

# *New Member Booklet*

## *2008-2009*



# *Valley Central Teachers' Association*

*There are no greater advocates for children and  
education than teachers and teacher unions.*



*2007-2008 New Members — VIP Photo*

## Welcome to the VCTA!

**Y**ou have joined a great union and are now a member of the AFL-CIO, the AFT (Local 3076), NEA, and the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT; Local 14-135). NYSUT is a federation of more than 1,200 local unions representing 585,000 members. These national and state affiliations are a part of your membership in the Valley Central Teachers' Association (VCTA).

The Valley Central Teachers' Association (**VCTA**) is your local union and was founded in the early 1960's as the bargaining unit representing teachers. The secretaries joined in the 1970's and the paraprofessionals joined in the early 1990's. The Executive Council and Building Representatives are the governing body of the Association (see pg.4). Executive Council meetings are held each month of the school year with your building representatives and are also open to the general membership. The first meeting this year will be held September 9, 2008 in the HS Professional Library at 4:00pm.

We are proud of our accomplishments and the progress we have made on a local level, especially with regard to our relationship with management. We work to maintain a fair, professional relationship with administration. This relationship benefits our members and the children in our charge.

As members of the AFL-CIO, AFT, NEA and NYSUT we encourage our members to purchase union made products and services and ask for all to support our brothers and sisters in the union movement. As a member of the VCTA, you are never alone when facing adversity. You have joined an Association of over 450 teachers, 22 secretaries, 130 paraprofessionals and 180 retirees who proudly stand beside you. You are connected to us and your actions have a ripple effect upon every other member in this union.

The VCTA has a "Liaison" program for our new members. There is a new member liaison in each building who is a veteran VCTA member. This person will be another "go-to" person, along with your building representatives and union officers, concerning union and building issues. You may bring to your liaison any questions or concerns that arise regarding your classroom, your building or your union. If you are not contacted by your VCTA liaison by September 30th, please contact VP Rich Steger (rsteger@vcmail.ouboces.org; VM 5648) or VP Patti Lunden (plunden@vcmail.ouboces.org; VM 7664). In addition to these resources, each new member is assigned a VCTA approved mentor that will assist you throughout your initial teaching years.

## Putting Children Where?

**S**even year ago, the VCTA adopted the motto "Putting Children Center" as part of our logo. You may think..., "Putting Children Where?" The more familiar phrase is "Putting Children First". This was even on a banner at Central Office. Of course, "first" denotes a place value—children first, then who is second? Certainly whoever occupies last place feels badly. No one likes to be in last place. The image of putting children center eliminates any place value. All members of the Valley Central Teachers' Association—teachers, secretaries, paraprofessionals—are part of a circle surrounding our children. In the center of the circle, the children are our focus, *the center* of our attention and efforts. And while this is the motto of the VCTA, the circle can be expanded to include all the other groups in our district—custodians, cafeteria workers, parents, Board of Education and community members, district and building administrators, central office staff and superintendents. That is the beauty of a circle as opposed to a line. A circle can be expanded by taking a few steps back and welcoming someone to stand shoulder to shoulder with us. We can look across the circle and see other members of our team. With a line, someone stands either in front, or back of you... there is always a line leader the rest of the line is dependent upon.

Putting Children Center: It is a good motto to recall throughout the school year. Children are our focus, not test scores. Children are our focus and their well-being and education are the driving force behind our decisions both inside and outside of the classroom. Children are the reason that the VCTA will take on political battles, the reason we protect the rights of our members and the integrity of our contracts. The children are the reason that we watchdog building conditions, working conditions and learning environments. We stand in a circle, member to member, no first place, no last...keeping our children in the center so that they may continue to learn and grow, laugh and play, think and reason. One day they will be ready to leave their place in the center and step into the circle so that the cycle of excellence in education that has been a part of the history of the VCTA continues into its future.

