

# The CEA Voice

[www.ceaohio.org](http://www.ceaohio.org)

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Columbus Education Association

March 17, 2008

## Background checks due in July

You should have received information on the requirements for criminal background checks. If not, please check with your principal or with CEA.

Ohio's updated background check law continues the requirement that licensed school personnel obtain a criminal records check when they renew their licenses.



Permanent and eight-year certificate holders must undergo checks when they begin their employment and every five years beginning Sept. 5, 2008.

School districts are barred from hiring anyone who has pleaded guilty to or has been convicted of a serious crime. A list of these offenses is available from CEA.

You are responsible for getting your own background check and paying the fee. CCS is requiring those who need one this year to get it done by July 15, 2008.

We will have more information about background check locations. CCS is arranging for a mobile unit to perform checks after spring break, payable by payroll deduction.

## State union worked to reduce fees

In February, the Ohio State Board of Education voted to increase licensure fees for teachers.

OEA protested the dramatic increase of these fees—including a 233 percent increase in the five-year teacher license, from \$60 to \$200. OEA asked the State Board of Education (SBE) to roll back the fee increase, holding it at the current \$60 for five years.

OEA wanted the SBE not to put the increased costs of teacher licensure, professional conduct investigations and school employee background checks on the school employees but where they belong, with the State of Ohio.

In many cases, the costs of increased license fees and expanded FBI and BCI background check costs exceed the annual raises of some school employees. These dramatic increases are unreasonable and unfair.

The SBE met on Mar. 11 and OEA Vice President Bill Leibensperger and OEA Legal Services Director Rachelle Johnson gave compelling testimony to rescind the decision to increase licensure fees. Unfortunately, motions made by Board Members John Bender and Deborah Cain to rescind the February decision and to move the effective date of the new fee structure from Mar. 1 to July 1 were voted down. The SBE has spoken. They will not be revisiting the issue any time soon.

## Quarterly Assessments

District administrators are addressing our request to retool the Quarterly Assessment schedule for this school year. Changes for next school year will be discussed soon.

First, Quarterly Assessments at grades 1, 2 and 9 will be administered and scored as scheduled for the third grading period. Quarterly Assessments for grades 10, 11 and 12 will not be administered or scored.

Here are administration's suggestions for the use of grading period 3 Quarterly Assessments at grades 3–8:

- ➔ Teachers will utilize the Quarterlies as an “instructional tool” for this grading period only.
- ➔ Teachers may strategically break up the grade level indicators to guide instruction and provide intervention.
- ➔ Teachers may analyze the questions on the quarterly assessments, determine what students believe are the answers, and prepare intervention.
- ➔ Teachers may assign the Open-Ended Response items as writing assignments, have students peer-review the writing assignments and, based on a rubric, determine what score they have received.

Other changes: Grading period 4 Quarterly Assessments will be administered only in grades 4, 6 and 7 in the areas of science and social studies and grades 1 and 2 in math.

## Making our schools better

TBS is our political-action arm, a separate entity from CEA developed to focus on the political arena.

It raises money for political candidates, levy and bond campaigns and other ballot issues affecting Columbus teachers and the school community.



We want to thank and to congratulate the following members from CEA District 5 who have chosen to support Teachers for Better Schools: Christopher Bond, Barbara Flu-Allen, Charlene Greene, Kenneth Hawkins, Katherine Helter, Bob Hern, Michael Hicks, Sharon Higgins, Rhonda Johnson, Tracey Johnson, Cynthia Jones, Janice Kabealo, Jessica Long, Jenifer Lourens, Christy Maser, David McEvoy, Wyk McGowan, Ezetta Murray, Carol Neague, Sally Oldham, Rhonda Peck, Rosie Perry, Mia Prewitt, Amy Sipes, Pamela Snyder, Deb Starr, Rita Stewart, Bryan Stoker, Lynette Szuk, Lanell Wade, Kimberly Walden and Diane Weaver.

To add your name to the list of TBS members, download the membership form at [www.ceaohio.org/docs/content/4-TBS%20Membership%20Form.pdf](http://www.ceaohio.org/docs/content/4-TBS%20Membership%20Form.pdf).

## Fulfill your classroom dreams

We are pleased to announce the third year of funding for the Columbus Schools Teachers' Dream Grant. These awards for Columbus teachers range from \$500 to \$5,000 for projects that improve teaching and learning in CCS.

The process is simple. There is no preliminary proposal review form, but applicants will need their principal's or supervisor's approval. This is an excellent opportunity for in-

terested teachers to acquire resources to support an innovative project to increase student achievement.

The deadline for applications is Apr. 11. Note: A CCS email account is required to submit online. To submit your application, click on the following link and enter your computer login name and password: (<http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us/applications/DreamGrant.nsf/GrantRequest?OpenForm>) You may save by clicking **Save**. To submit the application, click **Submit**.

## The Teaching Penalty study

A recent study released by a respected economic think-tank quantifies what most teachers have been experiencing for years; we earn less than professionals with similar education levels.

