

The Voice

Rhonda Johnson, President

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CEA awarded planning grant

The NEA Foundation announced on May 4 that it will build upon the success of its collaborative *Closing the Achievement Gaps Initiative* by awarding the Columbus public education partnership a \$50,000 planning grant. The partnership, comprised of leaders from the CEA and CCS will use the funding to develop a proposal to demonstrate how we will work together to improve achievement rates for low income and minority students, while raising performance for all students.

Based on a review of our proposal later this year, the partnership may receive a five-year, up to \$1.25 million grant to implement our strategy. The proposal will be considered along with proposals from Kansas City, Kan.; Springfield, Mass.; Durham, N.C.; and Omaha, Neb.

"We are pleased and honored to receive this planning grant," said CEA President Rhonda Johnson. "It validates and enhances the work the Columbus Education Association has done to strengthen our partnerships with the school district and the school community."

"The Columbus City School District is pleased to continue our partnership with the Columbus Education Association and our work together to close achievement gaps," said Supt. Gene Harris. "NEA's generous support will help us achieve our goal of 100 percent student success."

Specifically, the partnership's proposal will focus on ways to work together to strengthen four areas of intervention in public education:

- Local association district capacity and collaboration to generate a shared understanding of the problem, frequent and ongoing communication, and an agreed-upon set of strategies to address challenges;
- System alignment and coherence designed to increase district-level capacity to ensure school-level success;
- Family and community partnerships designed to generate support for improvement efforts and to bring necessary resources for achieving the vision and outcomes; and
- Quality teaching designed to improve teaching and learning as a means of closing the achievement gaps by improving the professional lives of teachers.

"We have found that these areas of intervention together bolster the likelihood that local impact can be sustained as they address and change the conditions and structures that we believe most directly drive student achievement and performance," said NEA Foundation President & CEO Harriet Sanford. "Columbus' proposal will assess their readiness, build capacity, and develop a shared vision and set of aligned, systemic strategies that close the achievement gaps. And it may qualify for our larger, multi-year implementation grant."

"Preliminary results from our three original pilot sites show powerful evidence of the potential of building and maintaining a collaborative relationship focused on student achievement among these groups," said Sanford.

The planning grants are by invitation only and are based on student population and demographics, NEA local association affiliates, regional diversity and stable association and district leadership.

UNCF campaign kickoff

It's time again for the annual CCS drive to support the United Negro College Fund (UNCF). We have been contributing to this program for many years, and CEA urges you to continue our support. Our goal this year is \$115,000.



The UNCF has made a real difference in the lives of many CCS graduates, current staff members and local community leaders. Many students who have believed college to be an unachievable goal are now attending and graduating with distinction from institutions of higher learning throughout the United States.

Facts about UNCF:

- ▶ More than 90 percent of UNCF students require financial assistance.
- ▶ Forty percent are the first in their families to attend college.
- ▶ Approximately 50 percent are from families with a gross income of less than \$30,000, and 55 percent of UNCF students are from single-parent families.
- ▶ UNCF scholarships apply to all schools, not just historically black colleges and universities.

This drive is very important. We are preparing our students for jobs in the global community. UNCF makes the difference for students seeking to further their education.

The campaign ends May 28. For more information, call Ezetta Murray at CEA at 253-4731. You may participate through payroll deduction for one year and spread out your payments. Those who donate \$100 or more will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 gift card.

Swine flu update

Your CEA team and the administrative team of CCS are working closely together to provide you with continuous, accurate, up-to-date information about Swine Influenza, now formally called H1N1 Influenza.



Based on direct information from our schools and the Columbus Public Health Department, Columbus City Schools has *no* confirmed cases of H1N1 in any of our buildings or in our school district. There is no reason for parents to keep healthy children at home.

CCS has an existing plan to respond to epidemics and is moving forward as planned. The district is working closely with the Columbus Public Health Department and the Ohio Department of Health to monitor and to communicate on a regular basis. CCS has heightened disease surveillance and reporting and is providing education and communication with staff, students and parents regarding health concerns related to swine flu.

CCS remains diligent in its standard procedures for cleaning horizontal surface areas with hospital/institutional-grade disinfectant. School personnel are reinforcing with students proper hygiene practices such as frequent hand washing,

sneezing and coughing into your sleeve and properly disposing of tissues. Students and staff members who feel ill are being encouraged to be evaluated by a nurse or doctor.

Currently there are no plans to make any changes to school schedules or activities. The district is working closely with local and state health officials to evaluate risk levels and will continue to respond accordingly.

Information about H1N1 Influenza will be continuously updated on the district's intranet and the external Web site at www.coulmbus.k12.oh.us. A basic Q&A is provided on both Web sites. The public can go to www.columbus.k12.oh.us or contact the FACTline at 221-FACT (221-3228), Customer Relations at 365-8888 or e-mail questions or concerns to factline@columbus.k12.oh.us.