## Here to Help: Meet Your VCTA Officers



**President Tim Brown, High School, Ext. 7613, [tbrown@vcmail.ouboces.org](mailto:tbrown@vcmail.ouboces.org):** Tim has been VCTA President for ten years. Tim oversees all VCTA committees and activities, and is our liaison to Central Office and NYSUT. He co-chairs the Grievance Committee with Secretary Laurie Councill, represents our concerns to politicians through the Committee of 100 and serves as treasurer for the Orange County Teachers Association. Tim has been an active member of the negotiating team during our last four Contracts (Collective Bargaining Agreements). Tim is one of our elected delegates to the NYSUT RA and has served on several RA committees. He teaches Health at the High School. This is his 23rd year at VC.



**VP Rich Steger, Walden, Ext. 5648, [rstege@vcmail.ouboces.org](mailto:rstege@vcmail.ouboces.org):** Rich has been a VCTA Vice President for ten years. He is in charge of Elementary issues, as well as Health and Safety issues. He shares the responsibilities of Opening Day, New Members, Health Insurance, and Community Outreach with co-Vice President Patti Lunden. Rich serves on the District Professional Development Team, Annual Professional Performance Review Committee, and Code of Conduct Review Committee. Rich was also on the negotiating team during our last for our last two Contracts. He is also one of our elected delegates to the NYSUT RA. Rich teaches P.E. at Walden Elementary School. This is his 15th year at VC.



**VP Patti Lunden, High School, Ext.7664, [plunden@vcmail.ouboces.org](mailto:plunden@vcmail.ouboces.org):** This is Patti's third year as VCTA Vice President. Patti was the editor of the VC ECHOES for seven years which won 23 awards and has also served as VCTA Secretary. She is in charge of Secondary issues, and represents the VCTA on the Community Advisory Budget Committee for the District. Patti is also in charge of issues regarding Payroll and Human Resources. In addition to the shared VP duties, Patti also shares the responsibility of Maternity issues with Secretary Laurie Councill. Patti serves on the District Professional Development Team, Annual Professional Performance Review Committee, and Code of Conduct Review Committee. Patti is also an elected representative to the NYS Teachers' Retirement System and one of our elected delegates to the NYSUT RA. Patti teaches Art at the High School. This is her 22nd year at VC.



**Secretary Laurie Councill, Middle School, Ext. 6646, [lcouncill@vcmail.ouboces.org](mailto:lcouncill@vcmail.ouboces.org):** Laurie has been the VCTA Secretary for eight years. She is in charge of Record Keeping, Social Activities, and shares Maternity issues with VP Patti Lunden. Laurie co-chairs of the Grievance Committee with President Tim Brown, serves on the District Professional Development Team and has represented the VCTA at the Committee of 100. Laurie is also one of our elected delegates to the NYSUT RA. Laurie teaches music and is the music department chair at the Middle School. This is her 23rd year at VC.



**Treasurer Erin Davis, Berea/Middle School, Ext. 1636, [edavis@vcmail.ouboces.org](mailto:edavis@vcmail.ouboces.org):** Erin has been with VC since 1982 and became a building representative in 2000. Erin is in charge of accounting and membership reporting and also serves as the secretary of the VCTA Benefit Trust. She is also an elected delegate to the NYSUT RA. Erin teaches physical education and has taught at every level throughout her career. She has also coached volleyball, soccer, and basketball. She is involved with Project Linus and her classes help make blankets/quilts for this cause. Erin has also completed three marathons and two century (100 miles) bicycle rides. This is her 27th year at VC.

**The VCTA Office is located in the High School.  
Our Phone/Fax Number is: 845-457-5899**

## Teacher Unit Building Representatives

<u>Berea</u>	<u>Maybrook</u>	<u>Middle School</u>	<u>High School</u>
Donna Clark Lisa Daily Robin Sinclair-Scott Maura Crown, Alt.	Linda Draughn Donna Lloyd	Chris Arndt Sonya Berger Mary Bleau Jo-Ann Capozella Shawn Carrozza Tammy Coleman Joe Collins	Bob Jurgens Peter Meisel Christine Mello Antoinette Oakes Diane Ruggles Jennie Sexton Keith Sexton Carolyn Zayas Lisa Aguilera, Alt. Kerri Marino, Alt. Meghan Riley, Alt. Melissa Verlin, Alt.
<u>East Coldenham</u>	<u>Montgomery</u>		
Sandy Carroll Mary Devitt Cathi Heil Holly Bacon, Alt.	Brian Ackley Gail Nozell Melinda Sulzbach		
	<u>Walden</u>		
	Janet Malloy Mary Ellen Mangiamele Lori Meyerson Patricia Joy, Alt.		

