

The Voice

www.ceaohio.org

Volume XLII, No. 2

Columbus Education Association

August 29, 2011

No deal, only repeal

Recently, members of the Columbus Education Association contacted us seeking answers about OEA's alleged involvement in an Issue 2 (repeal SB 5) compromise attempt. We want to set the record straight for you.

Earlier this summer, a political consultant with ties to the current governor approached three individuals, including Bill Leibensperger (OEA Vice President), Mike Billirakis (past President of OEA) and Tim Burga (Ohio AFL-CIO President). The consultant arranged an informal meeting between those individuals. They met with two back-channel emissaries from the current administration.

At the meeting, a number of issues were discussed. Leibensperger, Billirakis and Burga explained to the administration's representatives that they did not speak for We Are Ohio, nor could they negotiate on behalf of the coalition. Vice President Leibensperger informed OEA and We Are Ohio that he attended the meeting after it had taken place.

At no time was We Are Ohio or OEA represented by the presence or actions of the three individuals at the meeting with the Governor's representatives. This event took place among three individuals and two representatives of the current administration. Neither group was allowed to negotiate on behalf of its respective organization.

OEA and CEA are full partners in the We Are Ohio coalition. It is a citizen-driven, community-based, bipartisan coalition that has come together to repeal SB 5. The Columbus Education Association stands shoulder-to-shoulder with all We Are Ohio members who represent Ohioans from every profession and walk of life in the Buckeye state.

To compromise on SB 5 would be nothing more than surrender on our part. It would send the message to those who wrote SB 5 that we are willing to take what they would give us. The authors of SB 5 did not listen to us when they knowingly locked Ohioans out of the Statehouse. Nor did they listen when they moved their party's senators off a key committee to rubber-stamp the passage of SB 5.

To the writers of SB 5, we simply say, "We are Ohio and we stand with We Are Ohio. There will be no deal, only repeal!"



We need you at the ballot

The Ohio General Election is coming. Even though we have a very high percentage of registered voters in our bargaining unit, we know that not everyone is registered to vote or has current information on file with the county board of elections. We urge you to make sure:



- ✓ You are registered to vote
- ✓ Your address is current
- ✓ Your last name is current

We don't want any unanticipated changes in Ohio's voting requirements to impede your opportunity to cast a ballot.

The deadline to make sure you are properly registered is Oct. 11. Mark your calendar. We need every individual to vote in the November election to help us repeal SB 5. We need you to be there to vote "NO" on Issue 2.

Register in Franklin County by visiting the Franklin County Board of Elections at 280 East Broad Street, Room 100. To download a voter registration form, go to <http://vote.franklincountyohio.gov/> and click on "Voter Registration." All school buildings, including the CEA office, will have voter registration forms. Use the Internet for information about boards of elections in other counties.

Join the sick leave bank

It's an extremely serious situation when a teacher falls ill or is injured and runs out of paid sick leave. It means that a teacher loses a day's pay for every day he or she is not at school. Those of us new to teaching may find we suddenly have used, or haven't yet accrued, our allotted days. We work in a highly contagious environment. Even veteran teachers may encounter critical situations and find themselves out of days.

Fortunately, CEA negotiated the right to borrow sick leave. To join the sick leave bank, download a form at <http://bit.ly/q1hhmd>. Return the completed form to the CCS Treasurer's Office by Friday, Sept. 30.

When you donate two days to the bank, you may borrow ten days if you run out of leave. Later, if you leave the school system (through resignation or retirement), those two days will be restored to your balance.

CEA gets calls every year from a member who has exhausted his or her sick leave and did not join the sick leave bank. Once the enrollment period has ended, you cannot join the bank until the enrollment period next school year.

Be proactive. No one ever expects to run out of leave but it happens.

If you joined the Sick Leave Bank in the past, you do not need to rejoin; and you do not need to make an additional donation.

Looking for a support?

CEA is fortunate to have a special program that pairs teachers with peers to help them improve. As we begin the new school year, we want you to think about whether the Peer Assistance (PA) process might benefit you.

Peer Assistance, not to be confused with Peer Assistance and Review (PAR), is designed to help teachers who now are teaching a different grade level, teaching a different subject or are new to a school building this year. A PAR Consulting Teacher is available to come to your classroom and help you get the school year started on a positive note. Your consulting teacher likely will need to meet with you only two to four times. The consulting teacher can assist you with curriculum, classroom management, staff relations, pupil relations or any other area where you may want help, such as:

1. You have transitioned to another teaching level, (elementary, middle or high school)
2. You have moved from a non-classroom setting to a classroom setting
3. You recently were released from PAR (our assistance and review program) as an intervention or an intern, but want some additional assistance
4. You would like some refresher support

This program is non-evaluative, and there is no record of your participation in your personnel file.