CCS/OSU Outreach Courses

All certificated staff have the opportunity to take tuition-free graduate level courses. The CCS/OSU Outreach Courses for Summer Quarter 2009 will be open for pre-registration May 4–17. Current course listings are below:

- Applied Behavior Analysis for Teachers (EDU PAES 742)
- Building the Story: A Digital Journey for Teachers of Writing and Composition K–8
- Collaboration through Participatory Leadership in Schools
- ESL: Foreign Language Testing (EDU T&L 963)
- ESL: Teaching Reading and Writing to ESL Students (EDU T&L 606)
- Experiencing the Power of Poetry—Reading and Writing Poetry for Educators and Human Development Professionals: Bridges to Literacy and Life
- School and Family Based Interventions
- Somali History, Language and Culture
- Strategies for Integrating Technology
- The Impact of Brain Research on Teaching, Learning and Diversity
- The Middle East in World Affairs

Additional courses may be added next week. For more information about these classes and to pre-register, go to www.columbus.k12.oh.us/osu and click on *Summer 2009 Courses*, then navigate through the two information pages to get to the list of courses.

Interested in being a cooperating teacher?

The Staff Development Office is preparing for field observation, methods and student teaching/internship placements for the 2009–2010 school year, especially those that will begin in the fall. The procedures developed in 2008–2009 around college/university student placements includes working to expand the opportunities for Columbus teachers to work with these students who are interested in our profession. In order to be considered as a cooperating teacher, the minimum expectations include five years experience and Highly Qualified Teacher status. Research shows that effective cooperating teachers exhibit the following qualities:

- Positive rapport with students, parents and colleagues
- High organizational skills
- Extensive content knowledge
- Effective communication skills
- Effective classroom management
- Positive professional role model
- Willingness to contribute to the teaching profession by sharing classroom expertise with pre-service teachers

Principals and district offices are currently compiling recommendations. If you possess these qualities and want to be on the list for consideration, talk to your principal before Wednesday, May 20.

CEA banquet May 29

CEA will hold its 33rd Annual Awards and Retirement Banquet May 29 at the Hyatt Regency. We will recognize a Friend of Education, Outstanding CEA Member, Innovator in Education, Builder of the Association, Distinguished Service recipient and Outstanding Faculty Representatives.

We also will be honoring more than 60 retirees and giving scholarships to some very talented students whose parents are members of CEA.

This is one of our most popular and emotionally moving events. It's a great time to socialize with your fellow CEA members and take a moment to thank those who have served the Association.

All retirees and Senior Faculty Representatives are invited to attend at no charge. The cost for others attending is \$30. Call CEA for reservations at 253-4731.

Retired and involved

Years spent in the classroom constitute only part of the service rendered by CEA members. Many also become members of CEA-R when they retire.

This group is instrumental in getting our work done. CEA-R members help us throughout the year, assisting us in office projects and charitable campaigns—registering members for ratification meetings and assemblies and even counting out issues of *The Voice* each week.

But we don't know how they find the time. A peek at a *CEA-R Newsletter* reveals dozens of activities. For instance, a book club meets on Tuesdays. A hiking club meets on Thursdays. This year, the group is traveling to Gettysburg, Cape Cod, Opryland, Shaker village in Kentucky and taking a cruise on the Muskingham River after touring the Zanesville Art Center.

Locally, members will gather for personally guided tours of the Columbus Zoo and Columbus Museum of Art.

CEA-R also organizes cruises and trips abroad. But that's not all. Check out the Web site, www.cea-retired.com, to learn about benefits for retired CEA members.

Stay involved! Stay in touch! If you have retired from CCS, or are about to, get more information about CEA-R. Call Judy Valentine at 235-4572.

Special notes

❑ National Board Certification Orientation Sessions:

Teachers interested in taking their professional growth and accomplishments to the next level should plan to attend an orientation session to learn about the National Board Certification process and how to qualify for financial support from the district or the State of Ohio. The **last session this school year** is on **Tuesday, May 19, 4:30–7 p.m.** at Northgate Center. Register on PD Planner to attend.

❑ **CCS's Job Fairs** for unfilled positions will be held **Tuesday, May 12**, for Subject Certificates (7–12 and 4–9 Regular) and Special K–12 Certificates (Art, Music, PE, etc.) and **Wednesday, May 13**, for Elementary-Level Certificates (K–8, 1–8, PreK–8) areas. Both Job Fairs will take place at **Northgate Center** starting at 4 p.m. Results from the Job Fairs will be posted **Friday, May 15**.

❑ The **OEA-R Spring Conference**, hosted by Capital and Central Districts, will be held on **Wednesday, May 20**, at the **Rothchild Farm in Urbana**. Updates will be presented on health care and STRS. Workshops on *Managing Your Money in Difficult Times* and *25 Financial Mistakes You Cannot Afford to Make* will be presented. Breakfast, lunch and a garden tour is included for \$20. For more information, call **Marilyn Allen** at 299-4841.