

# The Voice

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

Volume XXXVIII, No. 37

Columbus Education Association

May 27, 2008

## District plan

Superintendent Gene Harris laid before the school board a smorgasbord approach to restructuring the district. If the board asks for, and gets, a bond issue in November, some or all of these suggestions could become reality.



Harris' plan includes the following:

- ▶ Creating more than one type of particular alternative schools to serve the East and West sides
- ▶ Creating feeder programs for schools such as CAHS, so students from particular nearby schools could enroll without going through the lottery system
- ▶ Allowing alternative-school preference to neighborhood residents
- ▶ Expanding some programs, such as CAHS, to include seventh and eighth grades
- ▶ Creating a high school language-immersion program
- ▶ Eliminating all middle schools, placing sixth-graders in elementary schools and seventh- and eighth-graders in high schools

If the district does not receive extra funds, Harris still is proposing, in part:

- ▶ Closing up to six schools over the next four years
- ▶ Reassigning students to minimize crowding or under-enrollment
- ▶ Upgrading high school science labs
- ▶ Expanding alternative school offerings, possibly using a vacant building for an arts program

Keep reading *The Voice* for updates.

## Speak up loudly for education

The 2008 election is only months away. If we keep our eye on the prize, NEA members are in a good position to win big!

While the Democratic Presidential Primary is still going and debate is continuing, we can make our voices heard. Associations across the country are stepping forward:

- ◆ Iowa State Education Association members came out in large numbers telling the candidates that we need changes to No Child Left Behind, smaller class sizes and a living wage for teachers and support professionals.
- ◆ The Nevada State Education Association organized members to be involved in a presidential primary.



NSEA members came out in masses to show support for public schools.

CEA is encouraging you to get involved also. NEA has an unprecedented political program, "Education Votes 2008." Spread the word. A new president brings an opportunity for more funding in the classroom, smaller class sizes, affordable quality health care for all Americans and a living wage for everyone in our communities.

Talk about the issues. Volunteer to work on a campaign. We need you to get involved in Education Votes 2008! No matter which party or candidate you support, it is important to let your voice be heard! To get involved, check out [www.nea.org/educationvotes/index.html](http://www.nea.org/educationvotes/index.html).

## Avoid IRS penalties

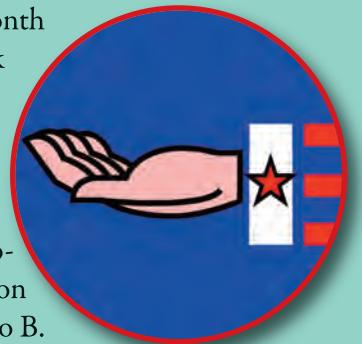
The Treasurer's office is asking us to fill out a form if we choose to be paid over a 12-month period (Plan B: 26 pays) or risk additional tax penalties.

Look for the **Notice of Election for Annualized Salary** form along with your contract or your assignment notice. Please fill it out if you are on Plan B or if you are switching to B.

Be sure to make a copy for your files. If you do not fill out this form, you could be subject to additional income taxes as high as 20 percent.

**The district deadline to file this form is June 6.**

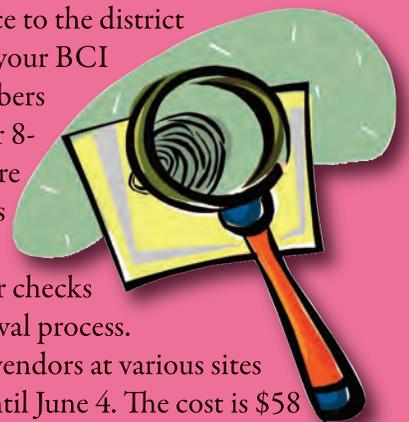
Please be sure the district has your correct address and phone number in case there is a problem with your paperwork. Send CEA your cell number so that we can reach you if you will be away this summer. Call CEA if you have questions.



## Deadline for background checks approaching

July 15 is a very important date. It is the deadline for providing written evidence to the district that you have completed your BCI and FBI checks. All members who have a permanent- or 8-year certificate must adhere to this deadline. Members holding a 2-year or 5-year license will complete their checks during their normal renewal process.

The district will have vendors at various sites throughout the system until June 4. The cost is \$58 and will be paid through payroll deduction only. Anyone who is required to but fails to complete the background checks may be disqualified from working in the district. Please contact the CEA office if you have any questions or concerns.



## Do we need high school exit exams?

A new study finds that high school exit exams are getting in the way of graduation. New research by sociology professors at the University of Minnesota and the University of California, Davis, challenges the value of these exams, finding the cost is high, both to the students who are denied diplomas and to the general public which must pay to develop and administer them. In fact, the researchers say, state exit exams, in place in 23 states, neither boosts academic achievement nor improves graduates' chances of making it in the job market later.

