

# The Voice

[www.ceaohio.org](http://www.ceaohio.org)

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## Buildings need real input

CCS administrators are seeing the need for a laser focus on literacy. We applauded the decision to focus on the Common Core State Standards in reading and math and on instructional coaching support. We are happy to see that high schools will have reading specialists.

We said back in 2007, when 183 Title I safety net teachers switched their focus to science and math—placing a greater burden on regular classroom teachers for specialized reading instruction—that students would suffer. Five years ago, our president, Rhonda Johnson, said, “Everyone knows that the math and science tests are essentially reading tests. Continue to provide intensive reading instruction, introduce complex vocabulary and provide intervention. The math and science scores will rise, too.”

But there is still a problem. The interview process for these positions has been centralized, and we believe this is wrong thinking. Instead of letting building interview committees work with their principals to consider the best candidates for their buildings, our central administration is taking the process to Northgate. Afterwards, building principals will be asked for their “consideration” of finalists.

Everyone learns in Classroom Management 101 that you don’t need to keep the whole class in for recess just because a few students misbehave. Maybe we have examples of cronyism in the district, but most building administrators work well with their interview teams and select the most appropriate applicants.

Maybe it’s time for principals to organize and speak out. Although technically this new interview arrangement does not violate the *CEA Agreement*, we believe that it sends a negative message to principals that they don’t know how to choose the best people for their buildings.

Selection of these specialists is important, and we should not exclude building leaders and colleagues who understand what their students need. Given that academic success is directly related to reading ability and that nearly 40 percent of high school graduates do not have the sophisticated reading skills employers expect, we must be inclusive, if not for ourselves, then for future generations.

## STRS update

We told you about pending changes to the STRS pension plan. A consulting firm is earning \$240,000 to review the findings of the Ohio Retirement Study Council, and Senate Republican leaders now say they expect to act before summer break on plans to address long-term solvency issues.

Being proposed:

- ✦ Abolishing the additional 2 percent employee contribution
- ✦ Allowing additional voluntary retirement contributions with the option to keep current anticipated benefits
- ✦ Allowing employees to take reduced benefits and keep their current retirement ages
- ✦ Giving pension boards leeway to increase the retirement age for new workers based on factors such as increased life expectancy or lower rates of return on investments

Discussions about changes have been in play since 2009 as part of efforts to ensure the long-term solvency of the \$163 billion in assets covering more than 1.5 million public workers. Over the past two years, 40 state legislatures enacted significant revisions to state retirement plans, ranging from increasing employee contribution requirements and age and service requirements for retirement, to revising cost-of-living adjustments. Nearly two years ago, Ohio’s public pension boards submitted new funding plans to our General Assembly that call for employees working longer for less-generous pension benefits.

An additional debate is under way regarding another common practice: allowing retirees to leave their jobs and take new ones, or return to their old ones under new contracts, earning salaries in addition to their retirement benefits.

## Your pay info: now online

Beginning in April, employees will be able to access their pay statements and other pay-related information, such as leave requests and certifications, online. Through the Employee Self Service (ESS) Tool, they will also be able to make changes to payroll information such as W4s, addresses and phone numbers. Eventually, the system will be paperless and pay statements will be available only online.

You should have received information, but you can find documents pertaining to ESS on the CCS Website at <https://columbusmunisselfservice.com>. You can access ESS from any computer; but if you do not have a computer connection at home, you will find kiosks available in your building where you can access your information. If you need a district email account, visit [www.columbus.k12.oh.us](http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us) and click on the STAFF button in the bottom right-hand corner of the homepage. Click on “CCS User ID/Email Registration” located in the first paragraph on the page. If you have any questions, contact the CCS Help Desk at 365-8425.

# Grievances update

CEA works hard to protect your rights and maintain the integrity of the negotiated contract. While we advise our members to try working out problems with their administrators first, we know this isn't always possible. Periodically, we will inform you of the grievances CEA is working on for you. This month's report of grievances is listed below:

Building/Unit/Administrator	Statement of Grievance	Relief Requested	Disposition
Gail Buick Salem ES	The CEA/Board Agreement was violated, misinterpreted and/or misapplied when administration failed to give reasonable support and assistance to the grievant when she repeatedly reported the offenses of a student that was disruptive and abusive to the point of stopping all instruction in the classroom during his presence. Administration also failed to address the discipline forms in a timely manner resulting in no disciplinary action issued in response to the report.	That the administration give adequate and reasonable support to teachers. That the administration respond to SCH-190s and all approved discipline forms in a timely manner and that NO REPRISALS be taken against the grievant due to the filing of this grievance.	I have taken due notice to the Level I grievance. In the future, I will make every effort to alleviate any teacher concerns and/or perceptions of administrative non-support.

## UNCF drive underway

The annual campaign to support the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) began last week. Each site should have received a packet of information including employee pledge cards, brochures and general statistics about the organization.



