

The CEA Voice

Rhonda Johnson, President

www.ceahio.org

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The 'Race' is steady, if slow

It has been a year since Columbus announced its participation in Ohio's \$400 million federal Race to the Top (RttT) grant. With \$20.5 million allocated for the program here, we are doing pretty well so far.

That's what a report from the nonpartisan Center for American Progress is saying. The report, *Race to the Top: What Have We Learned from the States So Far?*, looks at progress in the 19 states that received Round 1 grants from the \$4 billion program. Only two states—Florida and Hawaii—were noted for making less than satisfactory progress.

The Center favorably singles out Ohio's efforts to develop common core standards, allowing comparison with other students nationally and to implement a statewide teacher evaluation program. But the report is mixed, noting several areas of lagging progress, including administrator evaluations and full-state participation.

Sixty of the state's school districts and charter schools—about ten percent of those who initially signed up—have dropped out of the RttT citing inadequate grant amounts.

CEA President Rhonda Johnson contributed to the report, questioning how the new teacher evaluation program will accurately reflect student growth when test results aren't released until after the school year is over.

"They're building the plane while they're flying it, and they're asking us for our boarding passes," she told the Center. "The evaluation is to be done by Apr. 10. I don't see how that works if the evaluation has to be done in April but you get your test scores in July."

Columbus is piloting the new program with teachers in six turnaround schools.

"This [evaluation model] lends itself to getting really great feedback on three or four people," said Johnson. "A 500-student elementary school has maybe 30 people on staff. Is it feasible you can get that deep into what you need to do? We're going to find out."

Our RttT work has slowed since Gov. John Kasich took office. Principal-evaluation data is due out in September, more than a year later than promised—and for only 10 percent of the districts, rather than 25 percent. The rest are promised in subsequent years. Budget cuts and the effort to abolish our bargaining rights also have sidetracked the work.

Nonetheless, the report gave Ohio credit for recruiting teachers through Teach for America and training additional STEM teachers for working towards a new relationship with school districts focused "less on compliance and more on support for districts."

The goals of this four-year effort are:

- ◆ Recruiting, evaluating and retaining highly effective teachers and principals
- ◆ Turning around low-performing schools
- ◆ Building data systems that measure student success

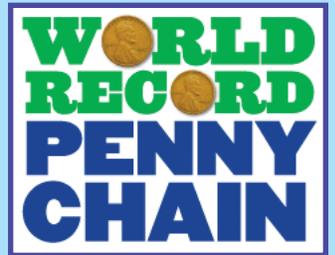
Ohio's plan has five main goals:

- ◆ Increase high school graduation rates by .5 percent per year
- ◆ Reduce graduation rate gaps by 50 percent
- ◆ Reduce performance gaps by 50 percent
- ◆ Reduce the gap between Ohio and the best-performing states in the nation by 50 percent
- ◆ More than double the increase in college enrollment for 18 and 19 year olds.

Read the full report at http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2012/03/pdf/rtt_states.pdf.

Help students make a big difference

Did you know that 39 of our schools are participating in a service learning program called the Penny Harvest™? The program empowers our students to achieve their own potential, while creating positive outcomes for both themselves and our community at large. It puts students in-charge of identifying, researching, understanding and helping to address the needs of others in our community. Research has shown its positive outcomes for students, including higher academic engagement, increased self-esteem and the development of critical thinking, communication and leadership skills. The student's management and direct control of the process is what makes the Penny Harvest unique. In the coming weeks, CEA will highlight great success stories from our schools.



The Penny Harvest students have a chance to go down in the record books and make history. To culminate the 2011–2012 Penny Harvest year, to celebrate the Columbus Bicentennial and to show the community the power of our children, they will set a new world record by laying down the longest, continuous chain of pennies (75 miles). We need you to volunteer and help Penny Harvest break the world's record.

The event will be held at Genoa Park on Sunday, June 3 (last day of the Columbus Arts Festival). The penny chain will symbolize what our students can do when they are given the opportunity to lead and to help. This year in the Penny Harvest, students from across our community have collected \$50,125.59 in spare change. After identifying and researching local issues, they will give back every penny of the money they raised to help others. By the spring, students will have raised and given away 75 miles worth of pennies to help our community.

Breaking the world record will bring awareness of what area students have accomplished and will inspire others to become engaged in working together to support our community. Register to volunteer at <https://pennyrecord.seekkids-dream.org/Event2011/Volunteer2012.aspx>.

Happy Earth Day!

On April 22, more than one billion people around the globe will participate in Earth Day 2012. This special day draws attention to the need for a sustainable future through conservation of our precious natural resources.

