

The Voice

State of the Association

The first CEA Legislative Assembly of the school year was held at The Boat House at Confluence Park on Sept. 13. The delegates were greeted by candidates



running for the Ohio House and then by Supt. Gene Harris. She asked CEA members not to be “distracted by the noise” and to focus on what we are all supposed to do—help children.

CEA President Rhonda Johnson delivered the annual State of the Association message. Johnson reflected on the past school year and highlighted some of the accomplishments of the Association.

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“At the state level, the most important battle that will affect all of us for the next two decades is the Voters First Amendment for redistricting reform. You need to Vote Yes on Issue 2 to approve the amendment. It will ensure every Ohio voter’s right to fair, competitive elections.”

During his report, Vice President Phil Hayes touched on multiple topics, including technology. Hayes encouraged delegates to continue to keep CEA informed about the issues that arise with district technology, including hardware like the new iPods and software like Infinite Campus.

The delegates later voted to endorse the Teachers for Better Schools slate of candidates and issues.

Open enrollment

Open enrollment for employee benefits will begin on Oct. 1 and end on Nov. 1, 2012. In order to continue benefits coverage beginning Jan. 1, 2013, all benefits-eligible employees must enroll, re-enroll or waive coverage for their benefits and meet with a Benefits Counselor. In this meeting, employees must provide documentation verifying their dependents' eligibility. The documents you will need can be found at: <http://bit.ly/Pqz6vz>. The link to a list of Frequently Asked Questions is <http://bit.ly/QmO6MM>. For dates and times of Benefit Information Sessions, go to: <http://bit.ly/OF5Uyc>.

Medical Mutual of Ohio is the administrator of our medical benefit programs. The rates for full-time CEA bargaining unit members are given in the chart below. These numbers are approximate amounts based on the information given to CEA at the time this issue of *The Voice* went to press. Final rates may vary slightly.

2013 Contribution Rates for Medical Benefits for Teachers

Medical 21 Pay Plan	EPO	PPO
Employee only	\$ 38.17	\$ 44.78
Employee plus one (Spouse on CCS coverage before June 1, 2009, or Child)	76.13	89.30
Employee plus one (New Spouse/DP)	215.98	229.15
Family (Spouse on CCS coverage before June 1, 2009, and/or Children)	112.33	131.77
Family (New Spouse/DP)	318.66	338.09
Medical 26 Pay Plan	EPO	PPO
Employee only	\$ 30.83	\$ 36.17
Employee plus one (Spouse on CCS coverage before June 1, 2009, or Child)	61.49	72.12
Employee plus one (New Spouse/DP)	174.44	185.08
Family (Spouse on CCS coverage before June 1, 2009, and/or Children)	90.73	106.43
Family (New Spouse/DP)	257.38	273.07

A 2013 Employee Benefits Enrollment Guide will be sent by CCS to your home address. The guide will provide a complete list of insurance rates for teachers, tutors and latchkey teachers.

Medical plan design changes

The amount required to fund expenses for 2013 from the CCS self-insurance fund would require a 13 percent increase in premiums. With an 8 percent cap on the Board's contribution, this means that our premiums would increase 8 percent (90/10 percent board-employee contribution), plus an additional 5 percent increase (0/100 percent employee). The average premium increase would amount to approximately 30 percent.

To mitigate this prohibitive increase, the Joint Insurance Committee agreed to make some less costly changes to plan design. The changes are a \$5 increase in office visit co-pays from \$15 to \$20; emergency room co-pay from \$50 to \$100 (waived if admitted); \$250 (single)/\$500 (family) deductible for in-patient hospitalizations and out-patient surgeries with 100 percent coverage after deductible is met (in network); prescription drugs: retail \$4/\$25/\$40 (30-day supply); home delivery \$10/\$50/\$80 (90-day supply).

These changes, even with a \$500 deductible, cost less than paying the 13 percent increase which is approximately \$1,113.24 for a member with the family plan.

This year's increase is the highest we have ever experienced. Here are the top three reasons for the escalation in cost of claims for members of the CEA bargaining unit:

- ➔ The number of emergency room visits increased by 15 percent, the most expensive health-care benefit available.
- ➔ Changes in STRS benefits resulted in a higher number of retiring employees who used CCS insurance to have procedures such as knee and hip replacements completed prior to enrolling in STRS insurance.
- ➔ Catastrophic claims amounted to \$3,346,430 in 2010, representing the 19 most-costly claimants and \$3,872,903 in 2011 for 24 claimants. The claims included care for conditions such as end stage renal failure, heart failure, cancer and a kidney transplant.

Life's unexpected events can threaten a family in more ways that you can imagine. A diagnosis of cancer, a disabling injury, a stroke or a heart attack could be devastating. Fortunately, the insurance benefits in CCS protect your family and your financial security. These increases in premiums and plan design changes may be difficult for you, but they leave you in a position better than your peers in other school districts and in the public and private sector.

Class size matters

The CCS administration has to make a concerted effort to complete initial class size adjustments within the first 18 student attendance days of the school year. Oct. 1 is the deadline to reorganize classrooms that exceed the class size guidelines prescribed in Article 301 of our *Master Agreement*. Here are the size limits:

- ✦ K-3: more than 29 students each
- ✦ 4-5: no more than 30 students each
- ✦ Middle school: no more 35 students per class and 150 students per day
- ✦ High school: no more than 36 students per class and 150 students per day

High school or middle school nonacademic classes must not exceed the number of pupil stations. For instance assigning 35 students to a computer class with 30 computers would be a violation of the contract.

Teachers who are being transferred through reorganization have two days without students to move to their new buildings: one day to pack, one day to unpack. Elementary teachers who move to a different classroom have one day to pack and unpack.

If your school still has not decided how to reorganize classes to meet class-size requirements, district administrators will intervene to assist you. If at any time class sizes exceed contractual limits, a reorganization must take place.

If you have any questions about class size, call CEA Vice President Phil Hayes at 253-4731.

Special notes

- Receive support for your college student from our **Members Scholarship Fund**. **Submit an application by Oct. 26**. The student must be a **senior at the college or university** with a **2.0 GPA**. Payment will be made directly to the college or university. Go to <http://bit.ly/Q3SbrZ>. Contact **Cora Miller** at CEA (253-4731) if you have questions.
- The **open enrollment period** for joining the **Sick Leave Bank** ends **Sept. 30**. You can **download a form** at <http://bit.ly/ceasl12>.
- The **deadline is Friday, Oct. 5, at 4 p.m.** for the **Ingram Teacher Grant** program. Grants range from \$500 to \$1,000 to support innovative instructional ideas. A **CCS email account** is **required**. To read more about the program and to submit your application, go to www.columbus.k12.oh.us/ingramgrant.

CEA Pre-Paid Legal Services Plan OEA/NEA Attorney Referral Program

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