

The Voice

Rhonda Johnson, President

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CEA lends support to federal grant application

Ohio could receive up to \$400 million in federal education funding, and some of that could come to Columbus.

Last week the CEA Board of Governors voted unanimously to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the CCS Superintendent and the CCS School Board President, agreeing to join the State of Ohio's application to receive Race to the Top (RTTT) funding.

To receive RTTT funding, each state must promise to help its lowest-achieving schools by:

- Implementing standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed after graduation
- Developing data systems measuring student growth and success
- Recruiting, supporting and rewarding effective teachers and developing incentives to retain them
- Turning around its lowest achieving schools

CEA President Rhonda Johnson was among only a handful of school and union officials from across the state asked to personally weigh in during discussions about the application. She believes the Association's endorsement and pledge of participation represents an opportunity that cannot be passed up.

President Johnson told the Board of Governors that support of this application is critical for Ohio, where deficits already undermine school funding. But the program also would reward Ohio schools—particularly in Columbus—for already doing the things the federal government wants.

"We are the type of school district that can do great things with this funding," she said. "We already understand the work that needs to be done."

The Race to the Top program aims to close achievement gaps across the nation while increasing graduation rates and preparing students for college and the workplace.

"We in Columbus already are reform-minded," said Johnson. "We already work as a team with the administration to identify and assist our lowest achieving students. We already provide strong teacher support within our own district and have developed groundbreaking incentive programs, including financial rewards for teachers at schools that achieve high goals they set for themselves. We are a model for the nation, and we should seize this opportunity to lead reform."

School districts that buy in are likely to receive a portion of the funding that is awarded. The level will be based on districts' Title I service levels. Grants will be awarded in April and September. Only a few states will qualify. To learn more, visit www.ed.gov/racetothetop/index.html.



Quarterly diagnostic survey results

CEA and the administration reviewed the results of a member survey regarding Quarterly Diagnostics at their Dec. 14 Joint Labor-Management meeting. CEA surveyed teachers across the district who administered Quarterly Diagnostics, and more than 500 teachers representing every school in the district participated.

Roughly twenty percent of teachers responded that they did not receive the proper number of test booklets or that they did not receive the test materials in time to adequately prepare for the test. The administration is committed to making sure teachers receive the proper amount of materials at least one week before they administer the test.

Almost sixty percent of teachers indicated that their students were unable to finish their Quarterly Diagnostic within the class or testing period. The administration is concerned that such a large number of students are unable to complete the test during the class or testing period and will look at the reasons for this.

Half of the teachers who took the survey indicated there were alignment errors with the Quarterly Diagnostic. The administration has assembled a team of classroom teachers and teachers on special assignment to review the comments and specific test item errors submitted by the survey participants.

Additionally, CEA and the administration discussed a misperception about the intent and the alignment of Quarterly Diagnostics. The Quarterly Diagnostics are intended to inform instruction. These end-of-quarter tests are not aligned with the Ohio Achievement Assessments (OAA). They are aligned with the CCS curriculum and pacing guides. Tests should be given to students under normal classroom testing conditions, not OAA testing simulations.

King Dinner

It is not too late to get your tickets for the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Awards Dinner Jan. 14 at the Hyatt Regency. This year we honor Michelle Mills, President and CEO of St. Stephens Community House, with the MLK Humanitarian Award and Sandra Y. Waters-Holley, a guidance counselor at Hamilton ES and coordinator of the Project Help Clothing Ministry, with the Helen Jenkins Davis Award.



Join us to honor these community advocates. Our keynote speaker this year is Emmy Award-winning news personality Ed Gordon. Gordon was a leading news anchor for the Black Entertainment Television network. He, too, is a community leader and has many thoughts to share with us.

Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased by calling CEA at 253-4731.

LA attendance

The single largest contingent of the CEA Legislative Assembly (LA) consists of faculty representatives from each building/unit throughout CCS. Senior FRs have a duty-free period during the day to conduct Association business, but their responsibilities extend to CEA meetings (i.e., the Legislative Assembly) outside of the school day.

