

The Voice

Rhonda Johnson, President

www.ceaohio.org

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Columbus Education Association

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NEA President visits CCS schools



NEA President Dennis Van Roekel (left) speaking with Champion MS teacher Mike Russell

Roekel stopped in Columbus on Wednesday, Aug. 25, as part of his week-long, multi-city, back-to-school tour. The veteran high school math teacher arrived at West HS at 6:20 a.m. on the first day of the new school year to meet and greet the staff.

West HS is one of seven CCS Priority Schools designated by the Ohio Department of Education. The seven schools could receive a total of \$20 million in additional federal funding over the next three years as recipients of School Improvement Grants (SIGs). President Van Roekel spoke with teachers and administrators of West's Innovation Team tasked with using SIG monies to facilitate the transformation of teaching and learning at the school.

NEA President Dennis Van Roekel, OEA President Patricia Frost-Brooks and CEA President Rhonda Johnson traveled from West HS to join Gov. Ted Strickland, Supt. Gene Harris and other dignitaries at South Mifflin STEM Academy to announce the award of a \$550,000 service learning grant from the federal government.

Awarded by the Corporation for National and Community Service, the "Bringing Learning to Life" grant partners include NEA, OEA, CEA, CCS and The Ohio State University College of Education and Human Ecology.

"Teachers will receive professional development to help them create more effective hands-on learning opportunities for students," stated Van Roekel. "We look forward to seeing the work that comes out of this project; it is our hope that we will be able to replicate it in other places."

"The grant is vital to the Columbus community," agreed President Johnson. "It will allow the members of the Columbus Education Association to receive professional development that will help them continue to lead the way in restoring schools to their traditional roles as community hubs."

After a tour of South Mifflin STEM Academy, Van Roekel, Frost-Brooks and Johnson traveled to Champion MS. The visit to Champion MS illustrated NEA's Positive Agenda and Priority Schools principles. Teachers recruited to staff this high-needs school are paid an extra \$4,000 a year.

After having lunch with the staff, Van Roekel departed for Austin, Texas.

Ohio wins Race to the Top Round 2

The Columbus Education Association is proud to announce that our signing on to Ohio's Race to the Top (RttT) grant application helped the state win \$400 million. The Columbus City Schools will receive \$20.5 million over the next four years.

The competitive grant was designed to promote reform across four key areas:

- ⇒ Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace
- ⇒ Building data systems that measure student growth and success and informing teachers and principals how to improve instruction
- ⇒ Recruiting, developing, rewarding and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most
- ⇒ Turning around their lowest-performing schools

Ten states won this time. Each has adopted rigorous common college- and career-ready standards in reading and math and have created pipelines and incentives to put the most effective teachers in high-needs schools. Additionally, all second-round winners developed alternative pathways to teacher and principal certification.

The next step is planning the specifics the grant will address. The Reform Panel will act as the transformation team to oversee the RttT program. Management and labor have committed to work collaboratively through the collective bargaining process to address areas of the RttT program that differ from the contract. The deadline for the plan is November 2010.

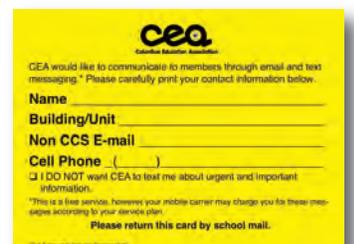
Ohio has a great strategy for public schools—the Ohio Education Opportunity Act, also known as House Bill 1. RttT dollars now give us the chance to implement that vision at a faster pace than without this funding.

OEA staff will provide technical assistance and consulting advice to CEA as we strive within our school community to use RttT dollars wisely.

OEA President Patricia Frost-Brooks said at the press conference: "I want to congratulate everyone who worked on Ohio's application. This will truly help all of us move our public education system from fifth to first in the nation."

CEA needs your contact information

CEA needs to communicate important information to our members in a timely manner, especially during this negotiations year. Text messages and e-mails are the most efficient way of achieving this goal. Please fill out the yellow CEA contact card. Give it to your Faculty Representative, or return it to the CEA office through school mail.



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CEA would like to communicate to members through email and text messaging.* Please carefully print your contact information below.

Name _____

Building/Unit _____

Non CCS E-mail _____

Cell Phone (____) _____

I DO NOT want CEA to text me about urgent and important information.

*This is a free service, however your mobile carrier may charge you for these messages according to your service plan.

Please return this card by school mail.

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College scholarship forms available

Our members work hard, and many are paying college tuition for their children. We are proud to assist those whose children attend institutions of higher education.

The CEA Members Scholarship Foundation provides up to \$750 in tuition assistance for each senior attending a university or other post-secondary institution. Ten dollars of dues from each member supports this fund. The funds are handled and disbursed by the Columbus Foundation. Payments are made directly to the college or university.

