

The Voice

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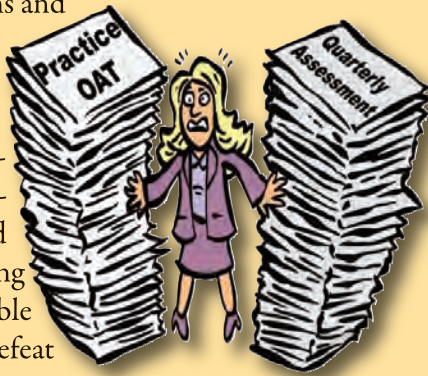
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Columbus Education Association

January 22, 2008

Testing overload

CEA recently filed a grievance with the district over testing overlaps, duplications and the increase in clerical work for our teachers as a result of the multiple tests required by our district. We have filed to arbitrate the grievance and hope to resolve the testing issues that take up valuable classroom time and to defeat the purpose of duplicate assessments.



Many of the tests required by the state and district measure the same skills. Many are given at the same time. We believe the schedule can be spread out or revised to eliminate redundant testing.

One very big issue is the timing of the quarterly assessments. They are administered very close to the practice OAT. Both assess the same skills, but we get results from the first test back too late to focus our work with students on their problem areas. The results of quarterly assessments should be used to determine how to better serve our students.

CEA is also asking the district to look at alternative ways of getting the tests scored and scanned. Teachers are wasting a large amount of planning and instructional time grading and scanning tests. This is truly a waste of valuable district resources.

Testing is a valuable tool. We believe that it provides teachers with the important information about student progress. We support testing of skills with multiple measures. But let's adjust the schedule and make sure we are not excessively testing certain skill areas. The district has agreed to look at this situation. We will bring you developments as they occur.

Leading the way...NBPTS

Our Association was one of the first organizations to endorse the concept of a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). It was natural that we would support both higher standards and national standards for our profession.



Our contract was one of the first to include National Board language. The State of Ohio offered a \$2,500 stipend to anyone achieving National Certification, good for 10 years. CEA negotiated a \$1,500 salary incentive for every Columbus teacher who became nationally certified. The Columbus incentive continued as long as the teacher was certified. Columbus teachers now had a package of \$4,000 per year for each teacher with national credentials.

Later, we negotiated a second incentive. A Columbus teacher could earn an additional \$1,500 by agreeing to teach

at any school that the superintendent deemed needing assistance. This was a strategy to deal with the criticism that the best teachers were not working where they were most needed. In Columbus, a NBPTS-certified teacher could earn \$5,500 more per year by taking advantage of all the contractual incentives. The *CEA Master Agreement* is a national model in this area.

Finally, we led the way in supporting members pursuing NBPTS certification. CEA and The Ohio State University provide courses to help teachers through the certification process. It is not surprising that we have one of the highest numbers of NBPTS-certified teachers. We continue to encourage members to take advantage of these opportunities.

Getting CCS real estate in order

The school district is evaluating its real estate holdings and deciding which parcels are worth holding onto and which should be sold. Much of this is necessary so the district can complete its building plan and so it can earn as much income from the sale or lease of property as possible.

Ohio law also requires that empty buildings be sold, leased or torn down within one year of vacancy.

Carole Olshavsky, an architect in charge of facilities planning for CCS, recently updated the school board on options for buildings now being used to house students and programs while their home facilities are remodeled or rebuilt. Here are some details.

The board must decide the fate of 16 schools now being used as *swing* space. Each will be vacant within the next several years.

- Beck ES (vacant in 2009–10)
- Brentnell ES (vacant in 2008–09)
- Clarfield ES (vacant in 2011–12)
- Eastgate ES (vacant in 2009)
- Everett MS (vacant in 2009–10)
- Gladstone ES (vacant in 2011–12)
- Hudson ES (vacancy to be determined)
- Koebel ES (vacant in 2008–09)
- Main ES (vacant in 2008–09)
- North HS (vacant in 2011–12)
- Pilgrim ES (vacant in 2009–10)
- Reeb ES (vacant in 2009–10)
- Shady Lane ES (vacant in 2009)
- Stockbridge ES (vacant in 2008–09)
- (Old) Watkins ES (vacant in 2009)

Also on the list are Indianola ES, Medary ES, Wedgewood MS and Linmoor MS, each to be used for swing space later, and then vacated or given new use. For instance, Linmoor MS is being reserved for future district use because it



is near Hamilton ES and the Linmoor Annex.

Options include exchanges like those at Beatty Park, Lincoln Park, Johnson Park and Barnett schools and American Addition Park. Part of all of these facilities is now being used by the Columbus Department of Recreation and Parks.

Some buildings, rooms, wings or parking lots are being leased to other parties, including Glenmont ES, Sharon ES, the parking lot at the Africentric School and the Mifflin MS athletic field.

Some buildings will be demolished once new schools are completed, including A.G. Bell, Eastgate ES, Champion MS, portions of East Columbus ES, East Linden ES, Shady Lane ES, East Mifflin ES and Watkins ES. The board is looking at adding Pinecrest ES, Scioto Trail ES and Sharon ES buildings to the list once students are relocated.