### VCTA Executive Council Meetings also include the following representatives: .

#### Secretarial Unit

Pamela Cunningham

#### Paraprofessionals Unit

Kathy Lennon

#### Retirees

Kevin McFadden  
Arline Friedman

#### NYSTRS Representatives

Patti Lunden  
Timothy Brown

#### Dental/Optical Trust

Lisa Coney

#### Editor

Meghan Riley

Executive Council meetings are held monthly and are open to the general membership.

*Want to know the date of the next Executive Council Meeting?  
Looking for Curriculum Resources?  
For information about, well... EVERYTHING,  
Check out the VCTA web site at:*

# www.vcta.net





## Getting to Know Our Community

The Valley Central School District was formed in 1959 when the three main villages in the District decided to consolidate their schools. Montgomery Elementary, Maybrook Elementary and Walden Elementary were the former K-12 buildings for each village. These three villages are all in the Town of Montgomery. The Valley Central School District also includes children from the Towns of Crawford, Newburgh and Wallkill. The river that runs through the district is the Wallkill River which flows north.

Like most Orange County communities, the Valley Central community has largely, until the recent past, been an agricultural community. But since the 1980's farmers have been selling their land to developers and housing tracts now sit in former cow fields. In its hey-day, Montgomery was known for its dairy farms, Walden for its knife factories and Maybrook was the transportation hub of the Northeast. Montgomery was also the original home of OC Choppers, made infamous by the Discovery Channel program, American Chopper. The Teutels' and many of their employees are VC graduates and still live in the community. Cardinals pitcher Matt Morris is also a VC alumni.

The best way to understand a person is to walk a mile in their shoes. The best way to understand your students is to get to know where they live. Take a ride around the district, and support its businesses. Ask questions and talk with teachers in your buildings—of the 900 diverse people VC employs, over ½ live in the district. Talking to these people will help you gain a better understanding of your students and this community—helping you to better serve both.



*The Clock is in the Village of Montgomery, Ward's Bridge crosses the Wallkill River.*



*Municipal Square and the Josephine-Louise Public Library in the Village of Walden.*



## Why Should YOU give to VOTE/COPE?

Your PAC (Political Action Committee) is called VOTE/COPE - the Voice Of Teachers in Education, the Committee On Political Education.

Your PAC helps influence the laws made in Washington, Albany, and in your own backyard.

In Washington, VOTE/COPE helps prevent the passage of anti-public education measures like vouchers and tuition tax credits. VOTE/COPE helps elect pro-union, pro-public education Senators and members of Congress.

In Albany, VOTE/COPE focuses lawmakers' attention on increased aid to public education, improved pensions, and the elimination of retirement tier inequities. For example, you only have to contribute 3% to your retirement for the first ten years of your career due to legislation that was passed with the help of VOTE/COPE. It keeps tenure laws intact as well as legislation like the Triborough Amendment, which continues the terms of expired contracts until successor agreements are negotiated.

And back home, VOTE/COPE supplies the resources necessary to run campaigns for school budget initiatives and elections of pro-public education candidates for school board races. In fact, the single greatest category of VOTE/COPE expenditures comes in the form of rebates to locals for these purposes.

When we speak with one voice, we make a difference. Your PAC gives you the clout you need to strengthen the teaching profession.

Smaller class sizes, greater investments in technology and in capital improvements, higher standards and the resources to achieve them are all a part of VOTE/COPE. You should be a part of VOTE/COPE too.



