Greetings Educators,

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. I would like to take this opportunity to formally introduce myself as the President of the United Education Association of Shelby County. I am excited about the opportunity to serve you for the next two years. There is a lot of work to be done within our association and we need all hands on deck to get it done!

I want to share with you a few things that UEA’s new leadership has accomplished in the past couple of weeks. We have established a mutually respectful and collaborative relationship with Superintendent Dr. Ray, his administration, and Shelby County School Board members. We were the only educator association represented on the Re-Entry Task Force and the Digital Access Committee. We had collaborative conversations with Dr. Ray around professional development hours, which resulted in the hours being reduced from 64 to 40 hours. Our most recent accomplishment in June was the collaborative conversation with Dr. Ray which led to an agreement and the announcement of the 175 day calendar for the 2020-2021 school year.

These are truly times when we need to come together in order to address unprecedented challenges such as safely reopening our schools amid a pandemic, advocating for public school funding at the local, state and national levels, and the need to secure a Memorandum of Understanding that is agreed upon and signed by both education associations and the district.

Together, we have a unique opportunity to achieve great things. The UEA now has a seat at many tables working collaboratively in an effort to achieve results that benefit educators and the students we serve. The associations have been in collaborative conferencing with the district for 15 months and the time has come for us to move forward and reach an agreement. I feel confident that we will reach an agreement soon.

Finally, as we embark upon a new school year filled with so much uncertainty, I want to assure you that I am advocating for students and educators to enter into safe and healthy school environments. I will be communicating regularly with you and soliciting your feedback on various items. I encourage you to become actively engaged in the work of the association by volunteering your talents and sharing your perspectives.

I look forward to working with each of you because we are stronger together!

Sincerely,

Danette Stokes, Ed.S.

UEA President