Some local businesses and educational organizations, including Junior Achievement and the Graham and KIPP Charter Schools have expressed interest in some of these properties, said Olshavsky.

Keep reading *The Voice* for future updates.

Governor pledges funding fix

Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland said in December he will find a solution to school-funding woes before the close of his term in 2010.

Gongwer News Service reported that Strickland said he prefers a legislative solution, but he is not ruling out a constitutional amendment—though he added that writing rules into the state constitution makes them more difficult to change or work with later.

He also acknowledged that a sluggish economy is making the solution more complicated.

Meet a fifth of dropouts: Gifted students

Some gifted students may earn poor grades because they have grown apathetic about their school work or because they lack the study skills they never needed to acquire to keep up as younger learners, according to a report in the *News Journal* in Delaware.

The Dec. 20 article quotes Jill Adrian of the Davidson Institute for Talent Development, a nonprofit founded to serve neglected and underserved gifted and talented children. She quotes institute data estimating that 20 percent of U.S. school dropouts test in the gifted range.

“Clearly there’s a problem there,” she told the *Journal*. “If we don’t meet the needs in the classrooms, they often tune out.”

Delaware is one of six states that don’t require special coursework for gifted students. Ohio provides funding for the education of gifted students, but schools must apply for the funds. And provision of services is not mandatory.

Learn about credit, loans

MidState Educators Credit Union provides helpful resources for information about loans, refinancing and credit. You can find out about buying a home or financing the purchase of a car, an RV or a boat by visiting www.educu.org.

Credit union members now have the option to receive their monthly or quarterly statements electronically.

Members can also earn a 1 percent rebate (up to \$150) by transferring credit card balances from other financial institutions to MidState’s low-rate Visa Credit Card.

A special session on credit and debt will held from 9:30 a.m.–12 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 26, at 399 E. Livingston Ave. To register, call 221-9376 or email dchatfield@educu.org.

Are you registered?

CEA has learned that many of our members are not registered to vote or need to re-register because of a recent move. To see if you are correctly registered to vote, visit www.sos.state.oh.us/sos/Elections/Voter/electionSearches.aspx. If you need to register, download the voter registration form from the Secretary of State’s Web site at www.sos.state.oh.us/ or pick up a form at any public library. Don’t wait until the next election day to find out that you can’t vote. The deadline to register for the Mar. 4 Primary Election is Feb. 4.



Continuing contract (tenure) deadline

The deadline is Mar. 7 to apply for a continuing contract. Continuing contracts are granted only to teachers holding a professional or permanent teaching certificate/license.

Here are the requirements:

- If you’ve worked only in Columbus, you need three years of successful Columbus teaching experience within the last five years.
- If you have a continuing contract with another Ohio district, you need two successful years of Columbus experience.
- If you hold a master’s degree, you need six semester hours or nine quarter hours of graduate coursework in your licensure area.
- If you do not hold a master’s degree, you need 30 semester or 45 quarter hours of at least 300-level coursework in your licensure area.

For additional information, refer to Section 401.16 of the *CEA Contract*, or call Cheryl Creamer at 365-5658.

Special notes

- ❑ Teachers with **one to three years of experience** are invited to **OEA’s Region 1 New Teacher Forum** from 5:30–7:30 p.m., **Tuesday, Feb. 26**, at the **Crowne Plaza Columbus-North Hotel** at 6500 Doubletree Ave. Learn about professional issues and the benefits of Association membership. Contact Debbie Roberts at 800-282-1500 or at Robertsd@ohea.org to register.
- ❑ If you want to **hear evenhanded discussion of the issues important to union members**, tune in to **WVKO 1580 AM** from 8–11 p.m. Ed Schultz and Thom Hartman often talk about the historical role of unions and their part in maintaining a balance of interests. The station is an effort of Ohio Majority Radio and Progress Ohio.
- ❑ **CEA Spring Elections:** Members may declare candidacy now through Feb. 8 for President, Vice President, Governors for Districts 5, 8 and 11, delegates for the 2008–2009 OEA Representative Assemblies and the 2008 NEA Representative Assembly. Campaigning will be Feb. 11–Feb. 25. Voting will be conducted Feb. 26–Mar. 10. Votes will be tabulated Mar. 11. Declaration forms are available from the CEA office.
- ❑ **Gary Theil**, Northeast Career Center, received the **Iota Lambda Sigma Lifetime Achievement Award**. This honorary society recognizes excellence in all phases of workforce development from the fields of education, business and industry.
- ❑ **Jimmie Beall**, Linden-McKinley HS Counselor, received lifetime membership into the **National Scholars Honors Society** for academic and professional excellence in scholarship for her doctoral work.
- ❑ **CEA-R** will meet on **Tuesday, Feb. 5, 11:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.**, at the **LaScala Restaurant**, 4199 W. Dublin-Granville Rd., to hear former CCS teacher **Dr. Annette Jefferson** speak about **African-American Women During the Civil War**. For more information, check the latest issue of the CEA-R brochure; or surf to www.cea-retired.com.