*~Obtained from the Internet,  
Courtesy of the Rochester Teachers Association*

**VOTE/COPE Solicits and Accepts  
Only Voluntary Contributions.  
The VCTA suggests \$50 per year  
as a teacher unit member's  
minimum contribution.**

**CONTRIBUTIONS OR GIFTS TO VOTE/COPE  
ARE *NOT* TAX DEDUCTIBLE.**

VOTE-COPE forms are available on the web at:

<http://www.vcta.net/votecope.htm>



### VCTA Dues



⇒ Dues are deducted in 10 payments beginning with the first paycheck in September and ending with the second paycheck in January.



⇒ Dues are scaled according to salary for part-time employees.



# **Know Your Collective Bargaining Agreement**

Once you were hired by the District and signed your Contract Salary Agreement, you were bound to the Collective Bargaining Agreement, also known as the Contract, negotiated between the VCTA and the District. You should definitely put this document at the top of your required reading list. Ignorance of the contract does not excuse anyone from its terms. If you have any questions, contact one of your building representatives.



## **A Quick Index to Your Contract (Article and Section)**

**Buy-Out, Health Insurance: XXV**

**Chaperones: XXI**

**Child Care Leave: XXII–H**

**Coaching: Appendix B, XX–B**

**Conferences–Parent/Teacher: XIII**

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## **Work Day**

Each building sets its schedule for the work day. This schedule is monitored by the VCTA President and Vice Presidents. Every member is entitled to a plan period that is free and clear of supervisory duties except in the case of emergencies, as well as an uninterrupted lunch. Teachers may leave the school building during their lunch period, except in the event of fire drill or emergencies. All members are expected to arrive at school on time; habitual lateness is an embarrassment to our professionalism and the VCTA does not encourage administration to tolerate such behavior. Likewise, it is expected that all members will be at school through the close of the school day. There is no such thing as “comp time” in teaching. You are expected to be at school at the beginning of each day and stay through the end of the day. You may choose to invest time before and after school but this does not excuse you from any part of the school day. On the rare occasion that you may be late to school or need to leave early, be sure to contact your building administration immediately so there is no misunderstanding of your intention. Members are contractually obligated to attend one faculty meeting per month and one department, team, or grade/subject level meeting per month. Additionally, new employees in their probationary period, are required to attend the 10 mentoring classes per year (30 hours per school year) as a condition of their employment.

## **If you have any questions about your schedule, please contact:**

**Elementary Level Members— VP Rich Steger, VM 5648**

**Secondary Level Members —VP Patti Lunden, VM 7664**



## Certification Requirements

You are responsible for knowing your certification requirements. Speak directly to State Ed. or contact O/U BOCES. **You must also keep track of your 175 hours (those certified after February 2004).** *Unit members needing to complete the 175 hour requirement shall not receive any salary adjustment for in-service courses applied to that requirement (Article XIV,C). However, approved graduate course shall earn salary adjustments as per (Article XIX, H).*

## LOSS OF CERTIFICATION IS GROUNDS FOR IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL WITHOUT PAY !

## What is Tenure?

Achieving tenure is one of the goals of every new teacher. It signifies the end of your probationary period. It is awarded after 3 years of intense scrutiny regarding every aspect of your teaching ability and professionalism. *(It is one of the longest and most demanding probationary periods of any career field. )* Why is tenure so important? It prevents you from being arbitrarily or capriciously dismissed. For example, it prevents a school district from firing a competent teacher so that it can hire someone else who may have better personal or political connections. Tenure does not guarantee you a job for life. Dismissal can take place for misconduct, incompetence, insubordination, physical or mental disability, neglect of duty, and lack of a permanent teaching certificate. Furthermore, until you receive tenure, you can be relieved of your teaching position at any time. *Tenure enables administration to retain only those teachers who have proven that they are professional, dedicated and highly skilled educators.*

Tenure is not transferable from one school district to another. However, a teacher who has acquired tenure in one district within the state and moves to another need only serve a two-year probationary period, rather than three, before being eligible for tenure in the new district.

## Evaluations

With intense scrutiny, come evaluations. According to the Collective Bargaining Agreement, non-tenured teachers and teachers with transitional or initial certificates will have annual evaluations based on a minimum of three observations per year. Observations may be announced or unannounced. The first observation for **first year teachers** will be announced and will take place before the end October. **First, second and third year teachers must be observed at least once during the second semester.** Observations include a pre-observation meeting for scheduled observations and a post-observation meeting for both announced and unannounced observations.

