

The Voice

www.ceahio.org

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Let's prevent the flu

The H1N1 flu virus seems to spread the same way as seasonal flu—from person to person through coughing or sneezing and from surfaces containing the viruses. Below are symptoms that would need immediate medical care:

- ⊙ Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- ⊙ Severe or persistent vomiting
- ⊙ Confusion, not alert and interacting
- ⊙ Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- ⊙ Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- ⊙ Sudden dizziness



There is no immediate cure available other than standard anti-viral drugs. The Columbus Public Health Department is recommending everyone get the seasonal flu vaccine and the H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available.

Make sure you and your students:

- ⊙ Cover your mouth and nose by coughing or sneezing into the crook of your elbow.
- ⊙ Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze.
- ⊙ Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- ⊙ Avoid close contact with people who are ill.
- ⊙ Stay home if you are sick.

To read about more about H1N1, visit:

- ⊙ Ohio Department of Health: www.odh.ohio.gov/
- ⊙ Columbus Public Health: www.publichealth.columbus.gov/
- ⊙ NEA: www.nea.org/home/31835.htm

At present, there are no confirmed cases of H1N1 in Columbus City Schools. However, CCS keeps in contact with public health officials and will let staff and parents know if an outbreak occurs. Information will be posted to the district's Web site at www.columbus.k12.oh.us.

Next steps for NEA Foundation grant

Last May, CEA received a \$50,000 planning grant from the NEA Foundation's "Closing the Achievement Gap Initiative." Using these funds, CEA and CCS are working together to create a plan to accelerate the achievement rate and close the gaps for underperforming, low income and minority student groups.

Harriet Sanford, NEA Foundation CEO, met with our



Reform Panel, Supt. Gene Harris, CEA President Rhonda Johnson and OEA and CCS officials to discuss our capacity for this program. In December, CEA will apply for a five-year, \$1.25 million grant to help implement the plan. As few as two local associations nationally will receive these funds. CEA is very excited about the opportunity to apply.

The NEA Foundation understands the importance of involving teachers, building principals, district-level administrators, families and the association in this collaborative process to shape learning environments and opportunities for all students.

This initiative is working in other states. In Hamilton County, Tenn., from 2004–2008, it has helped to close the achievement gaps by more than 10 percent in both reading and math in its 21 middle schools. It has created a network system of teachers, principals, instructional coaches and family partnership specialists to address specific issues related to achievement.

In Milwaukee, educators have created a professional development program resulting in student achievement rates in participating schools that have surpassed the district average for the first time. Educators regularly engage in discussions of student work and learn how to best promote student achievement. The teams developed a comprehensive literacy and mathematics initiative.

You can read more about these programs at www.nea.foundation.org by clicking on the "educators" tab.

Know the contract: Class size

The CEA has received a number of calls regarding class size at the elementary level. Class size for kindergarten through 3rd grade should be at no more than 29 pupils and in grades 4 and 5, no more than 30 pupils.

Schools should be organized based on approximately 25 pupils per classroom teacher. Even though an adjustment is not required until Oct. 1, principals may call their PLDs to request a substitute teacher be assigned while undertaking this process. No permanent teachers are being hired until after the October date.

We know that one of the levy promises was to reduce class size in the primary grades in certain schools. This also will not take place until October. Continue to call CEA if you have questions or concerns about class size. Please review Section 301.01 of your *Master Agreement*.



Grievances update: Here we go—again

Even though it is early in the school year, the contract has already been violated. Most violations have been resolved through an informal process with administration. Unfortunately, a few have not:

Building/Unit/Administrator	Statement of Grievance	Relief Requested	Disposition
Parkmoor ES Stacey McCarthy	Adm. denied teachers their afternoon recess if they continued with their 60-minute lunch.	Adm. maintain the current scheduled sixty-minute lunch and allow teachers to have their voted-upon afternoon recess for students	Step 2—Hearing Pending
Maize ES Ranea Williams	Adm. arbitrarily changed the afternoon recess time. In response to FRs requesting time being switched back to mid-afternoon, the adm. developed a three-option ballot either eliminating the afternoon recess totally or taking 15 minutes off of their lunch hour.	Adm. reinstate the afternoon recess while leaving the 60-minute lunch hour intact	Step 2—Hearing Pending

Support the *Master Agreement*

The *CEA contract* is a binding and legal agreement between the Columbus Board of Education and the Columbus Education Association. But the agreement is meaningless if administrators and teachers do not follow it.

