution. The Board does approve the Budget and approves Presidential appointments. The Board of Directors can set policy.

Representative Body

The TFT does not have a representative council. The leadership meets with the building representatives who are elected, on a monthly basis to provide a forum for two way information. Each site has its own building committee, and members of the committee are elected. Committee members include the Building Representative, three, five or seven members depending upon the school. The Building Committee is established in the contract, and has responsibility for working with the principal in a quasi-site based decisionmaking role. Building representatives have super seniority after their first year. In schools with one administrator, the Building Representative is the "teacher in charge," and receives a contractually negotiated stipend.

Committees Union:

1. Budget
2. Civil Rights Committee (inactive)
3. Nominations and Elections
4. Political Action
5. Program and Social
6. Retirement & Pensions (Inactive)

Committees: Joint:

1. Labor Management Committee - A joint committee with representatives from the AFL-CIO, the UAW, the TFT, three business people, the superintendent, and the president of the school board. This committee was the result of last round of negotiations, which came close to a strike. During the negotiations, the UAW became involved in the negotiations, and through the UAW influence, this committee was formed. The purpose was to keep parties working together, and to attempt to rebuild trust.
2. Curriculum Committee - The teachers are selected by the Union President, and other members (not principals) appointed by the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. All curriculum issues in the district move through this committee.
3. Health and Insurance Committee - Includes representatives of all the unions and the district. Its purpose is to make decisions about the health and welfare benefits program.
4. Intern Board of Review A joint Union-Management Committee of four representatives appointed by each party, which governs the intern and intervention program.
5. School Improvement Committee A committee composed of the TFT President, the Superintendent and the president of the middle management organization, charged with governance over school improvement initiatives including low performing schools.
6. Staff Development Control Board A committee composed of six teachers, one administrator and co-chaired by the TFT President and the District's Director of Training and Development. The committee is charged with review and approval of all districtwide professional development.

Permanent Union Staff (Names, positions, tenure)

1. 3 Full time clerical staff.
2. The TFT employs no permanent professional staff. The President is released full time, the Assistant to the President is released part time, and the Treasurer and the Director of Contract Administration are released half time. The TFT also employs several members who work part time after school. Positions include a special education person, a political action person, and five grievance processors, a workers compensation and community services representative and a membership services representative. In addition, one person is employed for curriculum and instruction issues and to fill teacher appointments to all district committees and the Vice President is paid to handle community relations and athletics.

Term limits

The TFT has no term limits. The previous president served for 30 years.

Union Partnerships

University of Toledo - The Union works with the University of Toledo on a number of projects. A graduate degree program through the College of Education and the Liberal Arts school to provides for a Master's Degree in Urban Education, with one-half of the hours in Liberal Arts.

Peer Review - The TFT, in concert with Ohio State, University of Toledo and Columbus Education Association (CEA) has produced at the request of the Ohio Department of Education, a training manual for districts interested in developing peer review programs. Toledo initiated peer review in

Partners in Education - TFT is involved with the Chamber of Commerce, Business Representation, the Superintendent of Schools to develop business partnerships with each school in the district.

Center of Science and Industry (COSI): The TFT is working with a branch of the Columbus Center of Science and Industry which has been in the community for three years. The partnership is designed to provide schools with greater access to the museum, and to make the museum more accessible to the schools.

University of Toledo and Bowling Green State University: A National Science Foundation Grant
A partnership grant which permits all elementary teachers in the district to take designated courses, tuition free, and with stipends, to improve hands on, inquiry based science teaching. Science support teachers work with elementary teacher colleagues to improve science instruction and student learning through peer coaching, demonstrations, gathering resources, and in the development of a science action plan for each site.

University of Toledo Humanities Institute - Initiated in 1992 by Professors at UT and the TFT, brings the humanities into the high schools. Two Professors in the liberal arts department and TFT members head up the project, which began with a \$500,000 start up grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Teachers attend regular sessions with liberal arts faculty and nationally known speakers are brought in. Readings are assigned and follow up discussions conducted. The program also brings in, to each high school, nationally known jazz artists who play and talk to the students.

Principal means of communication with members:

TFT News Focus A professionally printed quarterly newspaper (See attachment 4)

TFT News Bulletin A newsy bulletin printed and distributed on a more frequent basis. (See attachment 5)

Membership Engagement

Contract Surveys - The TFT regularly distributes a contract survey to its membership, then publishes a document for the members that reports on the results (See Attachments 10, 11, 12)

Significant recent budget developments (cutbacks, infusions) if any:

The Toledo school district has problems similar to those in Cincinnati where the district was required to cut \$20 million for the 1999-2000 school year. The problems arise from the state of school funding in Ohio, where the Ohio Supreme Court has ordered the state to develop a new funding method for schools.

In order to understand this district, what is it necessary to know/understand?

