

The CEA Voice

www.ceaohio.org

Volume XLII, No. 22

Columbus Education Association

January 30, 2012

Credit where it's due: When is it our turn?

CEA received a call from the news media last year about our academic progress. When we picked up the paper to look at the articles, we were pleasantly surprised. They cited Columbus' achievements: "By disciplining itself and focusing its efforts, that city's school district was able to improve its graduation rate from an anemic 59.9 percent in 2002–03 to 77.6 percent in 2009–10."

The articles quoted board President Carol Perkins as saying, "We came together on goals, and everyone could see that we were not that far apart...Everyone saw the need to do it."

That paper was not *The Columbus Dispatch*. It was *The Buffalo News* in New York.

The Buffalo News praised CEA's partnership with the school district for helping to raise test scores and graduation rates. "One of the components of the dramatic improvement in the Columbus, Ohio, school district was its partnership with the Panasonic Foundation," stated editorial columnists, referring to a third-party consultant brought in to help negotiate a solution to the district's problems.

The Buffalo News quoted CEA President Rhonda Johnson commenting on the difference cooperation with the board and administration made in Columbus: "Before the Panasonic Foundation, we were killing each other."

Our question is: Why aren't we receiving these kudos from our own media? At every turn, they have focused on the negative. Even when we begin to make progress, reporters write that the changes are too little. We should be doing more. We spend too much money. Rarely do they look at the big picture or look behind the scenes.

The Buffalo News editorial capped a series about the Buffalo schools' problems and praised the efforts of the Say Yes to Education Foundation, which is bringing to the district a plan to increase high school and college graduation rates. The series pointed to successes in other districts, including Columbus, and hoped for the same results.

We thank *The Buffalo News*. It acknowledges that our strategies are working, including "establishing a system of feeder schools (that) helps middle schools and high schools prepare for the students they will be receiving." And "a system of 'vision cards' (that) not only helps the district to set goals, but to measure, monitor and adjust as needed."

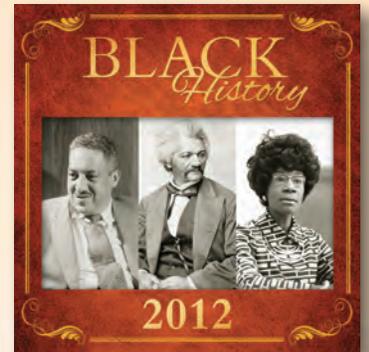
We deserve the credit. The reality is that working together—successfully—is no small feat. It took months of meetings and years of hammering on our mutual shortcomings until we found a way to agree. It's monumental.

Columbus City is the largest school district in Ohio. We serve students from diverse economic backgrounds and from an array of personal circumstances. Our union is the largest. Yet we and the school board have achieved a unity of purpose rarely seen in districts a quarter of our size.

We commend *The Buffalo News* for holding us up as the model we truly are. At least someone from among the news media realizes it.

Black History Month

Black History Month began in 1926 when historian Carter G. Woodson urged fraternity brothers at Omega Psi Phi to help promote a "Negro History Week." Woodson, a Harvard-trained historian, believed that promoting the achievements of black people would help to combat prejudice and build a sense of pride among his people.



He chose the second week of February because it marked the birthdays of the two Americans, Abraham Lincoln (1809) and Frederick Douglass (1817), who perhaps most greatly influenced the lives and social conditions of African Americans. In 1976, fifty years after the first celebration, the Black History Week became the first Black History Month.

This month, schools across the country focus on the accomplishments of black Americans and the progress made to improve conditions for all people, regardless of their race. It is a unique yearly opportunity to share with your students the accomplishments of many unsung (and some now-acknowledged) American heroes. Here are a few examples of teachers who we now remember for their struggles and contributions.

Mary Jane McLeod Bethune (1875–1955) was an American educator and civil rights leader who started a school for black students in Daytona Beach, Fla., that eventually became Bethune-Cookman University. She also was an advisor to President Franklin D. Roosevelt. With the help of benefactors, Bethune attended college hoping to become a missionary in Africa. When that did not materialize, she started a school. It grew and merged with an institute for African-American boys, eventually becoming the Bethune-Cookman School where she served as president from 1923–1942 and 1946–1947.

Booker T. Washington (1856–1915) was born a slave, though his father was white. After the Civil War, he worked in salt furnaces and coal mines in Malden, W. Va., and attended school part time, until he was able to enter the Hampton Institute where he later became an instructor. In 1881 he was chosen to organize a normal and industrial school for African Americans at Tuskegee, Ala. Under his direction, Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University) became one of the leading African-American educational institutions in America.

Helen Jenkins Davis was the first black educator hired by the Columbus Public Schools (1918). She taught for the district for 34 years. Davis, the daughter of a freed slave from Kentucky, resisted discrimination many times and served to promote human rights and equality until her death in 1987 at the age of 92. CEA gives an annual award in her name, commemorating her contribution to the education of Columbus students and to future career opportunities for black teachers.

SIG schools pay off

In February 2011, CEA entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Board of Education making certificated staff at Priority Schools (School Improvement Grant Schools) eligible for performance-based incentives (different from Gainsharing) of up to \$2,500.

Compensation would be awarded to CEA bargaining unit members if the schools achieved one or more of the following goals: making adequate yearly progress (AYP), reducing achievement gaps, meeting or exceeding state graduation rate or closing the graduation gap in student groups by 10 percent.

