

The CEA Voice

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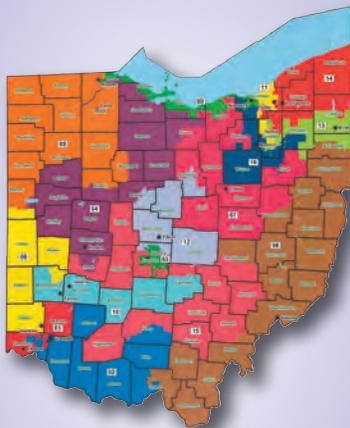
Columbus Education Association

April 30, 2012

Voters First, politicians second

In 1812, Mass. Gov. Elbridge Gerry redrew his state's electoral boundaries to benefit his political party in future elections. Some of Boston's redrawn districts looked eerily like a salamander, and a cartoon that ran in a local newspaper derisively dubbed those districts a "Gerrymander."

Last year, the Ohio Apportionment Board redrew the boundary lines for the 132 seats of the Ohio General Assembly and the 16 U.S. Congressional seats. This event should have been an open, non-partisan process. However, what took place was gerrymandering, pure and simple.



Ohio Congressional Districts

After holding secret backroom meetings, using a national political consultant and paying two top Republican staffers nearly a quarter-million dollars, Ohio's electoral map was gerrymandered beyond recognition.

The end result was a political map that benefitted politicians, ensuring their party's candidates would be elected without competition. Bizarre districts zigzag across Ohio and skip across Lake Erie, dividing cities and counties. More than 80 percent of the electoral districts aren't competitive. This means your vote won't count in the next election.

If the current map stays in place and one more Republican is elected to the legislature, they can place Constitutional amendments on the ballot and bypass the referendum process. If seven more Republicans are elected to the legislature, any law that is passed will be "veto-proof" and can be implemented immediately as "emergency" legislation. Imagine this scenario when SB 5 was passed.

Voters First, a coalition of more than 25 Ohio non-partisan organizations led by the League of Women Voters, is circulating petitions to amend Ohio's Constitution.

This amendment would create the Ohio Citizens' Redistricting Committee, a twelve-member group that would decide the boundaries of electoral districts. The committee would be comprised of four Republicans, four Democrats and four voters with no party affiliation. Politicians, lobbyists, corporations and other special interest groups could not be members. The committee would eliminate backroom deals and ensure open, honest and competitive elections.

Right now, we need your signature and petition-circulating skills to obtain the 385,000 signatures required to get this amendment on the November ballot. We need to make sure that the voters choose their elected officials instead of letting the politicians choose their voters.

We need you to sign and to circulate petitions. Call Judy Nelson at the CEA office at 253-4731 to take action now.

Vetoed choices. Really?

Once again, it's the 99 percent against the 1 percent. In this case, it's two school administrators who tainted the 211 process by defying their interview panels' recommendations during Round 1 of the interview process. These two administrators decided, even after all the work their committees did carefully reviewing the candidates' credentials, that they knew better; and vetoed the panels' choices. It didn't stop there. One of the administrators lied to the rejected candidate, telling the candidate that the panel had done the rejecting. Teachers in that school were understandably upset.

How regrettable this is. Our school district employs more than 200 administrators, and—go figure—all of them, except for two, let the panels do their jobs, trusting their judgment. This speaks well of the process carefully defined by Article 211 of our mutually negotiated agreement. The process is designed to include teachers who know what they are looking for in a colleague. Yes, the process does allow the principal to veto panel selections, but the spirit of the clause is a safety valve to ensure the right candidate gets into the classroom. It is a rarely exercised prerogative. Clearly, our two outliers have decided it's a license to exercise power.

We applaud the "99 percenters" and ask the "1 percenters" to get on board and follow their colleagues' ability to collaborate.

The choice is yours

Being called to the office by your administrator or supervisor regarding an alleged disciplinary action or an ongoing investigation can be a harrowing experience. It can become even more confusing and stressful when the administrator has already lined up the faculty representative to be a part of the meeting. If this is happening, your administrator is interfering in union business. This is an unfair labor practice.

Your Weingarten Rights include the right to choose your representation. You can be represented by your FR or by a staff member from the CEA office. Faculty representatives do not have to participate in hearings if they don't feel comfortable doing this kind of work. Administrators have no place in this process. They MUST cease and desist from copying faculty representatives on messages requesting that staff members meet with them.

The administrator has some leeway in setting the time and date of such a meeting. However, it must take place within five school days at a time when the representative of choice can attend. Remember: CEA officers, staff and FRs work for you, not your administrator. Faculty Representatives were elected to represent CEA members, not to do the bidding of the principal.

**PROTECT
YOUR
RIGHTS**


Columbus Education Association

(614) 253-4731

Reach Out and Read Book Drive a success

Thank you, CEA members, for your participation in this year's Reach Out and Read Book Drive. You donated more than 1,850 books valued at approximately \$15,200. The CEA officers and board, Nationwide Children's Hospital and the community applaud you for your generosity.