The Toledo Community is heavily Democratic. Labor plays a major role in the community, as does the Catholic church and the local newspaper, the Toledo Blade. Labor played a major role in the last round of negotiations, with UAW officials actually sitting in at the bargaining table as peacemakers, pushing the parties to settle and insisting on the creation of the labor management committee mentioned above.

Labor-management relationship:

Relationships were very collaborative between TFT and the District from 1981 until the fall of 1997, when a new superintendent was hired. This individual, who was originally from Toledo, has caused the relationship to revert back to an adversarial one resulting in the near strike over the 1998 negotiations. Since the 1998 settlement, however, the relationship has been on the mend through the intervention of the above mentioned labor-management committee. Only recently has communication been re-established between the Superintendent and the TFT President.

Key crises:

A voluntary group of people in Toledo formed an organization called "The Corporation for Effective Government. The group, primarily representing the business community, began as an anti-tax group, and has evolved into a group that does efficiency studies of various government agencies. The group issued a report in 1990, blasting the school district, claiming that the union was too powerful, that the union ran the district and that the union contract was too strong. As a result, the then existing superintendent was forced to retire and a new person was employed, the first African American superintendent in the district. This superintendent refused to fight with the Union, as had been his mandate from the school board. As a result, in 1997, the current superintendent was brought in who determined to deliver an anti-union campaign.

Measured outcomes - test scores, college acceptance rates (1997-98 & 1998-99)

Overall, student achievement is improving, and among the eight large Ohio cities, Toledo is either first or second in each category of measurement (see Attachments 14, 15) In recent years, the District has worked at redirecting the curriculum so that teachers are teaching in content areas that are measured by the test.

Current Superintendency:

Name: Merrill Grant, EdD

Background:

Taught in Toledo in the late 1960's, became a principal, moved to the "Executive Director" of elementary schools, then moved to Green Bay, Wisconsin; to Tucson, Arizona and finally, to Pajaro Valley, California as superintendent. Eventually, he came back to Toledo, first as an elementary principal and now, as the Superintendent.

Tenure:

Grant has been the Superintendent for 3 years. He has announced his retirement as of June 30, 2000.

Management team:

The District has been subdivided into seven mini-districts each with a "School Improvement Leader" in charge. There is also a Deputy Superintendent who runs the district for the superintendent; an Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, and an Assistant Superintendent for Planning and Evaluation. The competency of the seven "School Improvement Leaders" is mixed, resulting in a series of unfair labor practices charges filed with the State Employee Relations Board, all of which have been decided in the Union's favor.

Other employee unions (Name, approximate unit membership, relationship to teachers)

Secretarial/Clerical - AFSCME

Maintenance/Bus drivers: - AFSCME

Food services: AFSCME

Principals:

All management, psychologists, counselors are members of the Toledo Association of Administrative Personnel. They are affiliated with the American Maritime Union, an AFL-CIO union that represents the personnel who work on great lakes ships.

Paraprofessionals:

Paras are members of TFT, and are represented by TFT under a separate contract.

Status of contract:

Expiration of current agreement: November, 2000

Agency fee:

Yes. Dues are \$505 in 1999-2000. Approximately 25 agency fee payers pay the same as dues paying members, and may request an annual rebate of that portion of the dues that are not related to the collective bargaining mission of the union.

Binding arbitration: Yes

Strikes: Two strikes, one in 1970, a second in 1978.

Unfair labor practices:

The TFT has filed several Unfair Labor Practices against the district. Most recently, a charge was filed alleging that the district has created new positions and unilaterally set the wage rate contrary to law, which TFT successfully resolved after a decision was issued by the State Employment Relations Board.

Significant litigation:

TFT has participated in a major court case in the late 80's with the National Right to Work Committee over the agency fee provisions, particularly around the issue of the amount of the non-collective bargaining rebate and the rebate procedure.

Approximate number of grievances per year:

120-150 grievances filed each year. 6-10 cases go to arbitration annually.

Union role in community:

Political endorsements:

The TFT endorses candidates for office for school board, city council, mayor, county commission, judges, and state legislature. The process includes a recommendation by the TFT President to the Board of Directors. If the Board of Directors approves, then the endorsement is submitted to the Building Representatives who must approve the recommendation. Endorsement means financial contributions, legwork, phone banking, etc. Depth of the commitment depends on the circumstances. School Board members receive the most significant assistance. TFT raises funds from voluntary contributions of members through payroll deduction.

Community engagement

TFT participates in the AFL-CIO "Union Cities" program, which is an effort to develop coalitions around issues, and to bring greater coordination around union organizing issues throughout the community.

C. Education Reform

Union posture:

Pro/anti reform:

The TFT has had a history of support for school reform, and has rejected, for years, the concept that schools should be run like factories. The Union has conducted a long-term effort to professionalize teaching and to change the way decisions are made in schools. The reforms which TFT engages in and supports are around professionalization of teaching and standards for teaching.

