

The CEA Voice

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Columbus Education Association

March 10, 2008

Members ratify one-year agreement

Members of the Columbus Education Association converged on the Aladdin Shrine Center on Monday, Mar. 3, to hear the proposed agreement from the Columbus Board of Education.



CEA members listen intently as CEA President Rhonda Johnson gives comments on the tentative agreement.

After the introduction of local dignitaries that included Bill Liebenschlager, Vice President of the Ohio Education Association and Walt Workman, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Franklin County AFL-CIO, gathered members were welcomed by Association President Rhonda Johnson.

President Johnson informed attendees that the timeline for bargaining this year was accelerated due to an early request by the attorney for the Columbus Board of Education to consider their proposed offer.

“This one year proposed extension of the current contract contains a 2.5 percent raise for all members of the Columbus Education Association,” said President Johnson. “Our health insurance remains intact with no changes. Furthermore, the money allocated for Gainsharing and the Performance Advancement System will continue with this proposed agreement.”

“The challenge facing Columbus City Schools,” said Johnson, “is that in order for us to negotiate a multi-year agreement, the district has to be able to certify that they will have the money on hand to fund a multi-year contract. Given the district’s current financial situation, they do not have the monies available to do that.”

After an extremely brief question and answer session in which there were no objections to the proposed agreement, more than 96 percent of the gathered members voted to ratify the proposed agreement. The Columbus Board of Education unanimously ratified the contract the following evening.

Additional details of the agreement will be presented in an upcoming, special edition of *The CEA Voice*.

Cat-a-Van stops in Columbus on reading tour

Driving the need to read, the Cat-a-Van tour made a stop in Columbus last Wednesday as part of the NEA’s Read Across America celebration. The nearly 7-foot Cat in the Hat surprised students at East Pilgrim ES. He brought along books for stu-



NEA Cat-a-Van stops at East Pilgrim ES

dents and a cash grant of \$1,000 to purchase additional books for the school library.

Ohio is just one stop on the reading tour. The Cat-a-Vans will visit 18 cities and provide more than 12,000 books and nearly \$25,000 in cash donations to public school libraries through generous donations from NEA’s Books Across America.

The Cat-a-Vans are delivering a specific message to children and their caregivers: Read, read, read!

“Every parent remembers a child’s first reaction to story time,” said NEA President Reg Weaver. “But in today’s world, where the written word has to compete with TV, iPods and video games, keeping reading on the menu can be a challenge. NEA’s Read Across America program is about getting kids excited about reading so no matter what distractions might be out there, the joy of reading will never be diminished.”

“This is a fun and exciting event,” said Patricia Frost Brooks, president of the Ohio Education Association. “We know that children who read achieve. They score higher on tests and recognize letters and numbers more often than students who do not read as often. That is why we need to get pages turning—not just on Read Across America Day, but everyday.”

Leading the way . . . affiliate organizations

Our Association is a founding member of TURN, the Teacher Union Reform Network. This independent union-led effort strengthens the national unions’ capacity to promote reforms.

The ultimate goal is better learning and higher achievement for America’s children. Unions are in a unique position to stimulate change.

At the recent TURN national meeting, members discussed the following question: How should locals operate in the public education industry as education systems evolve in the 21st century?

We are interested in your responses. Please take a few minutes and think about it. Either send us a written response or log yours into the CEA blog at blog.ceaohio.org. It is never too early to be thinking ahead.

The network consists of NEA and AFT locals. Members meet three times a year to share successful—and not-so-successful—models of district cooperation.

Over the years, the TURN network has grown and some very active locals have been added. Current members are San Juan Teachers Assoc (CA), United Teachers of Dade (Miami, FL), Albuquerque Teachers Federation (NM), Prince George’s County Education Association (MD), Fairfax Education Association (VA), Newhall Teachers Association (CA), Portland Education Association (ME),

Montgomery County Education Association (MD), Decatur Education Association (IL), Poway Federation of Teachers (CA), Columbus Education Association (OH), Cleveland Federation of Teachers (OH), Denver Classroom Teachers Association (CO), United Teachers of Los Angeles (CA), Memphis Education Association (TN), United Educators of San Francisco (CA), Seattle Education Association (WA), Cincinnati Federation of Teachers (OH), Toledo Federation of Teachers (OH), Waverly Teachers Association (RI), Syracuse Teachers Association (NY), Mt. Diablo Education Association (CA), Sargus Teachers Association (CA), Minneapolis Federation of Teachers (MN), St. Paul Federation of Teachers (MN), Organization of DeKalb Educators (GA), Douglas County Federation of Teachers (CO), Boston Teachers Union (MA), Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers (PA), Springfield Education Association (IL), Santa Clarita Teachers Association (CA), Rochester Teachers Association (NY), United Federation of Teachers (NY) and the San Diego Education Association (CA).

