

# The CEA Voice

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Volume XLII, No. 37

Columbus Education Association

May 21, 2012

## OEA delegates meet

More than 90 CEA members represented you at the Ohio Education Association Representative Assembly (RA) May 11–12. The OEA RA is the top governing body of our state association comprised of more than 1,300 delegates elected by local education associations.

“This November, voters can take the power out of the hands of the politicians and put it back where it belongs—in the hands of the people, and OEA is proud to join this effort,” said OEA President Patricia Frost-Brooks, speaking about the Voters First initiative.



OEA President  
Patricia Frost-Brooks

“Together we can stop the politicians, and we can do it now—in time for the 2014 elections.” Following President Brooks’ message, U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown addressed OEA delegates on the first day of the RA.

“More than anything, public education made this country successful,” said Sen. Brown. “I’ll tell you, my voice might not be the prettiest,” the gravelly-voiced Senator told the crowd, “but because of you, it will be the strongest one fighting for education.”

RA delegates soundly approved a new business item that allows OEA to begin organizing and representing private and charter school teachers. “The new policy is consistent with OEA’s principles, including the belief that all employees have the right to representation and bargaining,” said OEA President Patricia Frost-Brooks.

By an overwhelming majority, the OEA Representative Assembly voted to approve a one-time dues assessment of \$22. It will help fund the effort to gather petition signatures and to support the Voters First initiative to amend the Ohio Constitution on redistricting and reapportionment.

Additionally, delegates and management staff contributed an all-time record of more than \$45,000 to the OEA Fund for Children and Public Education. The Capital District contributed more than \$13,000 to the fund.

## STRS plan stirs Senate

On May 8, the Ohio Senate approved Senate Bill 342, which contains the changes in the benefit formula, contribution and salary calculation and cost-of-living increase as approved by the STRS board:

- Beginning in 2015, eligibility for full benefits will begin a phased-in transition to age 60 and 35 years of service, with no age component until 2026. Ability to retire with full benefits at age 65 with 5 years of service is unchanged.
- There will be a gradual increase in employee contributions from 10 to 14 percent of pay.
- Lowering of the COLA rate for current retirees, from 3 to 2 percent, with a freeze during FY 2014.

- Change in the benefit formula in 2015, to 2.2 percent for each year of service, with the final average salary calculated on 5 years of salary rather than 3.

STRS’ funding situation is critical. Without these changes, which are endorsed by OEA, STRS will eventually run out of money to provide benefits. The Ohio House has indicated they will not act on pension legislation until after a study commissioned by the Ohio Retirement Study Council. That study is expected in July, and final action on this legislation may not take place until after the November election. Continue to watch your *CEA Voice* for updates.

## Sign the petition

Lines have been drawn. We’re taking names. We need yours. Your signature will mean the difference between fair elections and gerrymandered district lines that favor one political party.



Voters First for Ohio is circulating a petition to collect enough signatures for a constitutional amendment that would give a nonpartisan commission the power to change the recent redrawn congressional district boundaries. CEA supports this effort led by a coalition of more than 25 nonpartisan organizations, including the League of Women Voters, Ohio Citizen Action and Common Cause.

If the amendment passes, the new commission will adopt a plan that complies with all legal requirements. These include the Voting Rights Act, which creates compact districts, minimizes splits of municipalities and wards, maximizes the number of politically balanced districts and balances the number of districts which favor each political party to reflect the preferences of Ohio voters.

Think all this bluster is about a sophisticated but harmless jigsaw puzzle? Guess again. Ohio’s five-member Apportionment Board, meeting in private at taxpayer expense, redrew district lines to split more than 250 cities, townships and villages. The new map gives one party control of 80 percent of the voting real estate, guaranteeing them a legislative majority.

Think of the ramifications. In the Ohio House alone, citizens *could* elect seven more pro-Senate Bill 5 representatives who *could* pass legislation that *could* be implemented immediately. In Ohio, we have no recall provision for removing politicians.

This is a nonpartisan issue. No one group of politicians, of any stripe, should be allowed to secretly redraw congressional boundaries. Help Ohioans get a fair redistricting process on the ballot. Help us collect 385,000 signatures. Each FR or designee has a petition, and we need every employee to sign one. Those interested in circulating petitions can get one by calling Judy Nelson at CEA at 253-4731. Remember: This is a nonpartisan issue that will affect our future.

## Know your CEA Governor

The CEA Constitution and Bylaws designate the Board of Governors (BOG) as the Association's executive arm. This week's *Voice* features Ann Aeschbury, Governor of CEA District 10.

Ann is an art teacher at Indian Springs ES and Winterset ES. Ann was elected in the spring of 2011. She previously served as Senior Faculty Representative for the Elementary Art Unit. Unlike Districts 1 through 8, District 10 is comprised of city-wide units. The CEA members in this district may work in multiple locations or at non-school sites. Units in District 10 include: 17th Ave. Service Center, Art, Gifted & Talented, Hudson St. Warehouse, Kingswood Center, Latchkey, Music, Northgate Center, PAR, Phys. Ed., Pupil Services, Safety & Security and Shepard Center.



**Ann Aeschbury**

## Is your name on the list?

Your principal received a roster from Employee Relations to verify the eligibility of members who will receive Gainsharing payments. Full-time and part-time hourly members should ensure that their names are on their school rosters. Additionally, itinerant members should make sure that their names are included on school rosters with the correct amount of time spent in each building. Gainsharing for the 2011–2012 school year will be paid during the 2012–2013 school year.

