

The Voice

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Columbus Education Association

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Commission looks at education policy, early childhood learning

The twenty-five member Columbus Education Commission (CEC) met for the second time on Friday, January 11, at the Columbus State Community College.



The group, which includes CEA President Rhonda Johnson, spent the morning reviewing a presentation by Educational Service Center of Central Ohio Supt. Bart Anderson and Dept. Supt. Tom Goodney on how federal, state and local policy impacts education in Columbus.

The commission unanimously voted to ask the Columbus Board of Education to sanction a business study to look for possible efficiencies. School board President Carol Perkins, a member of the commission, said she would “lead the charge” on this issue. She promised to take the commission’s request to the next school board meeting.

Joined by Mayor Coleman, the group engaged in a working lunch while listening to a panel of principals from two high-performing schools, our own Eastmoor Academy HS principal Alesia Gillison and former Reynoldsburg Hannah Ashton MS Principal Tina Thomas-Manning.

Following the panel discussion, Mark Real, President and CEO of KidsOhio.org, and Sasheen Phillips, Curriculum and Assessments Director of the Ohio Department of Education, delivered a presentation that examined the state of early childhood education in Columbus. They discussed how the call for preschool-age programs in Ohio has been renewed following the introduction of the Third Grade Guarantee. Early childhood education providers, Bernice Hagler Cody, from Franklin County Head Start, and Linda Day Mackessy, from the YWCA, presented information about their pre-school programs.

The commission unanimously voted to direct the commission staff to gather input from community and national experts on early childhood education and literacy. The commission also tasked the staff to draft recommendations that support the commission’s goal of preparing Columbus children to be ready for kindergarten and to meet the third-grade reading guarantee mandated by Ohio law.

School board President Carol Perkins suggested that commission members visit some Columbus City Schools to get a firsthand view of what they do. The co-chairs, on behalf of the commission, accepted the invitation and asked staff to make the arrangements.

At the meeting on Thursday, Jan. 24, the commission will focus on how to define success and use technology and data analytics to improve student performance. Keep reading *The Voice* for details. To connect with the commission, go to <http://reimaginecolumbuseducation.org>.

No subs? Contact CEA

Is there a classroom in your building that needs a sub but doesn’t have one? Contact CEA when you notice this gap. There are days when a teacher or specialist is absent but the district hasn’t found a sub for that class. Send an email to tellcea@ceahio.org, or call the CEA office at 253-4731. We understand this is happening quite a bit, so we are beginning to track the inability of CCS to provide subs in all cases when staff is absent.

It is extremely important that we take responsibility for all the students in our buildings. Many of them are already behind their peers in academic achievement. Disruptions to the flow of their education are not helping their situation. The U.S. Department of Education continually emphasizes that the longer a qualified teacher is away from his or her classroom, the more children suffer academically. We cannot let this happen. Education is a civil right.

Teacher absence forms

First they say you don’t, and then they say you do. After saying that you don’t need to fill out any paper absence forms, the CCS administration has now determined that you need to complete absence forms for the entire year. They want to be cautious in case of an audit. This is exactly why CEA told them that the elimination of absence forms was not only a violation of the contract but a bad idea, at the least. Not having a paper trail of employees’ absences serves neither the employer nor the employee in the case of a dispute or an error.

In a previous issue of *The Voice*, CEA said that you would not have to account for past absences this year. That is not the case: If you missed any school days this year, you will receive a list of those dates from your principal/supervisor. Please double-check the list for accuracy and complete the necessary paperwork.

Here are key steps to follow when reporting and documenting absences:

- Report each workday, and/or partial workday absence, to the Substitute Management System or to your building principal/supervisor.
- If you call the principal, he or she must then make the call to SEMS.
- You must complete an Employee Absence Form within three days of your return to work. Find the form on the intranet at “Treasurer’s Office” under “payroll.”
- Forms will be kept on file at the building for four years. Forms should not be sent to the Treasurer’s office.

Got a continuing contract?

You may be eligible to receive a continuing contract. By Mar. 2, you must fill out and submit the Notification of Eligibility for Continuing Contract form, along with transcripts that document your coursework if you meet the eligibility requirements. While a limited contract is renewable from year to year upon recommendation of the superintendent, a continuing contract remains in effect until you resign, retire or are terminated or suspended.

Section 401.16 of the *CEA Master Agreement* explains more about the process. To be eligible, a teacher must have a five-year professional license, eight-year professional certificate or a permanent certificate on file with Human Resources on or before Mar. 2.

In addition, an eligible teacher must, by the conclusion of this school year, have completed three years of successful Columbus teaching experience within the last five years. Those with previous continuing contracts in Columbus or another Ohio district must have completed two successful years of experience in Columbus City Schools.