Membership attitudes

See Attachment 12, Your Response to Contract '98

Financial commitment

The TFT has a specific line item ranging from 4-5,000 per year on the intern program, and spends additional funds on professional development and other reform activities.

Reform elements in contract: (See Attachment 1, 1997-2000 Agreement)

1. Article I, Recognition, Definitions, Majority Rights, Agency Shop, Building Privileges, Section E-3, provides a process for school sites to waive the collective bargaining agreement, and to develop a collateral agreement for that school site.
2. Article XVIII. Evaluation of First and Second Year Teachers, Four -Year Contract Teachers and other Certificated Personnel. This article establishes certain provisions regarding the peer review and evaluation programs of the district.
3. Article XXV. School Intervention Team Establishes the possibility of a joint Union-District intervention team to work with low performing schools.

4. Article XXVI. Development of Instructional Programs - Committees Includes language establishing joint curriculum committee, prohibits district from implementing new educational programs without consulting with the union.
5. Article XXVIII. Staff Development Establishes a "Staff Development Control Board," to oversee staff development in the district, and other provisions related to staff development.
6. Appendix Q - The Toledo Plan Intern-Intervention-Evaluation Makes modifications to the Toledo Peer Review Process.

Organization/structure for reform:

Central coordinating structure:

There is a joint School Improvement Committee composed of the Superintendent, the President of the Union and the President of TAAP (Principals) group. Depending on the issue, others are invited to participate. The committee operates on a consensus basis, and was designed to review all changes in the instructional program of the district. The current superintendent initially downplayed the committee when he learned that it operated by consensus, but after the recent contract settlement, has begun to work with the committee again.

District office structure:

The Assistant Superintendent for Planning and Evaluation is supposed to oversee the instructional program.

Union structure:

The Union is partner with the district in school district and/or university reform initiatives including 60+ teachers on special assignment as catalysts for change.

Responsibility (within union - leaders? Staff?)

The President of TFT has the responsibility for monitoring and recommending TFT policy and activity on reform.

Organization around standards

Implementation:

There is a course description for every level, and a set of academic pupil performance objectives for each course of study. Curriculum alignment has occurred in core academic subjects.

Role of union:

Recruitment and appointment of the teacher members of all district committees.

Development of standards:

The performance objectives for each course of study were developed by teacher committees. Two teachers are released full time to work with the district curriculum department to align the curriculum, the standards, the course of study, and the textbook with the statewide proficiency outcomes and assessments.

Training/Staff Development

The staff development was organized by the Central Administration, and was not adequate.

Professional Development

Program description & Operation:

The District has a professional development committee composed of a majority of teachers who are appointed by the Union and called the "Staff Development Control Board.. All professional development that is district-wide must be approved by the committee. Individual schools may create independent professional development. Union building representatives and committees participate and have approval authority. During the school year, there is a catalog of courses offered through the Staff Development Control Board, and employees can voluntarily participate. Feeder patterns can also develop plans for professional development, however, approval comes, in these cases, from the assembled Federation Building Representatives within the pattern. Worthy of note, courses relating to the union, the contract, how to become a union representative and other similar courses are offered as part of the district-wide program. Employees who complete a course are provided with "professional growth credits," which apply toward salary advancement.

Relationship to union:

The program is fully negotiated, and the union is a full partner to all staff development in the district. Many courses are taught by teachers, including classroom management courses at the University of Toledo.

Relationship to colleges/universities:

Colleges and Universities that are interested in offering courses through the district staff development program must submit them to the Professional Development Committee.

Union structure/organization:

No specific structure, since the union is such a dominant element in the district-wide training program. In fact, a substantial number of the training programs offered through the district are conducted in the TFT Office.

Low performing Schools

Program description:

A section of the contract provides for a joint team of union and district representatives to intervene in low performing schools (See Attachment 1, Article XXV). Continual discussions between the District and the Union have ensued over how to deal with low performing schools. An agreement is being formulated which has several elements: 1) a three year pattern; 2) a process to identify schools; 3) invite the Building Committee and the principal to meet with the School Improvement committee; 4) Develop a school improvement plan to address the performance problems. After a period of time, if the school does not improve, one option would be to close the school. (See Attachment 13, Identifying and Assisting Low Performing Elementary Schools)

Relationship to union:

The plan is not operational at this point, but the parties are working collaboratively on its development.

Personnel - Transfers

Personnel issues are not yet resolved.

Written documents:

See Attachment 13, Identifying and Assisting Low Performing Elementary Schools.

Incentives for school improvement - measures to raise student achievement or teacher quality:

No concrete incentives.