According to The Teaching Penalty, a study recently released by the Economic Policy Institute (EPI), disparities between teacher wages and similarly educated professionals has been on the rise for the past 10–13 years. While college graduates' wages have recently experienced stagnation, teachers have experienced a decline in purchasing power.

Much attention has recently been given by policy makers to the idea that benefits for teachers are extraordinarily generous. By reducing benefits, say free-market proponents, teacher salaries can be significantly increased. The Teaching Penalty exposes serious flaws in two publications that have become a manifesto for free-market teacher compensation advocates.

EPI's report argues that while teacher benefits are on average better than those of other professionals, the actual amount of teachers' compensation allocated to benefits is too small to significantly alter the true disparity in wages faced by teachers as compared to other college-educated professionals.

## Reach Out and Read Campaign

The culminating ceremony for the Reach Out and Read Campaign was held on Monday, Mar. 3, at Linden ES where WBNS-10 TV's Angela Pace served as the mistress of ceremonies. This year CEA served as one of the sponsors of the event.



Committee Chairperson Tracey Johnson said, "Thank you to everyone who participated in the Columbus Education Association's Annual Reach Out and Read Book Campaign. We have collected approximately 2,300 books valued at more than \$18,000 with more books coming in daily. CEA, Nationwide Children's Hospital, the community and I applaud you for your generosity."

This effort would not have been a success without the support of the Faculty Representatives in our buildings. Your help was greatly appreciated.

A very special thank you goes out to committee members Robin Lucas, Winterset ES; Faye Mullins, Linden ES; and Vern Miller, Yorktown MS.

Our collective efforts will make it possible for the children in our community to start school ready to learn.

## Have a great break!

As you prepare for your week off for spring break, know that you are doing a great job. We are facing some tough issues here in CCS. You've all worked hard, and you've earned this time off.



CEA hopes you find time to rejuvenate yourself with friends, family, some travel—and maybe that novel you haven't had time to finish! Here's to a well-deserved spring break!

CEA will be closed over spring break. The phones will be monitored.

## Special notes

- The **UNCF campaign** will conclude Thursday, Mar. 20. Complete your UNCF campaign form, and return it to your campaign leader. Call Ezetta Murray at the CEA office with any questions.
- Middle-school girls interested in archaeology are invited to a **daylong archaeology program** at COSI, **Sat. Apr. 19, from 8:30–3:15 p.m.** Sessions are taught by women in the field. The cost is \$15 paid in advance. Register at [www.cosi.org/educators/mentoring/](http://www.cosi.org/educators/mentoring/) or email [GirlsExplore@mail.cosi.org](mailto:GirlsExplore@mail.cosi.org).
- Middle school debaters** will compete in a **spring tournament** from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on **Thursday, Mar. 20**, at the Ruff Learning Center, Capital University. For more information contact Georgia Lange, Faye Caner or Joan Baker at 6626 or 8783 or at [cutrijbaker6935@columbus.k12.oh.us](mailto:cutrijbaker6935@columbus.k12.oh.us).
- March is **Music in Our Schools Month**, sponsored by the Music Educators National Conference (MENC). It is a vehicle for advocacy for a *sound* music education. Here is a Web site to give you more information: <http://www.menc.org/>.
- 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.
- Classroom winner **Heidi Brown** (Independence HS) won \$200 for her school from **NEA Member Benefits** in its monthly drawing sponsored by the auto and home insurance program.
- MidState Educators Credit Union specials:** • **Home Improvement Loan:** 1% off your best qualifying rate —Rates start as low as 8% APR\* • **Home Equity Loan:** Borrow \$1,200 for 12 months at 10% APR\* • **Upcoming informational seminars:** Home Buyers' Seminars, Wednesday, Apr. 9, from 6:30–8 p.m. at their north office. *Debt reduction:* Sat., Apr. 12, 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. *Mortgage Refinancing:* Sat., Apr. 26, 9:30–11:30 a.m. Registration is required. Call 221-9376 or 866-628-6446.
- Teachers may now apply online for **summer school** positions for elementary, middle and high school. The **online application** has a complete listing of positions, school locations and other information. Only certified teachers currently employed with CCS may apply. Access the application by going to <http://cpsweb.columbus.k12.oh.us/summerschool>.
- Blue Jacket Tickets are available** from the CEA office for the following dates: **Mar. 18**, Calgary (4); **Mar. 26**, Chicago (4); and **Mar. 28**, Nashville (4). Call the CEA office at 253-4731 to purchase tickets.
- Does CEA have your personal email address? Send it to [bhern@ceaohio.org](mailto:bhern@ceaohio.org).**

## Request for CEA Scholarship Application Form

Name of member making request: \_\_\_\_\_

Send application to (CCS address): \_\_\_\_\_



A completed scholarship application, along with a transcript and two letters of reference, must be returned to the CEA office by 5 p.m. on Friday, May 9, 2008.