We congratulate the staff of the following schools who received stipends prior to winter break: Champion MS, Columbus Global Academy, Southmoor MS and Weinland Park ES. Their incentive pay for performance ranged from \$500 to \$2,500 per person for closing the achievement gap in their buildings in one or more student groups.

Declare now

Feb. 3 is the last day to declare candidacy for one of these OEA/CEA positions:

- President and Vice President (two-year terms)
- Governors for District 2 (unexpired term ending July 31, 2013)
- Governors for Districts 3, 6, Elementary School At-Large and two High School At-Large (three-year terms)
- 2012 NEA Delegates; and 2012–13 OEA Delegates.

The formal campaign period is from Feb. 4–Mar. 5. Voting will take place from Feb. 21–Mar. 5. The Elections Committee will tabulate votes on Mar. 6.

In the event of a run-off election, the formal campaigning period will be from Mar. 12–Apr. 2. Voting takes place Mar. 20–Apr. 2. The Elections Committee will tally votes on Apr. 3.

Make your voice heard. Run for a seat at the leadership table.

Grant writing workshop at Capital

Looking for a grant opportunity but don't know where to find one? Have you found one, but have no experience applying? CCS will present a Grant Writing Workshop at Capital University on Mar. 15–16. In this workshop, you may learn how to write grant proposals start to finish and how to locate and track relevant grant opportunities.

The workshop is from 9 a.m.–4 p.m. both days with lunch on your own. Tuition is \$425 per person and includes all materials.

To register, visit <http://grantwritingusa.com/> and look for the Columbus workshop location, or call 888-435-7281.

Dues deductions for 2011

Tax time is coming. Some CEA members may be able to deduct a portion of their union dues on their income tax returns. These are considered unreimbursed employee expenses and may be deducted on Schedule A (Form 1040) Line 21.

This type of deduction is subject to a minimum: It must amount to more than 2 percent of your adjusted gross income. Consult IRS Publication 529 for more details. Visit www.irs.gov. Search for "union dues."

The table above shows your deduction for NEA, OEA and CEA dues for the 2011 tax year.

Full Dues	
Plan A (21 Pays)	\$752.41
Plan B (26 Pays)	\$747.07
Switched from:	
Plan A to B	\$692.41
Plan B to A	\$807.07

Half Dues	\$474.32
-----------	----------

Quarter Dues	\$243.37
--------------	----------

Educators for Obama

It was about this time last year that Senate Bill 5 was introduced by Sen. Shannon Jones. For the nearly 300 days following its introduction, CEA members stood up together and fought SB 5. The stakes were high. If we had failed in our efforts, the bill would have had dire consequences for our profession and for our students. Through the hard work and dedication of our members, we defeated SB 5 on Nov. 8.

Fewer than 300 days remain until the Presidential election in 2012. The stakes are just as high as a year ago. If we fail to re-elect President Obama, the consequences for our profession and our students will be just as dire had SB 5 become law. We need to stand up and fight for the President who has stood up and fought for us. Help us win our fight by becoming an Educator for Obama by going to <http://www.neafund.org/> or by scanning the QR Code on the right.



Your President, your country and your students are counting on you.

Special notes

- Fee waiver applications for Spring 2012** will be in mailboxes on **Monday, Jan. 30**. The completed application is due back to Northgate by **Friday, Feb. 10, at 5 p.m.** If you have **Priority I** or **Priority II** status, include the proper documentation. **Your priority status will change to Priority III without proper documentation.**
- Early voting begins Tuesday, Jan. 31.** This is also the start of "golden week," when you can register *and* vote at the same time. You can obtain an absentee ballot from your local board of elections now. The date of the **state primary election** is **Tuesday, Mar. 6**.
- Kindergarten teachers, kindergarten instructional assistants and LLI tutors in Regions 4 and 5:** Meet from **4:30–6:30 p.m.** at the **Columbus Downtown HS** on **Tuesday, Jan. 31**, to discuss your concerns about the LLI program in kindergarten. If you did not attend the Jan. 24 meeting, you may attend this session.
- Feb. 1 is the deadline for notifying HR of your intent to retire in order to receive "super" severance pay.** See the Jan. 9 *Voice* and Article 810 of the *CEA Master Agreement* for more details.
- Teachers may express their preferences related to their teaching assignment for next school year.** Preferences must be submitted in writing to building principals **prior to Feb. 1**. See Section 211.05 (B) of the contract.
- Article 211 training** will be held at **Northgate Center** (Room G) on **Wednesday, Feb. 22**, from 8–10 a.m. for high schools, 7–12 schools and career centers; and from 1–3 p.m. for middle and elementary schools in Regions 2, 3 and 4. On **Thursday, Feb. 23**, training for district programs and offices will be from 8–10 a.m. and for elementary and middle schools in Regions 1 and 5 from 1–3 p.m. **Senior Faculty Representatives and principals/supervisors should attend together.**
- Mar. 2 is the deadline to apply for continuing contracts.** Eligibility requirements can be found in Section 401.16 of the *CEA Master Agreement*.
- Make sure no one has to choose between getting well and having a paycheck. **Donate days to the catastrophic sick leave bank.** Use a sick leave form to make your donation. Be sure that you and your principal/supervisor sign the form.