Eligible students must be college seniors between Sept. 2010 and June 2011 and maintain a 2.0 GPA. Parents or guardians must have taught in the Columbus schools for four years prior to the application date and must be CEA/CEA-R members.

Please visit the CEA website at <http://bit.ly/cS4HpX> to obtain an application. The deadline is Friday, Oct. 29. If you have questions, call Cora Miller at 253-4731.

PAR: Part II

Peer Assistance and Review (PAR), one of CEA's most successful programs, is now expanding. The program will now serve second-year teachers in the Briggs and Linden-McKinley feeder patterns. PAR II will be facilitated by a PAR Consulting Teacher and the building principal.

Support for PAR II is being provided by CEA's \$1.25 million grant from the NEA Foundation. One of CEA's goals is to strengthen teacher preparation and build a stronger web of collaborative support.

PAR will provide two full years of mentoring, assistance and review for these teachers. The extended PAR program will focus on:

- ✧ Professional self-reflection assessment
- ✧ Identifying four goals for the year
- ✧ Building and maintaining a professional portfolio to track progress and goal completion

PAR is a national model. For more than 20 years, the district and the Association have worked together to sponsor and mentor new teachers and those who find later that they need assistance. PAR ensures that there is a high quality teacher in every classroom.

Join the sick leave bank

The sick leave bank is a repository for days you may donate from your sick leave. The open enrollment period has begun and ends on Sept. 30. Anyone who has joined the bank by donating two sick days and then exhausts his or her own store of sick days, may take a loan from the bank of up to 10 additional days.

We encourage you to donate two days and to borrow from the bank if you have the need. You should seriously consider joining if you have a limited number of sick leave days. Bear in mind that if participation in the bank program drops below 10 percent, the program will be canceled; and your days will be refunded.

The application form is available on the CEA website. To download a copy, go to <http://bit.ly/cCFNtY>.

Retiring? STRS changes PLOP procedures

Beginning with July 2010 retirement dates, expect to receive your STRS partial lump-sum payment (PLOP) no earlier than 91 days after your effective retirement date. Also, beginning Oct. 1, 2010, PLOP payments will no longer be available for the purchase of service credit.

STRS has had the practice of paying on the effective date

of a member's retirement. This change came as a surprise.

The decision was not made through administrative rule nor discussed at a STRS Board meeting prior to notice being sent to affected members.

STRS staff has stated that the change to the 91st day is the same practice used by SERS and OPERS and that additional tax accounting and reporting is required for PLOP payments made within the first 90 days of retirement. STRS staff has also stated a willingness to assist 2010 retirees for whom the change represents a hardship.

LPDC update: CEUs

Monday, Oct. 1, is the deadline for submitting a CEU request for attending any professional development activity that occurred during the 2009–2010 school year and was not sponsored by a CCS department (and, therefore, not listed in the PD Planner Activity Catalog). Download the PD Planner Guide by following these steps:

1. Navigate to the **Curriculum and Staff Development** webpage.
2. Click on the **LPDC button** (red).
3. Scroll down and click on **Submitting an Individual CEU Request** (under PD Planner Guides).
4. Print out the guide and follow it carefully.

Please do not submit an Individual CEU Request (recertification request) for any activity already listed in the PD Planner Activity Catalog. This results in the activity showing up as incomplete in your activity records. Also, please do not submit college courses for Individual CEUs. The LPDC does not track college credits in PD Planner...only CEUs. Questions? Contact the LPDC Office at Northgate (5039).

Put on your sneakers for CIS

Communities in Schools is the nation's leading dropout prevention organization helping kids stay in school and graduate. In central Ohio, CIS is active in the Columbus and Whitehall City School districts and the Catholic Diocese where they work with students and their families in meeting basic needs so that they can concentrate on being successful in school. CIS helps our students every day by brokering a variety of community resources directly into the schools to encourage students to improve attendance, decrease school violence and discipline incidents and increase graduation rates.

Communities in Schools will stage a walk-run fundraising event Sept. 18 from 9 a.m.–noon beginning at Genoa Park, located behind COSI. Go to <http://www.premierraces.com> under "events" to register.

Special notes

- ❑ **Save the date**—CEA's **Annual Fall Fling** will be held on **Friday, Sept. 24**, from 4–8 p.m. at the **Hilton Columbus at Easton**. This year's event includes free admission, food and soft drinks. Beer and wine are \$2.
- ❑ **CEA thanks** Maurice Blake and Dean Fowls who have been added to the list of **contributors** to **Stewart ES** teachers who lost their personal teaching materials to a fire this summer. A special thanks goes to **CEA-R members** who donated \$1,500 to the teachers and volunteered to help them get ready for the new school year.

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