What does this mean for Columbus City Schools? It means as long as there is an Ohio Graduation Test (OGT), we will continue to have challenges. Many students will not graduate, and those who do won't necessarily have a leg up in the working world. Meanwhile, Ohio taxpayers will continue to pay for these tests.

In a companion study published in the journal, *Sociology of Education*, researchers found that employment prospects for young people were the same, regardless of whether exit exams were required in their states.

Look for the results of the study in an upcoming issue of *Educational Policy*.

## Know the contract: Returning from leave

Returning from an extended medical leave? Our negotiated agreement provides some very specific procedures. Please keep in mind these rules for returning to the classroom, per section 702 of the *Master Agreement*:

- You must notify the district of your return at least 30 days in advance.
- You must submit a doctor's statement within 10 days before you plan to return, verifying your ability to return to work. Your permission paperwork must state that you can return with *no restrictions*. Employees may not return to their duties any sooner than the date of return specified.
- You should also note if you are on extended leave, the Superintendent or designated central office staff may require additional explanation. The teacher must provide a written report from his or her doctor if requested to do so.
- You may also be required to see the school board's physician for clearance prior to your return. The board physician's hours, location and contact information are provided in the leave packet.
- If you have taken leave to care for a family member, a physician release is not required. But you still must submit advance paperwork stating your intended return date.

Many Association members have attempted to come back to the classroom without properly following procedures or after submitting the paperwork late. For clarification, please see Section 702 of the *CEA Master Agreement* or call the CCS Human Resources department at 365-8307. We at the CEA office also are glad to help you understand these rules.

## Get ready to *Make Strides*

This year, hundreds of thousands of people will hear the words, "You have breast cancer," and there's a good chance that some of them will be people we know and love. Help fight back by participating in the American Cancer Society Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk Sunday, Oct. 5, beginning at 8:30 a.m. at COSI.

Making Strides is our opportunity to honor and celebrate breast cancer survivors, educate women about early detection

and prevention, raise money to fund lifesaving research and support programs to help fight breast cancer. But *Making Strides* is more than just the name of a walk. It describes the amazing progress we can make if we work together to defeat this disease.

CEA encourages you to start your own team, sign up to walk as an individual or make a donation. Please walk with us to experience an incredible day of inspiration and to provide hope for all people facing breast cancer. For more information, visit [www.cancer.org/docroot/par/PAR\\_2\\_Making\\_Strides\\_Against\\_Breast\\_Cancer.asp](http://www.cancer.org/docroot/par/PAR_2_Making_Strides_Against_Breast_Cancer.asp) and click on Ohio.

To attend a breast cancer survivor luncheon at COSI on Saturday, Sept. 27, contact Ezetta Murray at the CEA office at 253-4731.

## TBS creates a strong voice

Our voices are strong when we speak together through Teachers for Better Schools (TBS).

TBS is your political action committee. It screens election candidates and raises money for political candidates, levy and bond campaigns and other ballot issues affecting Columbus teachers and the school community.



Our process is highly respected, and our support is strongly desired by all candidates.

We thank these TBS members from CEA District 9 for helping make our voice heard: Karen Andermills, Lisa Atkinson, Emily Bernardi, Rose Bokman, Cynthia Bradley, Diane Brown, Robert Coleman, Reynaldo Cordova, Thearesa Coursey-Conrad, Amy Crossin, Julia Degarmo, Jonita Dysert, Emogene Ellsley, Tara Floyd, Cynthia Fulton, Deepa Ganschinietz, John Hank, John Hoell, Summer Holmes, Cindy Jamison, Jill Johnson, Rebecca King, Vivian King, Thomas Kirker, Jeanette Kuschill, Adele Levenstein, Theresa Mahoney, Renee Mardis, Michele Mays, Jeremy McDaniel, Karen McMichael, Elizabeth McNally, Deborah Meadows, Vern Miller, Hope Rhea, Connie Richardson, Laura Schnebelen, Michael Sens, Elizabeth Shelley, Aaron Stamper, Eric Sztul, Suellen Vance, Tracy Wirthman and Barbara Young.

## Thank a PE teacher

May is National Physical Fitness and Sports Month, and our teachers work hard to provide fun activities that get kids moving every day. Next time you see your building's physical education specialist, say thanks for keeping your kids healthy.

Check out the resources at [www.EducationWorld.com](http://www.EducationWorld.com) to help you include sports and physical education in your classroom curriculum.

## Special notes

- Congratulations to **Marci Gorenstein** (Buckeye MS), the **April OEA Teacher of the Month**. She was nominated by the parent of one of her students who said that Ms. Gorenstein is a teacher who takes the extra time to make sure her child understands what she is teaching and achieving the confidence to succeed.
- In order to effectively design professional development that is aligned to your needs, the district requests your input. Please **check your CCS e-mail for the link** to complete the short **Professional Development Survey by May 30**.

See us on the Web at

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



Take part in your professional development by taking a survey sponsored by the district at [www.ceaohio.org/newsPage.aspx?artID=334](http://www.ceaohio.org/newsPage.aspx?artID=334).