## Help set world record

Forty CCS schools are trying to set a world record. They are collecting pennies for Penny Harvest, supporting See Kids Dream, a 501(c)(3) organization that helps students in grades K–8 create their own philanthropic projects to benefit their communities.

CEA is supporting this effort with a team in the World Record Penny Chain on Sunday, June 3, the last day of the Arts Festival. We need volunteers to be on our team. Shifts are for one hour to distribute or lay out pennies and to distribute hand sanitizer and water.

Penny Harvest began in New York City in 1991 after a father's 4-year-old daughter asked how she could comfort a homeless man. Today, the Harvest and its numerous partners train more than 800 teachers, librarians and parent coordinators annually to implement the national curriculum guide. The guide helps teachers connect philanthropy and service to a wide array of classroom subjects. Each participating school receives crates of materials, including canvas collection sacks, colorful penny bags, stickers, posters and honorary leader pins for use in its Penny Harvest campaign.

Call CEA and help support our students.



## Having a qualifying insurance event?

Life brings many changes that affect our job or personal status. We marry, divorce, separate, bear or adopt a child, obtain a Qualified Medical Child Support Order, or lose spouse's coverage due to a change in employment or eligibility for benefits.

These transitions affect our health insurance qualifications. If an event changes your family dynamic, you must inform the Benefits Department within 30 days of that event by providing the required documentation (marriage certificate, court order, divorce decree, birth certificate, adoption certificate, etc.). If you forget, you will end up owing more for your health insurance. See Section 806.04 of the contract for full details about our tiered plan.

We are reminding teachers of this issue because we are more likely than other workers to have a qualifying event occur during the summer. Failure to notify CCS of a qualifying event within this 30-day window may result in a denial of coverage for the employee's affected family member and the 30-percent penalty effective for members employed prior to June 2009. For more information, contact Pat Patterson in the CCS Benefits Department at 365-6448.

## Interested in becoming a cooperating teacher?

The Staff Development Department is preparing for field observations, methods and student teaching/internship placements for the 2012–13 school year. The district continues to expand the opportunities for Columbus teachers to work with university students who are interested in our profession. In order to be considered as a cooperating teacher, the minimum expectation is three years' experience. Research shows that effective cooperating teachers exhibit the following qualities:

- Positive rapport with students, parents and colleagues
- Excellent organizational skills
- Extensive content knowledge
- Effective classroom management
- Positive professional role model
- Willingness to contribute to the teaching profession by sharing classroom expertise with pre-service teachers

Productive and effective student placements are one of our most powerful recruitment tools and a mechanism to eliminate unwarranted stereotypes of urban education. If you possess these qualities and want to be on the list for consideration, notify your principal as soon as possible of your interest.

## It's the LA, and it's yours

Make plans to attend the CEA Legislative Assembly (LA) on Thursday, May 24, 4:30 p.m., at the Columbus Downtown HS. It is important that every building/unit be represented by their Faculty Representative. However, the meeting is open to all CEA members. This is your governing body.

The following buildings/units were represented at the May 4 LA: A.G. Bell Program, Alpine ES, Alum Crest HS, Art, Avondale ES, Beechcroft HS, Berwick K–8, Briggs HS, Broadleigh ES, Brookhaven HS, Burroughs ES, CAHS, Cassady ES, CEA Office, Cedarwood ES @ Stockbridge, Centennial HS, Clinton ES, Columbus City Prep. School for Girls, Columbus Downtown HS, Como ES, Devonshire ES, Duxberry Park ES, East Columbus ES, East HS, East Linden ES, Easthaven ES, Eastmoor Academy HS, École Kenwood K–8, Fairwood ES, Fifth Ave. K–7, Forest Park ES, Gifted & Talented, Guidance Counselors, 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, Liberty ES, Lincoln Park ES, Lindbergh ES, Linden STEM Academy K–6, Livingston ES, Maize ES, Marion-Franklin HS, Maybury ES, Medina MS, Mifflin HS, Mifflin MS, Music, Northgate Center, Northland HS, Northtowne ES, Nurses, Oakmont ES, Olde Orchard ES @ Old Shady Lane, OT/PT, PAR, Parkmoor ES, Parsons ES, Phys. Ed., Psychologists, Ridgeview MS, Scottwood ES, Shady Lane ES, Sherwood MS, South HS, South Mifflin STEM Academy K–6, Starling MS, Stewart ES @ Beck, Sullivant ES, Valley Forge ES, Walnut Ridge HS, Wedgewood MS, West Broad ES, West HS, West Mound ES, Westgate ES, Westmoor MS, Whetstone HS, Windsor STEM Academy K–6, Winterset ES, Woodcrest ES, Woodward Park MS, Work Study and Yorktown MS.

## Special notes

- ❑ **Reminder:** On **May 18**, you should have received a **half paycheck**, which will be followed by **another half paycheck** on **May 25**. On **June 8**, you will receive a **full paycheck**. Full pay will continue every two weeks until the end of the pay year.
- ❑ Teachers interested in taking their professional growth and accomplishment to the next level should plan to attend the session to learn about the **National Board Certification** process and to qualify for **financial support from the district**. The session will be held at **Northgate Center** on **Tuesday, May 22** from **4:30–7:00 p.m.** If you have questions contact **Carole Moyer** at **365-5361**.
- ❑ OEA will host the **OEA Women's Leadership Training** on **June 8–9**. The meeting will prepare leaders who are passionate advocates for Association issues. The event will be held at the **Doubletree Hotel Columbus/Worthington**. There is no cost to participants for their room or meals. There are only **25 openings** available. Contact **Jane Gorka** at **gorkaj@ohea.org** for additional information.