Approve the AFL-CIO partnership

Reason #3: Common Challenges

All unions in both the private and public sectors nationwide face an increasingly steep uphill battle each time they sit down at the table with management to renegotiate their contracts. Issues that involve union members include decent raises, maintaining core job benefits like quality health care and affordable prescription drug coverage, assuring job security, securing pensions and beating back attacks on our unions, including restrictions on collective bargaining rights, legislatively imposed merit-pay systems and paycheck protection schemes.

We are not alone in our struggle to fight for what we have earned through our tireless service to the students and families in the Columbus City Schools. By joining the AFL-CIO Labor Solidarity Partnership agreement, we will gain the support of the organized labor community of Columbus, the state of Ohio and the entire nation.



Making our schools better

TBS is our political action arm. This separate organization, funded through voluntary contributions, screens candidates for various offices and makes recommendations to the CEA Board of Governors and the Legislative Assembly to endorse candidates.



We want to congratulate the following members from CEA District 4 who have chosen to support Teachers for Better Schools: Denise Bakenhaster, Christel Barna, Lori Barton, Kay Benton, Carol Bobbitt, Marilyn Boyd, Angela Chism, Gerald Collins, Cheryl Copeland, David Fawcett, Paul Froehlich, Tina Fullen, Dana Godfrey, Deborah Harris, Laurie Hewitt, Patricia Jeffries, Courtney Johnson, Carolyn Kirby-Rogers, Jill Matticola, Debra Odum, Vicky Pate, Cynthia Price, Patricia Ranalli, Renee Ross, Christine Sapp, Eric Stone, Deanna Stull, Melanie Sullivan, Peter Trautmann, Susan Turner, Pete Volker, April Walsh, Julie Watson, Gregory Williams and Dwayne Zimmerman.

To add your name to the list of TBS members, download the membership form at <http://www.ceahio.org/docs/content/4-TBS%20Membership%20Form.pdf>.

Legislative update

Public education is under attack on several fronts at the Ohio Statehouse. CEA is working closely with OEA and other partners in public education to monitor and defeat the

following bills currently in committees:

HB 347 will eliminate Praxis III as a means to ascertain a teacher's competence and force over 600 school districts to develop their own method of assessment. We oppose this legislation because it would stop a currently effective assessment while creating an unfunded mandate on school districts which could result in a drain of resources that are better suited for the classroom.

HB 428 and **SB 270** permit the revocation of a teacher's license for any serious convictions or if a teacher commits to an intervention program in place of a conviction. We argue that a teacher's due process needs to be protected while simultaneously protecting our students.

Note the 211 schedule

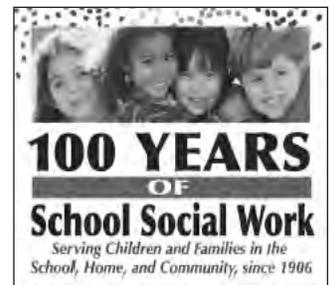
Article 211 packets should now be at your school. Please make sure you know about all the significant dates.

Mar. 14 is the deadline for Administrators to notify any staff member of a staff reduction. It also is the deadline for middle and high school rosters due to the curriculum office and for elementary rosters due to Principal Leadership Development office.

Review the entire Article 211 calendar on the CEA Web site at www.ceahio.org/newsPage.aspx?artID=302.

School Social Workers Week

We want to say thank you to all our school social workers. School Social Worker Week just ended on Mar. 8. You may not be aware that school social workers are specially trained to work in school districts across the country on crisis intervention, mental health assessment, counseling, linking and referring students and families to community agencies. School social workers collaborate with school staff and community agencies to reduce or minimize barriers to student achievement and attendance. Thanks for all you do.



Correction: The 'AP scores an "A"' story in the Mar. 3 *Voice* should have read: Ninety-five percent of the district's AP teachers have passed inspection. A small percentage are still completing the process.

Special notes

- Please take the time to consider a donation to UNCF. Our campaign will conclude Thursday, Mar. 20. Complete your UNCF campaign form, and return it to your campaign leader. Remember, your gift is tax deductible. Call Ezetta Murray at the CEA office with any questions.
- Purchase the official red NEA *A Child Is More Than A Test Score* T-shirt for \$15 to raise funds for TBS. Call CEA with your order.
- Voting in the CEA Spring Elections** ends today. Ask your SrFR for a ballot if you have not voted. Ballots will be picked up by the Elections Committee on Tuesday, Mar. 11.
- The **Capital District President and Vice President** will be elected at the Capital District of the OEA/NEA Representative Assembly on **Wednesday, Apr. 2, 2008**. The RA will begin at 5:30 p.m. at the STRS Building.