To enroll in the program, call Mira Wright, Human Resources Administration, at 365-5003.

Teachers for Better Schools

As you start rolling out your lesson plans, please don't forget to enroll in the organization that puts you at the front lines of education policies. Teachers for Better Schools (TBS) is the political action arm for the Association.

TBS screens candidates for local and state offices, including candidates for the school board. It recommends the slate that we ultimately endorse.

We want to support school board members who are really friends of education and work to see that the school district moves forward. These are the people who vote to approve our negotiated *Master Agreement*. We want state legislators who support our right to negotiate. There will never be a more important time to join TBS because of the unfair and unsafe legislation recently approved by this group of lawmakers.

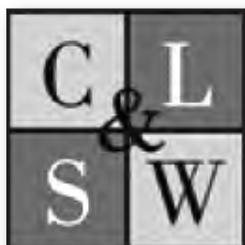
It would be great if we did not have to get involved in politics. Unfortunately, we won't be able to get out of politics until the politicians get out of education, a proposition with no end in sight.

Remember, we cannot use union dues to support candidates. That's why we have TBS. Teachers can join TBS by downloading a form at <http://bit.ly/ecXSaC>. Start with \$1 per pay. Many of our new teachers have already joined TBS. Join them.

We've got your lawyers

CEA membership provides a benefit that all of us need at one time or another: A legal services plan with reduced rates for those personal matters requiring a lawyer—such as developing an estate plan, resolving domestic matters or dealing with a traffic violation.

The Basic Plan (now known as the OEA/NEA Attorney Referral Program) is provided for every



active member. When you become a member of the Association, you automatically receive, at a reduced rate, legal assistance with matters in five areas: real estate, wills and estates, domestic relations, consumer protection and traffic violations.

For a reasonable fee, payable by payroll deduction, the Comprehensive Plan provides more extensive coverage for people who need it. Included here are matters such as personal injury. The best thing about the Comprehensive Plan is that your immediate family is eligible for services.

As a CEA member, you automatically receive four free half-hour meetings to discuss any legal matter, except income tax preparation. If you need more extensive legal assistance, including a document review, you can join the Comprehensive Plan and receive services at the discounted rate. A few legal services, such as help with business dealings, bankruptcy or taxes, and defense in criminal matters, do not qualify for the discounted rate.

If you would like to enroll in the Comprehensive Plan, call CEA at 253-4731 to obtain an application. Call Cloppert, Sauter, Latanick and Washburn, the law firm administering the plan, at 461-4455 for consultations.

Get your room "adopted"

As the online community grows, so do teacher resources. TeachAde (www.teacherade.com), an online community for teachers, and NEA Member Benefits have partnered with Adopt-A-Classroom to support your efforts in the classroom. TeachAde's website includes an online store, discounts on classroom supplies and registration for the Adopt-a-Classroom program.

This is an easy and effective way for parents, friends, family, contacts, local businesses and social network friends to make direct donations to classroom teachers. Just register and use outreach tools to spread the word.

- * You will have the ability to use donated funds to buy the supplies that fit your classroom needs.
- * All donations are tax-deductible.
- * One hundred percent of all donations are passed through to the teacher.
- * The Adopt-A-Classroom program is also a proven resource for school fundraising and PTA fundraising.

Special notes

- You will receive your first pay of the school year on Friday, Sept. 9, instead of Friday, Sept. 16.**
- The Voter Suppression Bill (HB 194)** will make it harder for you to vote by restricting your access to absentee and early in-person voting. **Your help will be needed soon to sign and circulate petitions** to send the bill to voters in the November General Election. Keep reading *The CEA Voice* for updates.
- This is the first year you will not receive a new Ohio Education Association Membership Card.** This card is also your CEA, Capital District and NEA membership card. If you have misplaced your card, please **contact OEA Membership at 228-4526** to request another one. New members will receive their cards soon.
- Attention bowlers!** Plan now to be a part of this year's **School Masters Bowling League**. Contact **Steve Hiner at (614) 440-8095** for more information. An organizational meeting will take place in September.

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