Want insurance? You must see the counselor

All eligible employees who want medical coverage must re-enroll in the Core Benefits program that packages medical, dental and vision coverage. This applies to everyone, even if you plan to waive coverage or if you already have coverage.

If you do not meet with a counselor, you will put your coverage at risk. Counselors are extending their hours and making an effort to meet in convenient locations.

If you want dependents covered, please bring the following:
- A copy of the first page of your most recent IRS Form 1040 tax return
- Applicable evidence, such as marriage certificate, birth certificate, adoption award letter, child-support order and domestic-partner affidavit.

In addition, there are new requirements for adding dependents up to age 26. To be eligible for coverage, such dependents must be your natural children, stepchildren or legally in your care. Legal proof, as listed above, is required. However, such dependents do NOT have to live with you nor must they be students or dependents listed on your IRS tax return.

If you have met with a benefits counselor but did not provide the appropriate documentation or if you did not get a chance to meet with a counselor in your building:
- Reschedule with the counselor at the building site and provide necessary documents.
- Find an alternate location that is close and convenient to you. The counselors’ schedules are available online. Contact the site office to see if there is any availability in the schedule.
- If you cannot reschedule at another location, stop by the CEC during the last week of open enrollment (ending Nov. 1). The CCS Benefits Department will be able to enroll employees in core deductions.

If you have questions, please call CEA, or call the Benefits Office at 365-6475.

United for our kids

It’s easy. You get a pledge card. You fill it out. Then the miracles begin. Our collective funds, along with the efforts of hundreds of organizations, provide resources for those seeking quality education, stable income, good health and secure housing.

Columbus City Schools’ annual United Way campaign ends Oct. 26. Realize that when you support the effort, you are providing so many things our families need. United Way programs provide early intervention for young children so they are prepared for school and have a better chance of making it all the way to graduation. They provide food for central Ohio pantries, where many of our families get their groceries. The United Way of Central Ohio also funds programs that:
- Provide job-skills training for displaced workers
- Coach people in managing their finances
- Point the way to jobs for those with special challenges
- Find ways across barriers to health care
- Ensure needs are met in times of crisis and so many other things that you might not notice, but which mean our community thrives.

Read more at www.liveunitedcentralohio.org. And when you get your pledge form, give generously. Remember, we don’t ask for ourselves. We ask for our families.

Don’t be part of the one percent

On Friday, Oct. 12, CEA was bombarded with phone calls from members. The reason? They weren’t paid. Because of a computer glitch, the new MUNIS system failed to direct deposit the pay of approximately fifty of our members—more than one percent of CEA’s membership. The Payroll Department was not aware of the glitch and, therefore, did not notify members of the mishap.

CEA immediately called affected members and informed them of the Payroll Department’s plan to remedy the problem by issuing manual checks.

Rest assured that your Association does not take payroll errors lightly. However, your best offense is a strong defense. Go to http://columbus.munisselfservice.com on Tuesday afternoons before a payday to check that your pay is scheduled to be deposited. If you detect an error, call the Payroll Department immediately at 365-6440. The error will be fixed, and your pay could be direct deposited as usual. If you wait until payday to report an error, you will receive a manual check that you will have to deposit yourself. Remember, your next payday is Friday, Oct. 26. Go http://columbus.munisselfservice.com on Tuesday, Oct. 23, and check your pay.

No wireless routers

Your Association knows our members are at their wits’ end over the state of technology in CCS. We’ve been forced into finding our own solutions to overcome the district’s technological limitations. Using workarounds and bringing in our own laptops and tablets so we can effectively teach our students just feels like our new normal.

It’s frustrating when we’re able to access the internet just to be met with a router that won’t connect. No wireless routers. You get a Wi-Fi signal, but the connection is so bad that it’s as if you’re on a public network. We know it’s not fair. We’re working on it. And we’re hoping that state and local officials will finally provide the funding that we desperately need to upgrade the district’s network. Until then, we’ll keep doing our best to keep our students connected.
wirelessly virtually everywhere except at work. It’s disconcerting when you teach a lesson or how you set up your classroom is dictated by an immovable internet drop. Since we already bring in our own technology to help our students, it may seem logical to connect our own personal wireless routers to the district’s network. CEA says: Don’t do it.