You may also be evaluated by a portfolio review which may include a video of teaching, sample lesson plans, samples of students' work, student assessment instruments or reflection of classroom performance. Portfolios may be previewed with an administrator and/or supervisor.

Initial observations should include suggestions to help improve your teaching. Pay heed to these suggestions; discuss them during your post-observation conference and incorporate them into your teaching. Ask for help from your administrator or from a colleague. Should you receive an observation that you feel is unfair, contact a building representative immediately so that a follow-up meeting can be planned to discuss the situation with administration.



## **Health Insurance Fast Facts:**

- ⇒ As a member of the VCTA, you are entitled to Medical Coverage for you and your dependents or a buy-out of benefits if you have been provided comparable coverage through a spouse.
- ⇒ **All teachers contribute 5% (deducted before taxes) to their medical coverage choice—Article XXV .**
- ⇒ The District provides the Orange Ulster School District Health Plan which is a self-funded provider. The OUSDHP is a combination indemnity/PPO plan, which means that you can either go “in-network” and pay a co-pay or go “out of network” and pay 20% of “reasonable and customary charges”\* as well as plan deductibles. *Important Note: Remember, this does not always mean that you only pay 20% of the total cost. Depending upon what the insurance co. considers “r&c,” you could end up paying a much larger percentage.*
- ⇒ As a VCTA member, you may use any health insurance company you wish. The VCTA has worked with three companies to offer alternative medical insurance: MVP, Empire Direct HMO, and GHI HMO. Be sure to visit representatives from each company on the first day of school at our Member Benefits Display.
- ⇒ You have the right to change your coverage choice once a year, however you must submit your application to Central Office by the established date. This information is usually distributed in mailboxes.
- ⇒ Need Help? Contact VP Rich Steger or VP Patti Lunden for assistance with all insurance issues.

### **The Comparability Clause**

- ⇒ Members whose spouse **provides** comparable coverage must take the District Buy Out (\$2000/year) as long as the insurance coverage and out-of-pocket costs are comparable. **Comparable** means equal or better than the coverage provided by the district.
- ⇒ Comparability is determined by a side by side comparison of the two coverages. You must provide the plan details of your spouse’s coverage including any premiums your spouse pays for coverage.
- ⇒ If you find yourself having to review your spouse’s insurance with the District, you are **strongly urged** to have either VP Rich Steger or VP Patti Lunden with you. It is the VCTA’s goal to protect your right to have the best coverage available for you and your family.
- ⇒ If your status changes, (e.g., marriage, spouse’s coverage changes) you may be entitled to change your coverage/selection (i.e., utilize the District’s sponsored health insurance or opt for the buyout).

### **Dental and Optical Coverage**

- ⇒ This is provided to all members through the Valley Central Dental/Optical Benefit Fund which is operated by the Dental/Optical Trust Board for the VCTA.
- ⇒ Lisa Coney oversees the Trust for the VCTA and any questions should be addressed to her at the Middle School.
- ⇒ A “Blue Book” outlining coverage and providers and claim forms are available in each building and online through the links provided at [www.vcta.net](http://www.vcta.net).
- ⇒ There is no comparability clause or buyout provision for these benefits.

### **Need a Sick Day?**

- ⇒ You will be given instructions on how and when to contact the sub caller in your building. As soon as you know you will not be in school, contact the sub caller.
- ⇒ It is your responsibility as a professional to leave plans for your substitute. E-mail, fax, or call in plans. You should leave emergency plans at school in case circumstances prevent you from providing specific plans for that particular day. These plans should only be used in the event of a true emergency. Once they have been used, be sure to leave a new emergency plans.
- ⇒ You do not have to provide a doctor’s note upon your return to school, however the BOE reserves the right to ask for a doctor’s note at any time. Should this occur contact your building representative.
- ⇒ After an absence of 5 continuous days, filing a note with the Main Office of your building is automatic.
- ⇒ The Board of Education critically evaluates attendance prior to granting Tenure.
- ⇒ **Teachers have been denied Tenure based on excessively poor attendance.**