The following is a list of the buildings/units represented at the CEA LA held on December 3: A.G. Bell ES, Alpine ES, Alum Crest HS, Art, Arts Impact MS, Avalon ES, Beechcroft HS, Beery MS, Briggs HS, Broadleigh ES, Brookhaven HS, Buckeye MS, Burroughs ES, Cassady ES, Cedarwood ES, Centennial HS, Champion MS, Columbus Africentric ECES, Columbus Africentric ECSS, Columbus Spanish Immersion Academy, Como ES, Dana ES, Deshler ES, Dominion MS, Downtown HS, East Columbus ES, East HS, Easthaven ES, Eastmoor HS, Eastmoor MS, École Kenwood, Fair ES, Fairmoor ES, Ft. Hayes CC, Ft. Hayes MEC, Gables ES, Guidance Counselors, Heyl ES, Hilltonia MS, Hudson Comm. Ed. Ctr., Hudson St. Warehouse, Huy ES, Independence HS, Indian Springs ES, Indianola K-8, Innis ES, I-PASS @ Mifflin MS, Juvenile Detention Center, Kingswood Center, Leawood ES, Liberty ES, Lindbergh ES, Linden-McKinley HS on Arcadia, Maize ES, Marion-Franklin HS, Medina MS, Mifflin HS, Music, North Linden ES, Northgate Center, Northland HS, Northtowne ES, Nurses, Oakmont ES, OT/PT, Olde Orchard ES, PAR, Parkmoor ES, Ridgeview MS, South HS, South Mifflin ES, Southwood ES, Stewart ES, SuccessWorks Academy, Sullivant ES, Tutors, Walnut Ridge HS, Watkins ES, Wedgewood MS, Weinland Park ES, West Broad ES, West HS, West Mound ES, Westgate ES, Whetstone HS, Windsor Academy ES, Winterset ES, Woodcrest ES, Woodward Park MS, Work Study and Yorktown MS.

The next meeting of the CEA Legislative Assembly will be on Thursday, Feb. 4, 2010, at 4:30 p.m.

Study questions charter effectiveness

A recent report from researchers at Stanford University questions the effectiveness of charter schools on the national level. The report, *Multiple Choice: Charter School Performance in 16 States* tracked the performance of nearly three quarters of the nation's charter schools students, including the State of Ohio.

Multiple Choice researchers created "virtual students" based on students in competing traditional public schools, the charter's "feeder pool." This feature allowed Multiple Choice researchers to compare charter students to equivalent traditional public school students, taking an "apples to apples" approach.

Nationally, 2,403 charter schools were ranked based on their students' math gains, measured by state standardized tests. Nearly 46 percent of charter results were "indistinguishable" from traditional public school comparisons. A further 37 percent of charter schools posted math gains that were "significantly below" competing traditional public schools.

Compared to their peers in traditional school districts, new charter students in Ohio actually lose learning initially in both reading and math. Researchers established that charter students continued to experience "significant losses of learning in math after the first year of attendance." Ohio was one of six states in the study that demonstrated lower than average charter student growth as compared to peers in traditional public schools.

When disaggregated by race, African-American students in Ohio charters "receive no significant benefit in both reading and math" compared to traditional school peers. Hispanics who are enrolled in Ohio charters "receive a significant

loss of learning compared to their counterparts in traditional public schools in both reading and math".

Special Education students, English Language Learners and retained charter school students all receive "no significant benefit compared to their counterparts in traditional public schools in both reading and math", according to the study.

Researchers at Stanford were unable to establish if Ohio charters could produce better growth results than traditional public schools by using achievement test scores. According to the researchers, in Ohio, "charter schools do about the same as traditional public schools in reading and charter school attendance leads to significantly worse results in math...compared to their virtual peers from traditional public schools".

Go to: http://credo.stanford.edu/reports/multiple_choice_cred.pdf

Know your snow days

We are now into the season where weather sometimes forces the district to close schools. Fortunately, we are allowed some leeway in these situations. We have five calamity days each year that schools do not have to make up. During these days, teachers are not required to report and are not charged leave.

If you are a tutor or latchkey teacher and are scheduled to work, you will be paid for the day. However, part-time hourly employees will not be paid for calamity days.

If a teacher works in multiple buildings and one or more is closed, the teacher should report to the open buildings.

On calamity days, no extracurricular activities will take place.

For more information, please refer to the Memorandum of Agreement on page 169 of the *Master Agreement*.

Back up your computer files

Thanks to the passage of Issue 75, the district has begun to replace older computers in the district with the new thin client work stations. As the computer replacements continue, members should take precautions to safeguard their files and professional data.

In some instances, members have been given just 24 hours' notice that their computers will be replaced, resulting in lost data and files. CEA urges all members who have not yet had their computers replaced to save their files and data on a flash drive or other removable media.

Members should check with their administrators or supervisors to ascertain when the computers at their worksites will be replaced. Remember, your computer could be replaced at anytime—so remember to regularly save your data. Make sure the files and professional data you rely on to perform your duties are safeguarded.

CEA elections

The following positions will be open in the CEA Spring 2010 Election: CEA President; CEA Vice President; Governors for Districts 2, 7, 9 and 10; 2010 NEA Delegates; and 2010-11 OEA Delegates.

Members may declare their candidacy for these positions from Jan. 4–Feb. 4 and conduct campaigns from Feb. 5–19. Voting will take place from Feb. 22–Mar. 8. The Elections Committee will tabulate votes on Mar. 9.

Special note

☐ CEA-R will host a **silent auction** on **Jan. 7 at 10 a.m.** at the **Berwick Party House**. All proceeds from the auction will be donated to the David and Joanne Katonik Art Enrichment Fund. The fund **gives money to art and music teachers** in CCS for **supplies and equipment**.