Installing or using personal wireless routers at work compromises the security of the district’s network. Unauthorized users that gain wireless access to our network could upload a virus and take down the network. Worse yet, confidential student and employee information such as phone numbers, addresses and Social Security numbers could be accessed. We ensure the safety of our students and colleagues by preventing unauthorized visitors from accessing our schools. Let’s ensure the safety of the confidential information of our students and colleagues by not allowing unauthorized users network access through personal wireless routers.

Know your ABCs

We’ve been getting questions about the rules governing the Association Building Council (ABC). Simply put, the ABC is a vehicle through which many problems can be addressed in your building or unit. Many times, your ABC will act as front-line offense to informally resolve problems and prevent them from turning into grievances.

Your ABC consists of five members: the Senior Faculty Representative, two elected members and two members appointed by the principal/supervisor. After soliciting your members for ABC concerns, FRs should share a summary of the forthcoming ABC agenda with your building principal before the upcoming meeting. This allows FRs to answer any questions your principal or supervisor might have prior to the meeting.

ABC meetings are open to all CEA members in the building, unless an executive session has been declared by the council. All CEA members have the right to have matters placed on the ABC agendas and have the right to speak to the council on those items, unless discussion has been limited by a majority vote. Even though your principal is not an ABC member, he or she is required to attend the ABC meeting.

After the meeting, your ABC chairperson writes the report and gives it to your administrator. He or she has five days to provide each teacher with a copy of the report given to them by the ABC chairperson.

More details about the ABC can be found in your CEA Master Agreement in Article 202 and in the CEA Faculty Representative Notebook on page six. If you have further questions, please contact CEA Vice President Phil Hayes.

Thank you for attending the LA

We thank the representatives who attended the Oct. 4 Legislative Assembly. The Assembly consists of Faculty Representatives, Governors and CEA officers. Meeting attendance is important to ensure effective representation.

The Legislative Assembly meets monthly during the school year in this parliament-like session to vote on matters of great importance to our Association. All CEA members are welcome to attend these meetings.

The following buildings/units were represented:


Grade card and TRC update

On Wednesday, Oct. 17, the Curriculum Department sent out two memos. The intent of the first memorandum is to respond to concerns brought forward by CEA regarding the Infinite Campus grade reporting tool. The memo also includes the 2012–2013 interim and grade reporting timelines. Downloaded this document at http://bit.ly/OJ28bW.

The second memo announced that the report card and goal levels generated by iPod testing at the elementary level have been changed. Additionally, the deadline to complete TRC testing has been extended to Friday, Oct. 26. This memo can be downloaded by going to http://bit.ly/T16uj5.

Special notes

- Early voting hours resolved—Secretary of State Jon Husted has set hours for the final three days of early voting that were subject to a legal dispute in the battleground state of Ohio. Secretary Husted directed the 88 county boards of elections to be open from 8 a.m.–2 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 3; from 1–5 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 4; and from 8 a.m.–2 p.m., Monday, Nov. 5.
- Fee waiver applications for Spring 2013 will be in mailboxes on Monday, Oct. 29. The completed application is due back to Northgate by Friday, Nov. 9, at 5 p.m. If you have Priority I or Priority II status, include the proper documentation. Your priority status will change to Priority III without proper documentation. Call Norma Oldham, Northgate Center, 365-8993 if you have any questions.
- Join CEA members for the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk on Sunday, Oct. 28, at COSI. Check-in starts at 8:30 a.m., and the walk begins at 10 a.m. Go to www.makingstridestwalk.org/columbus to register today. Use Columbus Education Association as your team company. Everybody has been personally touched by this disease, so sign up today.
- Receive support for your college student from our Members Scholarship Fund. The student must be a senior at a college or university with a 2.0 GPA. Download an application at http://bit.ly/Q3ShrZ. The due date is Oct. 26. If you have questions, contact Cora Miller at CEA (253-4731).
- CEA will hold a special election for two High School Governors-At-Large. Campaigning for these positions ends Monday, Nov. 12. Voting is Oct. 30–Nov. 12. Tally day is Tuesday, Nov. 13.

CEA Pre-Paid Legal Services Plan

At Cloppert, Latanick, Sauter and Wohlbauer, we have dedicated ourselves to teachers in and out of the classroom. Our experienced personal injury, divorce, dissolution, criminal, probate and real estate attorneys are available to you at moderate rates which are lower than we normally charge our private clients. Please contact us today and allow our experience to work for you.

(614) 461-4455 or www.cloppertlaw.com