

The CEA Voice

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Columbus Education Association

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Read Across America

Every teacher knows that sharing a book with a child is a joy. But, according to the National Center for Education



Statistics, since 1993 only 53–58 percent of children ages 3–5 received this joy on a daily basis.

Everyone can do better! Simply reading daily with a child does require parents, older brothers and sisters, and other caring adults to add yet another hat to the many they already wear to care for and raise a child.

Children who are read to at home have a higher success rate in school. Children who read frequently develop stronger reading skills.



To get kids excited about reading and encourage more adults to spend time reading with their children, the National Education Association (NEA) launched the first NEA's Read Across America day in 1998. On Mar. 2, 2009, NEA's Read Across America will mark 12 years of celebrating reading and the birthday of Dr. Seuss.

So from coast to coast, teachers, celebrities, community members and parents are putting aside the many hats they wear for work and play and donning their reading hats, the red and white striped stovepipe hat of *The Cat in the Hat*.

Let's all join together on Mar. 2, and everyday thereafter, to ensure that Columbus' children have caring adults to share books and rich reading experiences.

To download resources from NEA's Read Across America Web site: go to www.nea.org/readacross.

Staff reductions and reorganizations

Reorganizations should create stability and consistency among the staff and build on its existing strengths. Reorganization should not be used as a management tool to make people uncomfortable so they will choose to leave the school or the district.

Mar. 3 is the deadline for principals to notify teachers if they are being staff reduced. Reorganizations should take place at this time, prior to Round 1 postings. Teachers cannot be reorganized after the first round of postings without their consent.

Staff reductions are delineated in Section 211.03 of the contract. Teachers are considered staff reduced if:

- They have been assigned by Human Resources or obtained a position at the 2007 Job Fair.
- They are in an unassigned status if:

- They have returned from an unpaid leave of absence exceeding 10 days;
- They have returned from an extended paid leave, but have released their previous assignment;
- They are being reduced from a school due to a decrease in enrollment, school closure, school re-constitution/redesign or abolishment of a program;
- They have been released from a position by mutual agreement between the CEA and HR.

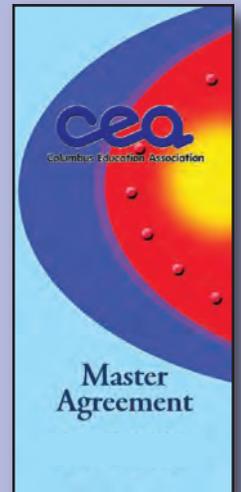
Principals *should not ask* teachers to fill out forms or to write letters stating that they are planning to interview or to leave the building for any reason.

For more information, please refer to Article 211 of our negotiated agreement.

Selective interview panels

Senior Faculty Representatives, principals and supervisors have been trained in the 211 process. Schools now should be working to select and train their interview teams. Section 211.01 of our negotiated agreement describes the composition of the interview team. The team should consist of: the principal, SrFR, one elected member of the ABC and two members of the school's community (for instance, a parent). If a school or department wishes to deviate from this requirement, the SrFR should make a request in writing to the Association President for an alternative panel. These requests must be made prior to the first round of postings, which is Thursday Mar. 12.

Each week, approved alternative panels will be listed in *The CEA Voice*. The following alternative panels have been approved to date: Indian Springs ES, Liberty ES, OT/PT and Starling MS.



Pre-K teacher visits

We are pleased that funding from the Franklin County Commissioners to continue the Pre-K Partners home visiting program has been approved. The purpose of the home visits is to get to know our kindergarten families and establish relationships with parents, as well as to answer any questions families may have about preparing their children for school. In 2008, 168 CCS staff visited 1,313 homes.

Staff members who work primarily with kindergartners participate in home visits. Teachers visit in pairs and the visits are scheduled in advance with the family. Each teacher earns \$30 for each visit up to \$540 (18 visits).

For questions and information, contact the Ohio Children's Foundation at 461-1939 or info@ohio-childrens-foundation.org.

Laptops on lockdown

Technology is a wonderful tool. It is amazing that a STEM school's capricious rules are keeping laptops out of the hands of students and teachers. The constricting rules are making the use of technology a hurdle of jumps and hoops for teachers to negotiate.

Rule 1: All laptops must be stored in a secure room next to the principal's office. A custodian must be asked to unlock the room so teachers can retrieve and return laptop carts.

Amended Rule 1: All laptops carts need to be signed out and a reason given for using the laptops (i.e. which GLI is being covered). This documentation will determine the need for the use of technology.

Amended-Amended Rule 1: Teachers need to sign out laptop carts 24 hours in advance of use. (If laptops are unsigned and a teacher has not given a 24-hour advance notice, the laptops cannot be used).

Even worse, the rules do not apply to all teachers. This is not a humorous tale. These teachers are not being accorded their rights as professionals. The students are not allowed to work with the technology that enhances their education.