# **Help me with my MONEY...**

## **If you wish to improve your salary, there are several ways to do so:**

- ⇒ Stay at VC! Each year, you move up a step on your salary schedule. You may also change columns as you earn credits (in-service or graduate) up to MA+60. Credits beyond the MA+60 require the Superintendent's preapproval. Notice that a new salary schedule is provided for each year of the contract.
- ⇒ Coach or advise a co-curricular activity. Stipend schedules are listed in your contract.
- ⇒ Chaperone events. Let administration know you are available and willing to help.
- ⇒ Apply to tutor, write curriculum, teach summer school, or evening school.

## **In-Service/ Graduate Credits:**

- ⇒ You may take In-Service hours or graduate credits to improve your pay. Many courses are offered throughout the school year, often on-premises! You can register on-line through the district web site.
- ⇒ 15 in-service hours equals 1 credit.
- ⇒ **You will not be paid for In-Service hours that you apply toward the completion of the 175 hour requirement you may be under to retain certification unless they are Graduate credits.**
- ⇒ When taking "out-of-district" in-service courses or graduate courses, fill out a pre-approval form. These forms are available in your building and are sent to Deputy Superintendent John Hunter. Once the course is finished you must provide a certificate of completion or transcript to Assistant Superintendent Sheila Murphy. Keep careful track of your hours/credits.
- ⇒ Salary is adjusted as follows: (See contract for rates)
  - BA— in blocks of 6 credits;
  - MA — in blocks of 3 credits.
- ⇒ Once you have accumulated 30 credits you will change columns on the salary schedule.
- ⇒ If you are hired with a BA, once you have obtained your Master's degree, you will change to that column on the salary schedule. You must submit your transcript to Human Resources.
- ⇒ If you encounter any problems with credits, please contact VP Patti Lunden for help.
- ⇒ **Hand deliver all records to Central Office and request a date/stamp. Keep copies of all your records.**

## **Military Credit:**

- ⇒ Military Service entitles you to two steps credit on the salary schedule (Article XIX, Section L).

## **Investment Options; 403(b) Tax Sheltered Annuity and/or 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan:**

- ⇒ If you wish to make your investment contributions through payroll deduction, you must use one of the 40 vendors which the VCTA and District have mutually established. The list is on the VCTA website. If you use an outside vendor, payroll deduction will not be available to you and your financial advisor will have to assist you in obtaining the tax benefit.

## **All this fun and you get paid too!**

- ⇒ Teachers are ten month employees, paid from September through June.
- ⇒ You can choose to be paid over 21/22 checks or 25/26 checks. If you choose 21/22, you will receive all of your salary throughout the ten month school year, with no prorated summer check in June to cover the months of July and August. If you choose 25/26, you will receive your regular checks from September to June minus a prorated July and August share. This prorated portion of your salary will be provided in the form of an additional "multi-pay" check in June (equal to 4 checks) for the summer.
- ⇒ When you receive your first check, multiply your gross per period by what you selected (i.e., 21/22 or 25/26); it should equal the amount of your Contract Salary Agreement.
- ⇒ ALWAYS look at your pay stub each time that you are paid. It should not change from pay period to pay period without reasonable explanation. **Any problems with payroll, contact VP Patti Lunden for help (VM 7664).**