Peer review:

Program description:

Toledo has been the pioneer in peer evaluation and review throughout the United States, with a program that has been in effect since 1981, and the Toledo program has served as a model for other districts throughout the nation. The Toledo program is governed by an "Intern Board of Review" composed of five union and four management representatives, with the chairpersonship rotating annually between the parties. The Board of Review recruits and assigns consulting teachers, manages the program's budget, and accepts or rejects the evaluation recommendations of consulting teachers.

Consulting teachers are assigned to new teachers, referred to as interns. The consulting teacher works with the intern during the first two semesters of employment, and at the conclusion of the period, conducts an evaluation of the intern which includes a recommendation regarding continued employment. The recommendation is submitted to the review board, and rejection of the recommendation requires six votes. Consulting teachers also work with non-probationary teachers who have been identified as performing in a way so unsatisfactory, that improvement or termination is imperative. Either the Principal or the Union Building Committee may refer a teacher to intervention. There is no arbitrary time limits on the length of the intervention. Instead, the consultant determines when intervention ends, and files a status report with both school management and the union. (See Attachments 6, 7 - Intern, Intervention, Evaluation)

Issues:

The Principal can refer or the Union Building Committee or both can refer a non-probationary teacher to the peer review intervention process or a joint referral may occur. Prior to the current agreement, the principal and the Union Building Committee were required to jointly refer. The Union Building Committee has initiated more referrals than the Principal.

School based management/decisionmaking related to school improvement

Program structure:

No formalized school based management system, but there is a Federation Building Committee that has the authority to advise the principal, and then has specific authority under the contract. (See Attachment 19, Rights and Responsibilities of the Building Representative and Committee...)

Site budgets:

Currently, union members have no specific authority regarding school site budgets, though the school improvement plan process does provide some funds that are under control of the site. In addition, there are other types of plans, for example the Title I program funds, and a local Technology Fund requires that the Federation Building Committee sign off on the budget.

Contract/rule waivers:

There is a provision in the Contract to provide for waivers of the contract.

Other major reform efforts (Description, scope, relationship to union)

School Consultation Program -

Three teachers on call full time, one elementary, one secondary, one special education. A teacher may contact one of the three who may provide a variety of assistance. Services provided by these teachers include:

- 1) Classroom management
- 2) Teaching procedures/practices
- 3) Resources
- 4) Referrals

While not necessarily designed for teachers in trouble, most of these services are provided to those with problems and challenges. All contacts with these three teachers are voluntary and confidential. The three teachers are selected jointly by the union and management. (See Attachment 9 - Be your best every day - with the School Consultation Program)

Career Ladder

The district has a unique career ladder. The first level is the "commendation" level. To qualify for the first level, a teacher must have at least five years of experience. A rather rigorous process is in place to qualify for advancement to commendation. First, an application that includes a writing sample, references, an observation, a portfolio and a personal interview. The application is scored, and the score must be above a certain breakpoint. If accepted, then the candidate goes through a full year, called the induction year, where the candidate is observed 9 time- three times each by three peer review teachers. A composite score is developed, and if successful the candidate reaches the commendation level. This level provides a stipend, and the teacher must perform certain tasks for the district approved by the Career Ladder Board of Governors. There are three additional levels with higher stipends. Each level requires an increased amount of work for the district, and results in higher amounts of compensation. The program is under the purview of a Career Ladder Board of Governors composed of six union members, three administrators and the deans of two local schools of education.

This program has been in place since the 1988-89 school year, and approximately 130 teachers have applied, and about 40 teachers are currently at various steps on the ladder.

The program is a source of contention among some members, however the leadership of the union feels that it is worthwhile. Funds for the program come from the state, through special legislation and are not from the local budget. (See Attachment 8, "A Career Ladder for Teachers")

Attachments:

1. 1997-2000 Agreement, Toledo Federation of Teachers - Toledo Public Schools
2. Constitution - Toledo Federation of Teachers
3. Toledo Federation of Teachers Budget 1999-2000
4. News Focus - Toledo Federation of Teachers - Summer, 1999
5. TFT News Bulletin January 25, 1999
6. Intern Intervention Evaluation
7. The Toledo Plan: Intern Intervention Evaluation
8. A Career Ladder for Teachers
9. Be your best every day - with the School Consultation Program

10. Contract '88 Questionnaire
11. Your Response to Contract '88
12. Your Response to Contract '98
13. Identifying and Assisting Low Performing Elementary Schools
14. The Blade: "City tops urban 8th-grade test scores."
15. The Blade: "Students improve scores on state tests."
16. TFT Teaching Materials Inventory
17. Toledo Public Schools Career Development Plan - Performance Criteria
18. TFT Building Representative and Building Committee Election Procedures
19. "The Rights and Responsibilities of the Building Representative and Committee..."
20. TFT Composite Administrator's Performance Evaluation