To resolve this issue, the CEA staff is working with the PLD, and the teachers are working through the ABC. We can only hope that the principal be placed in lockdown (be made to wear his own orange vest), and the laptops be freed.



We welcome CCS board members

CEA looks forward to working with the new members appointed to the Columbus Board of Education—Ramona Reyes and Bryan Steward. Both bring substantial expertise to the position.

Reyes succeeds Terry Boyd, who resigned to take on increased responsibilities at Franklin University. Reyes is president of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and a human-resources specialist at Nationwide Insurance. She was a member of the Ohio Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs from 2004–2008.

Steward succeeds W. Carlton Weddington, who left the board to take a seat in the Ohio House in November. Steward is a civil-litigation attorney who works as an assistant vice president for Fifth Third Community Development Corp.

Voters in November will elect a successor to Betty Drummond, who recently announced she plans to leave the board Dec. 31 to spend more time with her family.

Thanks for standing United

The tally continues of the CCS United Way collection. Our schools have helped provide support for agencies such as Foodlink®, which provides links to more than 100 food pantries and soup kitchens in Franklin County. Callers contact FIRSTLINK at 211, and receive information about a pantry in their area.

Thanks for giving from the following schools: Eastmoor MS, Linden ES and NECC @Downtown HS.

National Women's History Month

Until the 1980s, women were virtually excluded from history textbooks. Their many accomplishments in politics, science, the arts and other areas remained relatively obscure.

But in 1981, after a series of week-long celebrations, Women's History Month began. During March, we have a unique opportunity to teach our students about the achievements of women throughout American history.

This year, we honor women in the environmental movement, including Rachel Carson, Julia Hill, Jane Goodall and Alice Waters. For more information, visit these sites:

- ➔ National Women's History Project: www.nwhp.org/
- ➔ Thomson-Gale Free Resources: www.gale.com/free_resources/whm/index.htm
- ➔ Women's History Resources, Library of Congress: www.loc.gov/rr/print/coll/237_path.html
- ➔ U.S. Women's History Workshop: www.assumption.edu/whw/



Bargaining update

We want to thank members for participating in the online Bargaining Priorities Survey. The response was overwhelming. The Bargaining Team and the CEA Board of Governors will meet Tuesday, Mar. 3, to make recommendations at the CEA Legislative Assembly on Thursday, Mar. 5.

If you did not see an item you submitted on the survey, it may be because we already have it in the contract; it is a violation of a law or policy; it is less than we currently have in the contract; it is an area over which we cannot bargain; or it is a term or condition of employment for a bargaining unit we don't represent. If you have questions, leave a message for Deborah Huffman-Mirib at the CEA office at 253-4731.

Special notes

- ❑ **Editor's note:** Last week's *Voice* article, "Congratulations are on TAP," failed to mention that some of the TAP schools did not receive performance awards because they will not be eligible until next school year. CEA did not intend to imply that some of the TAP schools' performance did not warrant awards. Our sincere apologies go to the new TAP schools, Clinton MS, Fifth Ave. ES, Lindbergh ES and Starling MS. They will receive their payouts next school year.
- ❑ If you have not already delivered your **ballots** to the CEA office, please have them ready the **morning of Tuesday, Mar. 3**, for pickup by the **Elections Committee**. Thank you for participating in the CEA elections process.
- ❑ Ohio's new superintendent, **Deborah S. Delisle**, will present awards to teachers who have been nominated for **Ohio Teacher of the Year**. Among the nominees are **CCS teachers Marcie Day (Parkmoor ES), Charlotte Price (South HS), Porsha Robinson-Ervin (Moler ES) and Geraldine Phifer (South HS)**. The awards will be presented at the Central Region Spring Conference of the Ohio School Boards Association on **Wednesday, Mar. 11**. CEA congratulates these members.
- ❑ The **Ohio Center for Law-Related Education** seeks elementary teachers to review a workbook of citizenship lessons. Contact **Jared Reitz** at jreitz@ocltre.org with a brief bio and interest statement. Please respond by Thursday, Mar. 5.
- ❑ **Save the date** for OEA's Building 21st-Century Learning Skills workshop at the Crowne Plaza in Dublin Apr. 3–4. Contact Demetrice Davis at davidsem@ohea.org for more information.
- ❑ **Borders** is offering active and retired teachers **25 percent discounts, Mar. 19–25**. The Kenny Road bookstore will hold a **teacher appreciation reception from 4–8 p.m., Friday, Mar. 20**. For more information go to www.borders.com/educators or e-mail stharp@bordersstores.com.
- ❑ Improve your leadership skills. The **OEA Women's Caucus** presents, "**Personal and Professional Decision Making Skills**," June 12–14, in Worthington. Contact Joni Watson, jonirw@aol.com or (937) 312-1006.