

The Voice

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Race to the Top update

Ohio's deadline for districts to participate in Round 2 of Race to the Top (RttT) was May 14. According to the final list released by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), 534 traditional and charter school districts have joined Ohio's RttT application. This represents an increase of 55 traditional school districts (321) and a decrease of 2 charter schools (213), compared to the first round of Ohio's RttT application.

Eleven of Franklin County's sixteen school districts joined the state's application. They include: Bexley, Canal Winchester, Columbus, Dublin, Grandview Heights, Groveport-Madison, Hilliard, Reynoldsburg, Upper Arlington, Whitehall and Worthington. CEA President Rhonda Johnson, along with Supt. Gene Harris and Board President Carol Perkins signed the Memorandum of Understanding for RttT for Columbus.

Ohio could receive up to \$400 million if the state's application is approved. By law, 50 percent of RttT monies will automatically be distributed to participating districts based on their share of students who qualify for free and reduced price-lunch. ODE guaranteed each district that participated a minimum of \$100,000 of "floor funding."

For-profit charter management scrutinized

Earlier this month Policy Matters, an Ohio-based, non-partisan think tank, released "Imagine Schools: Public Good vs. Private Profit." The report calls into question the financial practices of Imagine Schools, Inc., the largest for-profit Education Management Organization (EMO) in the nation. Imagine Schools, Inc. oversees 71 charter schools in 11 states and the District of Columbia. Eleven are in Ohio, four of which are in Columbus. Since the 2005–2006 school year, the EMO's Ohio charters have received more than \$115 million in state and federal funds.

Of Imagine's six Ohio charter schools that have been rated by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), none have earned higher than a "D" on the state report card since the 2005–2006 school year. ODE rated Imagine's charters far worse than neighboring traditional public schools. According to state law, Imagine cannot open additional charters in Ohio until their schools' academic performance improves.

"Public Good vs. Private Profit" highlights how Imagine utilizes Schoolhouse Finance, its real estate subsidiary to broker complex real-estate deals for charters within its organization. According to the report, Schoolhouse Finance paid \$6 million between 2005 and 2008 to purchase five Ohio properties that now house four Imagine schools. Schoolhouse Finance resold all five properties to a real estate investment trust within 22 months of each property's purchase for a combined total of \$26 million dollars.

The report makes a number of policy recommendations

to state legislators, including prohibiting for-profit EMOs from managing charters in Ohio. To download the entire report, go to <http://bit.ly/9SXO92>.

Correct your contact information

CCS needs your correct U.S. mailing address and home phone number or another preferred phone number. Many members now use their cell phones as a preferred method of communication.

Many area codes are missing from members' personal information because when they were hired, there was only one area code for Central Ohio. Area codes are vital, since many of us live beyond the 614 exchange.

It's important that CCS have your updated information, because CEA needs to be able to communicate with you regarding employment information, CEA elections and other union business. CEA gets a lot of returned mail due to members moving and not changing their personal information with HR. Please note that the information in the CEA database comes from CCS.

Download a personal data change form on the CEA website, and send CCS Human Resources your updated information. Complete a new form even if you only need to update your area code. Go to <http://bit.ly/czASr3> to download the form.

LPDC update for all educators

The LPDC will meet for the final time this school year on Wednesday, June 2. They do not meet in July. If you do not have a current, approved IPDP on file with the LPDC, this will be your last chance to have one reviewed before participating in summer professional development. Remember, you cannot count any credits (semester hours, quarter hours or CEUs) earned prior to having an approved IPDP on file for renewing a license.

If you have any questions about LPDC procedures, download the *LPDC Handbook* from the Curriculum and Staff Development webpage. The newly-revised handbook contains the guide for creating and submitting an IPDP (Appendix A), which includes several examples of learning goals. It also contains the guide for submitting a request for individual CEUs (Appendix D) and the guide for registering for district workshops listed in *PD Planner* (Appendix C). You can download the handbook from the CCS Internet homepage; click on *Staff* (bottom right); click on *Departments* in the gray-shaded area (*not* in the black header at top); click on *Curriculum and Staff Development*; click on the *LPDC* button (it's red); scroll down to *Publications* and click on *LPDC Handbook of Operations* or go to <http://bit.ly/ctvWA4> to download the handbook.

Join CEA-R

A key feature of the Annual Awards & Retirement Banquet is honoring our colleagues who are moving on from the classroom. For many, moving on means joining CEA-R. This group of retired educators is constantly on the move, with book clubs, hiking groups, concerts and trips (day and overnight) to shop or visit historic places.

When they are not traveling, CEA-R helps us get our work done at the office, assisting us with office projects and charitable campaigns—even counting CEA literature, United Way contributions and issues of *The Voice* each week.

Stay involved. If you are retiring this year, get your membership application in to CEA-R. Dues are \$10 per year or \$100 for life. Then get busy signing up for social activities. This year the group is traveling to Gettysburg, Cape Cod, Opryland, a 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. Check out the website, www.cea-retired.com, to learn about benefits for retired CEA members. There are many reasons to join.

