

The CEA Voice

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Columbus Education Association

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New education funding plan

Recently, the governor unveiled "Achievement Everywhere," his new plan for overhauling education funding. In 2011, former Gov. Ted Strickland's school funding model was scrapped and Ohio adopted a two-year "bridge" formula, leaving Ohio the only state in the nation without a permanent school funding plan. The legislation reduced funding to 2009 levels and cut \$1.8 billion from education.

As proposed, "Achievement Everywhere" calls for \$1.2 billion in additional education funding over the state's next two-year budget period. The plan would equalize education funding to less property-rich districts and would also contain a two-year guarantee that no Ohio school district would see a decrease in funding.

The plan would provide more than \$20 million over two years to create a new voucher program that would help pay for private school tuition for any student entering kindergarten in the fall of 2013 whose parents are at 200 percent of the federal poverty rate. "Achievement Everywhere" also features increased monies to help with the education of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, early childhood education, students in poverty, as well as gifted students.

"Achievement Everywhere" calls for a total of \$300 million to be set aside for the "Straight-A Fund" to provide one-time grants to districts over the next two years. Districts would have to take on "ambitious new strategies" to increase student achievement or "increase operational efficiency" to be eligible for Straight-A Fund monies.

The governor's plan is part of his two-year budget, initially proposed on Monday, Feb. 4. The Ohio Legislature will soon begin the state budget process and has until June 30 to pass the two-year budget. Keep reading *The CEA Voice* for updates.

Support the UNCF

The kickoff for CEA's United Negro College Fund Campaign was Feb. 7. The organization serves many students—not just African Americans. The organization provides operating funds for its 39 member colleges, all of them small liberal arts institutions, making it possible for them to offer their students 21st Century academic programs while keeping their tuitions to less than half the average of other private colleges.

UNCF administers 400 scholarship and internship programs, allowing students from low- and moderate-income families to afford college tuition, books, room and board. Serving as a national advocate for the importance of minority higher education, UNCF represents the public policy



interests of its students and member colleges through its annual television program, "An Evening of Stars."

The UNCF has made a real difference in the lives of many CCS graduates, current staff members and local community leaders. Many students who had believed college to be an unachievable goal are now attending and graduating with distinction from institutions of higher learning throughout the United States.

Facts about UNCF:

- ⇒ More than 92 percent of UNCF students require financial assistance to reach their educational goals.
- ⇒ An estimated 40 percent are the first in their families to attend college.
- ⇒ Approximately 50 percent are from families with a gross income of less than \$30,000.
- ⇒ Fifty-five percent of UNCF students are from single-parent families.
- ⇒ UNCF scholarships apply to all schools, not just historically black colleges and universities.

This drive is very important. We are preparing our students for jobs in the global community. UNCF makes the difference for many students seeking to further their education.

Your Senior Faculty Representative and your building principal/supervisor will conduct the campaign in your building. Please give generously. You may spread out your payments by participating in payroll deduction for one year, or you may make a one-time contribution.

The CCS drive ends Friday, Mar. 1. For more information, call Ezetta Murray at CEA, 253-4731.

Ten powerful minutes

CEA needs ten minutes of your time at a special meeting. When you leave, you will feel empowered to help the city help our kids. You don't believe it?

Then attend one of these quick meetings. Your Faculty Representative will explain briefly about

the work of the Columbus Education Commission, and then give you a postcard on which you may write your ideas to help community leaders give our students the support they deserve. The commission has asked for our input on this very important issue. Let's not waste this opportunity.

The commission is charged with developing a list of recommendations that will:

- ◆ Help our children to succeed in the city's vibrant, growing economy,
- ◆ Make Columbus a global leader in developing the highly skilled, creative, entrepreneurial workforce that will propel economic growth in the 21st Century
- ◆ Leverage the resourcefulness of our entire community



to meet these goals.

The goals of each Ten-Minute Meeting are to:

- ◆ Raise awareness and understanding of the work of the Columbus Education Commission
- ◆ Encourage teachers to make their voices heard as the Columbus Education Commission is crafting a series of recommendations to improve schools within the Columbus City School District—both charter and public
- ◆ Invite teachers to a special Columbus Education Commission forum
- ◆ Ask teachers to encourage parents, students and residents to give the commission their ideas.

Please check with your FR for the scheduled session in your building. Teachers who work in more than one building should attend a Ten-Minute Meeting in one of the locations.