Please take time to review the contract. If an administrator is not following the contract, he or she can be grieved. The grievance is usually filed at Step 1 at the building level. If the matter is not resolved, it is filed at Step 2 with the superintendent. If parties still fail to resolve their differences, the CEA Board of Governors may vote to take the issue to arbitration. Know that the Association will file grievances on your behalf or on behalf of a entire staff, if necessary.

Grievances can be filed for any violation of any section, policy, rule or procedure. These might include:

- ➔ Lack of administrative support for discipline policies (Article 208): For instance, if a teacher was hit by a student, no matter what the age, swift action from the administrator should take place. Another example of lack of administrative support is an administrator's failure to return 190s in a timely manner (72 hours).
- ➔ Unprofessional behavior (Article 404): Administrators are not to verbally criticize teachers in front of students, parents or peers. Bargaining unit members should not be subjected to verbal abuse.

It is clear that everyone needs to read and follow the contract. If there are areas of concern, call CEA. Document all pertinent information related to your concern. This is your contract. Rights that have been fought for and won should not be given away because of complacency or fear. Stand up. Stand with us. Uphold your contract.

The Fling is coming...

Don't forget to put the CEA Fall Fling on your calendar. Join us Friday, Sept. 25, from 3:30–7:30 p.m. at the Aladdin Shrine Center, 3850 Stelzer Road. Admission is free; beer and wine are \$1. Great entertainment is provided, including live music and door prizes. If you join or if you are already a member of Teachers for Better Schools (TBS), you will receive extra door prize tickets.

This is one of the most enjoyable events of the year. Gather your colleagues and friends and come to the Aladdin Shrine Center to enjoy a wonderful evening of fun and fellowship. You will meet many CCS educators and find out more about the people who make Columbus schools great.

CEA just welcomed 300 teachers at its annual new teacher luncheon. This is your chance to let them know you are there to support them. New teachers can meet experienced colleagues, develop camaraderie and make some valuable friendships. As CEA President Rhonda Johnson told our newest colleagues, "You are joining a family."

You can talk with other CEA members, local politicians and CEA staff. Join the fun. Come to the Fling.

LPDC update

You have until Oct. 14 to complete an online *Recertification Request* if you attended a professional development workshop or activity not offered through CCS during the 2008–2009 school year and wish to apply for CEUs for that event. To complete this process, navigate to the Curriculum and Staff Development Web page at www.columbus.k12.oh.us/staffdev/. Click on the LPDC button, go to the PD Planner Guides, and download and print *Submitting an Individual CEU Request*.

Follow the guide closely as the CiMS system is not intuitive. Do not submit a request for a workshop that is offered within CCS (which should already be listed in the *PD Planner Activity Catalog*).

Special notes

- ❑ **CEA Member Scholarship application deadline: Saturday, Oct. 31.** Receive \$750 in tuition assistance for each eligible dependent who is a college senior. For details, call Cora Miller at 253-4731.
- ❑ **Sick leave bank open enrollment deadline: Wednesday, Sept 30.** Donate two days of your sick leave, and become eligible to borrow as many as 10 days. To download an application, go to <http://bit.ly/3gPH2e>.
- ❑ **Legal Services Comprehensive Program enrollment closes Saturday, Oct. 31.** Receive reduced rates if you need to use a lawyer frequently. Enroll for extensive coverage for matters not limited to the basic plan, which include real estate, wills and estates, domestic relations, consumer protection, personal injury, bankruptcy and traffic violations. Contact Cloppert, Sauter, Latanick & Washburn at 461-4455.
- ❑ **Health insurance open enrollment will be Oct. 13–Nov. 6. Everyone must re-enroll.** You must meet with the plan counselor even if you want to waive coverage. Certain documents are required for changes to your plan. For questions, call 365-6475.
- ❑ **Save the date: Friday, Oct. 16, is Capital Day** at the Hyatt Regency.
- ❑ The Ohio Center for Law-Related Education will hold its 19th Annual **Law & Citizenship Conference, Oct. 4–5**, at the Holiday Inn, Worthington. The conference will provide information about citizenship to help students develop analytical skills. The center will unveil its new elementary activity book filled with original, interactive lessons and resources aligned with the standards and not available anywhere else. For more information and to register, go to: www.ocltre.org/LnC.

CEA Pre-Paid Legal Services Plan OEA/NEA Attorney Referral Program

At Cloppert, Latanick, Sauter and Washburn, we have dedicated ourselves to teachers in and out of the classroom. Our experienced personal injury, divorce, dissolution, criminal, probate and real estate attorneys are available to you at moderate rates which are lower than we normally charge our private clients.

Please contact us today and allow our experience to work for you.
(614) 461-4455 or www.cloppertlaw.com