If you have retired from CCS or are about to, get more information about CEA-R. However, you do not have to be retired to be a member. Call Judy Valentine at 235-4572.

TURN spring meeting

Teachers' unions are frequently criticized as obstacles to education reform initiatives, but we in Columbus are reform-minded. That is why the Columbus Education Association has been a member of the Teacher Union Reform Network (TURN) for the past 15 years and was represented at this year's spring meeting. TURN's primary goal is to build new union models that can take the lead in building and sustaining effective schools for all students.

TURN hosts multiple regional and national meetings each year, encouraging member unions to "maintain an open mind to new and promising ideas and changes." At the most recent national meeting in mid-May, TURN attendees participated in conversations with two polarizing figures in the education world: education author Diane Ravitch and Jo Anderson, Senior Advisor to Education Secretary Arne Duncan.

Jo Anderson presented the Obama administration's plan for the reauthorization of the Elementary Secondary Education Act. Anderson also gave an update on *The Keep Our Educators Working* Act of 2010, designed to provide \$23 billion to prevent massive nationwide layoffs of teachers. During the discussion period, TURN attendees peppered Anderson with their questions and concerns regarding Race to the Top. Anderson promised to take the feedback he received to Secretary Duncan.

Diane Ravitch was an assistant Secretary of Education in President George H. W. Bush's administration. Originally a proponent of charter schools, school choice and high-stakes testing, Ravitch spoke passionately about why she felt the increased role of standardized testing and choice in America's schools has distorted the curriculum and deprofessionalized teaching. Ravitch's new book, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* made *The New York Times* best-seller list and is in its seventh printing. It was recently announced that Ravitch will receive NEA's 2010 Friend of Education Award.

CEA recently interviewed Ravitch about teaching and learning in the age of accountability. To read the interview, go to <http://bit.ly/ajINff>.

Attend the Legislative Assembly

FRs should make plans to attend the CEA Legislative Assembly (LA) at the Columbus Downtown HS on Thursday, May 27, at 4:30 p.m. All CEA members are welcome. It is important that every building/unit be represented by its SFR. This will be the final meeting of the LA for this school year.

The Assembly consists of Faculty Representatives, Governors and CEA officers and is the policymaking body of the Association.

The following buildings/units were represented at the May 6 LA: Alpine ES, Alum Crest HS, Art, Berwick K-8, Binns ES, Briggs HS, Broadleigh ES, Buckeye MS, Burroughs ES, Cassidy ES, CEA, Cedarwood ES, Centennial HS, Champion MS, Clinton ES, Clinton MS, Cols. Africentric ECSS, Columbus Spanish Immersion, Como ES, Counselors, Deshler ES, Dominion MS, East Columbus ES, East HS, East Linden ES, Easthaven ES, Eastmoor Academy, Eastmoor MS, École Kenwood, Fair ES, Fairmoor ES, Ft. Hayes MEC, Hilltonia MS, Hudson Comm. Ed. Ctr., Hudson St. Warehouse, Huy ES, Independence HS, Indian Springs ES, Innis ES, I-PASS @ Mifflin MS, Kingswood Center, Leawood ES, Liberty ES, Lincoln Park ES, Lindbergh ES, Linden ES, Maize ES, Marion-Franklin HS, Medina MS, Mifflin MS, Music, Northgate Center, Northland HS, Northtowne ES, Nurses, Oakmont ES, Olde Orchard ES, PAR, Parkmoor ES, Parsons ES, Ridgeview MS, Salem ES, Shepard Center, Sherwood MS, South HS, Southwood ES, Speech & Language, Stewart ES, Sullivant ES, Tutors, Walnut Ridge HS, Wedgewood MS, Weinland Park ES, West Broad ES, West HS, Watkins ES, Whetstone HS, Windsor ES, Winterset ES, Woodcrest ES, Woodward Park MS and Yorktown MS.

Please contact the CEA office if your building was represented but not listed above.

Don't text and drive in Columbus

The Columbus City Code Texting Ban (CCC°2131.44) went into effect on May 5, 2010. This is a primary offense for which you may be stopped if there is reasonable suspicion that you are violating the statute. Once a driver is stopped or has been involved in an accident, an investigation may take place to determine whether or not there is probable cause to believe that the driver was, in fact, violating the texting ban. Those caught texting behind the wheel will face a \$150 fine.



Here are the details for drivers in Columbus:

- ◆ Unlike seat-belt enforcement, you can be stopped and ticketed just for texting.
- ◆ The ban covers writing and reading text messages or e-mail, as well as using the Internet while driving. It covers only drivers, not passengers.
- ◆ You're considered to be driving even if you're stopped at a red light or stuck in traffic. You must be parked or pulled over to text legally from your car.

Special note

- ❑ Each year, teachers have the opportunity to **change pay plans**. **Plan A is 21 pays** (Sept.–June) and **Plan B is 26 pays** (Sept.–Aug.). You may switch during the open period, which **closes Aug. 30**. Those who work in year-round programs must choose Plan B. For questions, call CEA or the district payroll office at 365-6440.