There are also education requirements:

- ⇒ If you have a master's degree: Six semester hours of graduate coursework in your licensing or related area beyond your master's degree
- ⇒ If you do not hold a master's degree: 30 semester hours of 300-level or above coursework in your licensure or related area.

If you have questions on eligibility requirements, contact Teacher Certification/Licensure at 365-5658.

Know your contract: Teaching preferences

Prior to the 211 process (Assignments and Transfers), teachers have the right to express their teaching assignment preferences for the following school year. Section 211.05(B) of the *Master Agreement* describes the procedure. You must submit your request in writing to your building principal prior to Feb. 1. This is a great opportunity to make the request now so that your principal can make every consideration prior to reorganization of the teaching staff.



Know your Governor

The Columbus Education Association Board of Governors (BOG) is the executive arm of the CEA. It is responsible for the development and execution of all CEA programs. The governors oversee all of the Association's financial affairs. In addition to attending BOG meetings twice a month, Governors are present for CEA Legislative Assembly meetings. Members of the BOG maintain close contact with faculty representatives, holding district meetings once a month. This week's *Voice* features Carla Davis, Governor of District 2.

Carla is a Common Core Instructional Teacher on Special Assignment at Forest Park ES. She has been involved in various CEA committees and was the long-time Faculty Representative for Forest Park ES.



Carla Davis

Davis was elected in the spring of 2012. Buildings/units in District 2 include: Alpine ES, Avalon ES, Beechcroft HS, Devonshire ES, Forest Park ES, Northland HS, Northtowne ES, Parkmoor ES, Valley Forge ES and Woodward Park MS.

Vote for Murray and Flu-Allen for credit union board

Ezetta Murray and Barbara Flu-Allen are running for re-election to the Education First Credit Union Board of Directors. They are the only two CEA/CEA-R members on the ballot. You should have received your ballot (blue form) in your December monthly statement. Please join us in supporting these two candidates.

Murray has been a member of the Education First Credit Union since 1991. She has extensive leadership experience, through teaching and as a CEA Staff Consultant. As part of CEA, Murray represents educators, files grievances, negotiates contracts and serves on various committees, chiefly employee relations, as well as strategic and succession planning committees. She runs CEA's annual charitable campaigns, including the American Cancer Society drive and the United Negro College Fund.

Flu-Allen graduated from East High School and attended The Ohio State University Colleges of Dentistry and Education. She is licensed as an assistant superintendent, supervisor, high school principal, health educator, school guidance counselor and dental hygienist. She has served for more than 12 years on the credit union board. Flu-Allen earned the Mayor's Service Above Self award, as well as honors from the Minority Scholar Initiative, the Ohio Department of Education and CEA. She received the Learning for Life Golden Apple and is a Martha Holden Jennings scholar.

Please complete your self-addressed ballot, and return it by midnight on Feb. 28. Only current Education First Credit Union members may vote. Remember, vote for Ezetta Murray and Barbara Flu-Allen to retain their seats on the Education First Credit Union.

Teachers' Dream Grant

Application information for the Teachers' Dream Grant is now posted on the Columbus City Schools website. This grant provides an opportunity for all teachers to apply for individual, school-based grants ranging from \$500 to \$5,000.

Applicants should focus on academic enrichment, increasing student achievement, closing the achievement gaps, improving school/community relations and improving classroom learning climate. This is an excellent opportunity for teachers to acquire resources to support innovative projects.

All grant applications are due online by 4 p.m. on Friday, Mar. 29. Go to <http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us/dreamgrant> to apply for the grant. For more information, view the district website or contact the Curriculum Leadership & Development Office at 365-8993.

Special notes

- ❑ **CCS will issue paper W-2s through the U.S. mail by Jan. 31** as required by IRS regulations. The Payroll Department will initiate an email blast once the ESS availability date for W-2s is determined.
- ❑ **Save the date** for one of our best-loved events. **The CEA Awards & Retirement Dinner is Saturday, May 18**, at the **Hilton Columbus Downtown, 401 N. High Street**. Social hour is at 6 p.m., with dinner at 7 p.m. There is no cost for retirees, honorees and Senior Faculty Representatives to attend.
- ❑ **2012 dues deductions** for CEA members: **Full Dues, Plan A** (21 Pays) **\$824.33**, **Plan B** (26 Pays) **\$825.83**. **If you switched from: Plan A to B: \$765.83** or went from **Plan B to A: \$884.33**. **Half Dues** are **\$460.42** and **Quarter Dues** are **\$250.71**.
- ❑ Campaigning for the open positions in the CEA Spring Elections is now underway and ends Mar. 4. Please support candidates by distributing their campaign literature. Voting will take place Feb. 19–Mar. 4. Votes will be tabulated on Mar. 5. Call CEA Elections Chairperson Michele Mays at 253-4731 with questions.