You may also attend the Columbus Education Commission's teacher forum from 4:30–6 p.m. on Feb. 28 at East HS. CEA President Rhonda Johnson is the CEC's teacher representative. She will bring your ideas to the commission.

You may attend any of the public meetings CEC is holding to gather public input. Each meeting is from 6–8 p.m. Dinner is included.

- * Feb 12, Linden-McKinley STEM Academy, 1320 Duxberry Avenue
- * Feb 20, Briggs HS, 2555 Briggs Road
- * Feb 26, Buckeye MS, 2950 Parsons Avenue
- * Mar. 5, Columbus Collegiate Academy-West, 115 South Gift Street
- * Mar. 7, East HS, 1500 East Broad Street

Complete the calendar survey

On Friday, Feb. 8, members should have received an email containing a link to an online survey that will determine the calendar for the 2013–2014 school year.

This window for the survey will close Sunday, Feb. 24, at 11:59 p.m. The link was sent to members' personal email addresses and cannot be accessed on a CCS computer or a device connected to the district computer network.

If CEA does not have your home email address or if you have opted out of email messages from CEA, send an email to tellcea@ceaohio.org with your name and school/unit in order to receive the link. Paper copies of the calendar survey are available at the CEA office.

It's OK to speak up

When we discover someone is breaking a rule, it's tempting to turn away. We often fear reprisals or retaliation. To encourage more such reporting, our school board just approved the "Whistleblower Reporting and Protection Policy" that protects those who want to do the right thing.

Employees are encouraged to make a report if they learn of an employee or school board member who may have violated Ohio or Federal law or district policies; or if they suspect financial irregularities, ethical violations, conflicts of interest or unsafe or unhealthy situations that put employees or students at risk.

Reports must be made within 24 hours of discovering the actual or suspected wrongdoing. Use one of these reporting methods:

- ⇒ Notify your immediate supervisor, unless that supervisor is the subject of the report, in which case you can choose another reporting method. If you choose to notify your immediate supervisor, you must also provide a written report using the form provided by CCS.

- ⇒ Submit a report using CCS' online reporting tool, or CCS' reporting hotline. You may remain anonymous if you so desire.

For suspected fraud, you may also submit a report to the District's Internal Auditor and/or provide a report to the Ohio Auditor of State. Here is the contact information:

Ohio Auditor of State's Office
Special Investigations Unit
88 East Broad Street
P.O. Box 1140
Columbus, OH 43215
1-866-FRAUD OH (1-866-372-8364)
The District Internal Auditor
Office of Internal Audit, Columbus City Schools
737 East Hudson Street
Columbus, OH 43211
(614) 365-8904

Educator expense deduction

If you are an eligible educator, you can deduct up to \$250 (\$500 if married filing joint and both spouses are educators, but not more than \$250 each) of any unreimbursed expenses you paid or incurred for books, supplies, computer equipment (including related software and services) other equipment and supplementary materials that you use in the classroom. The deduction is claimed on either line 23 of Form 1040 (PDF) or line 16 of Form 1040A (PDF).

You are an eligible educator if, for the tax year, you meet the following requirements:

- You are a K–12 teacher, instructor, counselor, principal, or aide and;
- You work at least 900 hours a school year in a school that provides elementary or secondary education, as determined under state law.

For additional information regarding educator expense deductions, see *Publication 529, Miscellaneous Deductions*, and *Publication 17, Your Federal Income Tax for Individuals*.

Special notes

- ❑ **Fee waiver applications for Summer 2013** are in buildings now. Completed applications are due back to Northgate by **Friday, Feb. 15, 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.**
- ❑ **Donate days to the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank** for CEA member **Ginger Hardesty**. Use a sick leave form to make your donation. Be sure that you and your principal/supervisor sign the form.
- ❑ The teacher **applications for Summer School 2013** are available on the CCS Intranet home page. The deadline for submitting applications is **Monday, Mar. 4**. Contact **Cheryl Watson** at Northgate at **365-5025** with questions.
- ❑ Campaigning for **2013–14 OEA delegates** and **2013 NEA delegates** ends **Mar. 4**. **Voting** will take place **Feb. 19–Mar. 4**. Votes will be **tabulated** on **Mar. 5**. Call CEA at 253-4731 if you have questions.
- ❑ **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**.
- ❑ **Mar. 2 is the deadline to apply for continuing contracts**. Eligibility requirements can be found in Section 401.16 of the *CEA Master Agreement*.