CEA encourages every building/unit to get involved, since 50 percent of all money raised will be used to establish the UNCF-Columbus City Schools Scholarship program.

Please make a donation to UNCF, because a mind is a terrible thing to waste.

## CEA LA attendance for March 1

We thank our faculty representatives for their hard work and for attending CEA Legislative Assembly meetings, along with CEA governors and officers. The LA is the policy-making body of the Association. It sets our direction. It stays up to date on governmental affairs and school board discussions. It also formulates endorsements of election candidates and ballot issues. It is important for all FRs to be able to hear, firsthand, the message of CEA leadership.



The following buildings/units were represented at the Mar. 1 LA: A.G. Bell, Alpine ES, Alum Crest HS, Arlington Park ES, Art, Arts Impact MS, Avondale ES, Beechcroft HS, Berwick K-8, Binns ES, Briggs HS, Brookhaven HS, Buckeye MS, Burroughs ES, CAHS, Cassady ES, CEA Office, Cedarwood ES @ Stockbridge, Centennial HS, Champion MS, Clinton ES, Colerain ES, Columbus Africentric EC ES, Columbus City Prep. School for Girls, Columbus Downtown HS, Como ES, Dana ES, Devonshire ES, Dominion MS, Duxberry Park ES, Eakin ES, East Columbus ES, East HS, Eastmoor Academy, École Kenwood K-8, Fairwood ES, Fifth Ave. K-7, Forest Park ES, Ft. Hayes CC, Georgian Heights ES, Gifted & Talented, Guidance Counselors, Heyl ES, Highland ES, Hilltonia MS, Hudson Comm. Ed. Ctr., Hudson St. Warehouse, Huy ES, Independence HS, Indian Springs ES, Indianola K-8, Innis ES, Johnson Park MS, Juvenile Detention Ctr., Liberty ES, Lincoln Park ES, Lindbergh ES, Linden-McKinley STEM 7-12, Livingston ES, Maize ES, Marion-Franklin HS, Maybury ES, Medina MS, Mifflin

HS, Mifflin MS, Music, Northgate Center, Northland HS, Northtowne ES, Nurses, Oakland Park ES, Oakmont ES, Olde Orchard ES @ Old Shady Lane, OT/PT, PAR, Parkmoor ES, Parsons ES, Phys. Ed., Ridgeview MS, Salem ES, Shady Lane ES, Shepard Center, Sherwood MS, South HS, South Mifflin STEM Academy K-6, Southmoor MS, Southwood ES, Speech & Language, St. Vincent, Starling MS, Stewart ES @ Beck, Sullivant ES, Tutors, Valley Forge ES, Valleyview ES, Walnut Ridge HS, Watkins ES, Wedgewood MS, Weinland Park ES, West Broad ES, West HS, West Mound ES, Westgate ES, Westmoor MS, Whetstone HS, Windsor STEM Academy K-6, Woodcrest ES, Woodward Park MS and Yorktown MS.

## Special notes

- ❑ Senior FRs must submit requests by fax (253-0465) for **alternative interview panels** to the CEA President **prior to interviewing**. These are the buildings/units that have been approved since the last edition of *The Voice*: **Duxberry Park ES, Ft. Hayes Career Center, Nurses and South Mifflin STEM Academy**.
- ❑ The **CEA Spring Run-Off Election** will be held according to the following schedule: Formal campaigning, March 19-Apr. 16; voting, Mar. 26-Apr. 16; and tallying of votes by the Elections Committee, Tuesday, Apr. 17.
- ❑ CEA's **Reach Out and Read campaign** is in full swing. Please donate to this worthwhile cause that puts books in the hands of children at an early age. If you donate three new books to the campaign, you are eligible to be entered into a **drawing for a NOOK Tablet**. See your FR for the entry form. The **campaign ends Friday, Mar. 16**. If you have questions, contact **Tracey Johnson** at 253-4731 or email her at [tjohnson@ceahio.org](mailto:tjohnson@ceahio.org).
- ❑ **2011 dues deductions** for CEA members: **Full Dues, Plan A (21 Pays) \$752.41, Plan B (26 Pays) \$747.07. If you switched from: Plan A to B: \$692.41 or went from Plan B to A: \$807.07. Half Dues are \$474.32 and Quarter Dues are \$243.37.**
- ❑ The application **deadline** for **CEA scholarships for graduating high school seniors** is **Wednesday, May 2, 5 p.m.** Two scholarships are available: the **\$1,500 Christa McAuliffe Scholarship**, awarded to an education student, and the **\$1,000 CEA General Scholarship**. Both are renewable for up to four years but at a reduced level from the first-year award. Go to <http://bit.ly/eSj3rJ> to download the application form.
- ❑ **Save the date** for one of our best-loved events. **The CEA Awards & Retirement Dinner** is **Friday, May 18**, at the Hilton Columbus Easton. Social hour is at 6 p.m., with dinner at 7 p.m. There is no cost for retirees, honorees and Senior Faculty Representatives to attend.