This is a great time to involve your students in activities that will heighten their awareness of our planet's condition while strengthening academic skills.

Earth Day founder Gaylord Nelson, then a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin, was inspired to create public awareness after witnessing the effects of the 1969 oil spill in Santa Barbara, Calif. He took his cue from the student anti-war movement and created a "national teach-in on the environment," and with Denis Hayes as national coordinator, Earth Day grew to a staff of 85 to promote events across the country.

On April 22, 1970, about 20 million Americans demonstrated for a healthy, sustainable environment. Students organized protests against the deterioration of the environment. Groups that had been fighting against oil spills, factory pollution, raw sewage, toxic dumps, pesticides, freeways and wildlife extinction realized they shared common values.

The first Earth Day led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of the Clean Air, Clean Water and Endangered Species acts.

In 1990, Earth Day went global, mobilizing 200 million people in 141 countries and lifting environmental issues onto the world stage. It called attention to recycling efforts worldwide and led to the 1992 United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro.

Earth Day 2000 relied on the Internet to organize. Activities featured a talking drum chain that traveled from village to village in Gabon, Africa. Thousands of people gathered on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., urging leaders to accelerate efforts to clean up and conserve the environment.

For activities your students will enjoy on Earth Day, go to: www.earthday.org/2012.

Article 211 update

The 211 process continues. This is where we are now:

Apr. 16: Round 1 interviews close. Selected candidates will be called to sign selection agreement forms beginning at 5 p.m.

May 8: Round 2 postings open. Many citywide positions may be reposted.

May 9: Round 2 interviews open.

May 11: Round 2 postings close.

May 14: Round 2 interviews close. These include all open positions left unfilled in Round 1 and any new openings created from selections made in Round 1.

To apply, submit a cover letter, copy of your license and your résumé. Send a copy to the administrator and to the Senior Faculty Representative.

As you apply and as panels conduct interviews, remember interviews must be granted to the two most senior applicants for each position.



Middle school students get a dose of reality

I Know I Can's Early Awareness advisors have spent the last month in every middle school administering its Real Money Real World activity to current 8th grade students. The activity, developed by the Ohio State Department of Treasury, is built to simulate adult life and responsibilities for students, teaching them the reality of a budget, and how different sized budgets create very different lifestyles.

Students walk through life making financial decisions on buying a home, a car, paying for insurance, phone bills, kids, food and clothing. The lesson learned by participants is that going to college sets them up for a more comfortable and stable lifestyle later. For many, the revelation is groundbreaking, and often sends them home thanking their parents.

The I Know I Can AmeriCorps members have already visited several middle schools and will complete their visits in mid-April. I Know I Can thanks the principals, teachers and counselors who have been so open and welcoming to the IKIC staff and this program. Your support makes the difference in our success. To learn more about I Know I Can's latest programs and events, please visit www.iknowican.org.

Special notes

- ❑ The **retirement party** for **CEA Vice President Sally Oldham** will be held at the **Columbus Downtown HS** on **Tuesday, May 8, from 3:30–7 p.m.** Come and enjoy light refreshments and laughter.
- ❑ **Autumn 2012 fee waiver applications will be in buildings** on **Monday, Apr. 23**. Due to the early start of the autumn 2012 semester in Ohio colleges, the fee waiver process must be completed before the end of this school year. Even if you don't know the identifying course number or course name, complete the fee waiver application with as much information as you have at the time. Call **Norma Oldham (365-8993)** or email her at **noldham@columbus.k12.oh.us** once you have the course number.
- ❑ Join us for the **CEA Awards and Retirement Banquet**, **Friday, May 18**, at the **Hilton Columbus at Easton**. Social hour is 6–7 p.m., with dinner at 7 p.m. The cost is \$30 per ticket, with tables of 10 costing \$300. **There is no charge for Senior Faculty Representatives, retirees and other honorees.** The reservation deadline is **Wednesday, May 2**. If you have **submitted your paperwork** to retire from CCS and **have not received a retirement banquet packet** from CEA, notify **Judy Nelson** at 253-4731.
- ❑ **Campaigning and voting in the CEA Spring Run-off Election concludes Apr. 16**. The **tallying of votes** by the Elections Committee will be on **Tuesday, Apr. 17**. Contact **Michele Mays** at CEA with questions at 253-4731.
- ❑ 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*: **Beechcroft HS** and **Huy ES/A.G. Bell Program**.
- ❑ The **deadline to apply** for teaching Summer School 2012 is **Monday, Apr. 16**. **Only CCS certificated full-time teachers are eligible to apply**. Go to: <http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us/summerschool> to download an application.
- ❑ 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.