## **Leave Provisions: (Non-Tenured Teachers: Attendance is looked at very closely.)**

- **Sick Leave:** 15 days per year cumulative (you may accumulate up to 400 days)—Article XXII, A
- **Illness in Family:** 3 days per year non-cumulative—Article XXII, Section D
- **Death in Family:** 3 days in the event of a death in the member’s family/household—Article XXII, E
- **Personal Business:** 3 days per year for “matters of a personal nature requiring urgent attention or involving important responsibilities or obligations which cannot be attended to when school is not in session.” No reason has to be given except if the request is on the “bookend” of a holiday/vacation or if the Superintendent has reason to believe the personal leave is being abused.
- **Jury Duty:** Serving or subpoenaed as a witness (where you are not party to the litigation)—full salary less compensation paid to teacher for duty, provided the teacher selects the call-in method of fulfilling the jury duty obligation and reports to work on those days not required to report.
- **Pregnancy:** A teacher may use any sick time accumulated for any time her doctor finds she is unable to work due to pregnancy (including the 6-8 week period after delivery that the doctor finds her unable to work). During this time all benefits will be intact.
- **Child Care Leave:** If a teacher chooses to stay home with a newborn infant (including adopted newborns), either after the sick time is expended or the period in which the doctor found the teacher unable to work has expired, the teacher may request a childcare leave (4 months prior to the date on which the leave would commence). A child care leave is unpaid. Child care leaves are generally granted for up to a two year period with excess leave being granted at the sole discretion of the District. Contact Patti Lunden or Laurie Council for more information.
- **Workman’s Compensation:** If you are hurt while on the job and unable to perform your duties as a result of a personal injury which occurs in the proper course of your employment and is not due to your own negligence—you will be paid your full salary less the amount of the Workman’s Compensation award and no part of the absence (up to 30 days) is charged against your sick time.
- **Professional Conferences:** You may be granted a request to attend a conference in your teaching area as long as it does not impose a hardship on the teaching schedule or class coverage. You must request the conference two weeks ahead of time in writing to your principal. You will be informed one week before the conference of the decision. DO NOT FORGET TO CALL FOR A SUB!!

### **Keeping a Professional Portfolio**

Every teacher should keep a professional folder to gather and maintain documents pertaining to your career as an educator. You should keep an accurate record of absences, personal days and conference days. Save all of your evaluations and correspondence from the district. You should also keep a copy of course transcripts, and pre-approval forms in case the district misplaces any of this information. Following is a list of documents that should be kept in a personal portfolio or file.

#### **Correspondence:**

Confirmation of your appointment  
Letters to and from you: Admin.  
Letters to and from you: Union  
Confirmation of tenure

#### **Professional Development:**

Prior approval forms (courses, etc)  
List in-service courses completed  
List graduate courses completed  
List conferences/workshops attended  
College transcripts

#### **Co-Curricular/Coaching**

Requests for appointment to co-curricular/coaching positions  
Letter of appointment to position, job description

#### **Evaluations:**

Post-Observation Evaluations  
Lessons used for Observations  
End Year Evaluations  
Tenure evaluation

#### **Credentials**

Copies of certification  
Copy of College Degree  
Transcripts  
Professional Test Scores  
Professionally Required Workshops

#### **Miscellaneous**

Requests for Personal Day  
Record of Absences  
Any requests for positions/appointments  
Requests for Chaperone pay

**C**ongratulations, you have made it to the classroom that you have always wanted to be in! What's the secret to becoming the successful teacher that you have always dreamed of being? It's easy...Love your kids. Those faces peering up at you in a few days—they will be your kids in a matter of weeks. Former superintendent, Jim Coonan always reminded all teachers each year that our community sends us “the best that they have. They don't keep the best ones home.” These parents send us their children—to teach and to love. You won't find all of your kids loveable all of the time. Love is something that you sometimes have to work very hard at—but generally love given becomes love returned— and this very year, you may be the teacher one of those kids never forgets. You may be the teacher that child is inspired by. You may be the teacher who changes that child's life forever. Being a teacher is one of the best jobs you will ever have. It may test your spirit and your will, there may be days that you think will never end (they will), and there may be times that will make you wonder...but at the end of the year, as you are packing up for summer break and those kids are moving on to someone else—you'll know that you gave them the very best you had to offer. And you will find that they have affected who you are. Teaching and learning—it is a two-way exchange. There is no greater job in the world. Welcome to teaching and welcome to the Valley Central Teachers' Association.

### **Please Join Us at the VCTA Fall Fest 2008:**

- ⇒ **Date: Friday, October 17th**
- ⇒ **Time: 3:00 pm– 6:00 pm**
- ⇒ **Location: Otterkill Country Club; 100 Otter Road**



### **Berea Celebrates at Fall Fest 2007**