Special thanks go to Barnes & Noble for their continued support of our campaign and to CEA-R for their contributions and continued support of our efforts.

A very special thank you goes to the Reach Out and Read Committee: Faye Love (PAR), Robin Lucas (Winterset ES) and Vern Miller (Yorktown MS). Your work is greatly appreciated.

Congratulations to Dawn Marsh, Avondale ES. She is the winner of the NOOK Tablet.

Columbus City Schools has the best teachers in the country. Our collective efforts will make it possible for the children in our community to start school ready to learn.

No FR elections this year

A number of Senior FRs will not be returning to their building/unit next year due to retirements or transfers. However, this is not the year to elect new faculty representatives. We hold these elections in the spring of odd-numbered years. Instead, we have a process to replace FRs who are not returning to their school/unit: Your new FR is the person whose name appears after the Senior FR on the CEA FR Certification Form. If there are no other FRs, the alternate becomes the new Senior Faculty Representative.

The only time you should hold an FR election this year is if none of the other FRs or the alternates want to be the Senior Faculty Representative. You may also hold an election to fill any remaining vacancies.

To be fully prepared for their new responsibilities, those who are coming into FR positions should attend the next two Legislative Assembly meetings, Thursday, May 3, and Thursday, May 25. We will have some very important business to conduct, including approving the CEA budget, endorsing candidates for elected office, petition drive to create a non-partisan commission for Ohio redistricting and the 2012 Presidential Election. Please contact CEA with questions.

Join Team CEA in the Guinness Book

Nearly 40 CCS elementary schools are participating in a service learning program called the Penny Harvest. Over the course of the 2011–2012 school year, our students have helped Penny Harvest collect more than \$50,000 in spare change. After students identify, research and address local issues, they decide how the money they raised will be spent to address the needs of others in our community.

We need our members to help celebrate our students' hard work by helping to construct the world's longest continuous penny chain. Representatives of the Guinness Book of World Records will be there. This 75 mile-long behemoth will be built in Genoa Park, right behind COSI on June 3 (the last day of the Columbus Arts Festival). If you are interested in showing solidarity with our students, join Team CEA for this exciting event. To volunteer for a shift, call Phil Hayes at the CEA office at 253-4731.

Let's help our homeless students

Project Connect is the program of the Columbus City Schools that ensures the educational rights of homeless children and youth, ages pre-K through 21. Of the more than 2,500 children in Franklin County who have been identified as homeless this year, more than 1,500 are CCS students.

Children experiencing homelessness lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. They may be living with relatives or friends, in a hotel, a shelter, an abandoned structure or locations not meant for habitation.

Teachers can help identify students by recognizing signs of homelessness such as: increased absenteeism, lost access to school transportation, repeated wearing of the same clothing, loss of their belongings after moving, increased disruptive/withdrawn behaviors and new students to your classroom.

Project Connect advocates for students to remain enrolled in their current schools for the duration of their homelessness. Additionally, children experiencing homelessness may not have the basic school supplies necessary to be academically successful. Project Connect provides these items to our students.

For more information, call Project Connect at 365-5140.

Special notes

- ❑ Celebrate **Dean Fowls' retirement** from CCS at the **Hilton Easton** on **Tuesday, May 15**, from **4–7 p.m.** The festivities will include hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar. Send a **\$25 check made payable to John Pollock to Greg Mild** at **Northgate Center** by **Friday, May 11**.
- ❑ **Dawn Tarentelli** is retiring. We will celebrate her 35 years of service to **Livingston ES** on Friday, May 25 at **Kingy's Pizza** at 7470 Hill Rd., Canal Winchester, from 4–7 p.m. If you have any questions, send an email to **tracilarway@gmail.com**.
- ❑ 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. The **deadline to return** the application is **Friday, May 4**, by **5 p.m.** Call **Norma Oldham (365-8993)** or email her at **noldham@columbus.k12.oh.us** once you have the course number.
- ❑ Senior FRs must submit requests by fax (253-0465) for **alternative interview panels** to the CEA President **prior to interviewing**. The panel for **Linden-McKinley STEM Academy HS** has been approved.
- ❑ **Reminder:** On **May 4**, you will receive a **full paycheck**. On **May 18**, you will receive a **half paycheck**, followed by **another half paycheck** on **May 25**. On **June 8**, you will once again receive a **full paycheck**; and full pay will continue every two weeks until the end of the pay year. The pay year ends June 22 for teachers on Pay Plan A (21 pays per year) and ends Aug. 31 for teachers on Pay Plan B (26 pays per year).
- ❑ 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.
- ❑ The application **deadline** for **CEA scholarships for graduating high school seniors** is **Wednesday, May 2**, at **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**. Go to <http://bit.ly/eSj3rJ> to download the application form.