

The CEA Voice

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Columbus Education Association

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The “Education Mayor”

“As a community, we should encourage, promote and replicate the best of what works in education. We must support success and replace failure.”



This is just one thing Columbus Mayor Michael Coleman said on Feb. 21, delivering his State of the City address at South HS.

Mayor Coleman does not want to run the school district. He does want to help us connect with community leaders, families and others who care about our kids, so we can work together to improve outcomes for them.

He talked about a number of city initiatives. But the impact of his report centered on education. You can read his speech at <http://mayor.columbus.gov/>.

Here are some sound bites:

- About preschool: “We need the private sector, non-profits, faith-based organizations, along with the state and federal government to help us fund and deliver this essential foundation of a quality education.”
- About technology: “Most Columbus schools have only three to five computers per classroom. This is clearly inadequate.”
- About excellent schools: “Unfortunately, we don’t have enough good schools in Columbus. When you combine Columbus City Schools and charter schools, only 5 percent of schools earn an ‘A’ rating. That means only 2,800 of 65,000 students go to excellent schools. Meanwhile, five times as many students attend failing schools—both district and charter. This is unacceptable and needs to change.”

Here’s what he covered:

- Operational efficiency: “We must use the Columbus City Schools operations review to find more efficient ways to deliver district services.”
- Teacher and principal excellence: “We must make it a priority to attract and retain the best teachers and the best principals for our schools.”
- Quality Pre-K: “We must make it a community priority for every child to have access to Pre-K education, regardless of income.”
- Closing the digital divide: “We must give teachers and students direct, individual access to classroom technology, beginning at the middle-school level.”
- Encouraging successful schools: “We must encourage and replicate good CCS schools and, ultimately, replace the ones that consistently fail; and we must embrace and recruit high-quality charter schools and find a way to close the bad ones.”

CEA applauds the mayor for speaking out on these important issues. He is concerned about the future of our city, and much of its success is tied to education. That is why he, along with Council Member Andrew Ginther, formed the Columbus Education Commission. This is a community-wide commission designed to provide feedback and recommendations. CEA President Rhonda Johnson sits on the CEC. Keep reading your *Voice* for reports from the commission’s meetings.

Take the staff survey, win an iPad

The *Master Agreement* provides for a district-wide evaluation of each school by the CEA membership. This year, the staff survey is “going green” and will be administered online.

Members will be able to rate work locations on their professional environment, democratic procedures, teacher involvement and other important categories. This year, members will have the opportunity to provide additional open-ended, anonymous responses about their work locations.

An email containing the link to the survey was sent to members’ non-CCS email addresses on Friday, Mar. 1. The survey will close on Sunday, Mar. 17, at 11:59 p.m. If you did not get the email message, or if CEA does not have your current non-CCS email address, please send it to tellcea@ceaohio.org to participate in the survey. You will be able to access this survey from home or from work.

The survey results for each school/building will be published on CEA’s website. A hard-copy of the open-ended responses will be provided to the respective Senior FR for each school/building.

When you complete the survey, you will automatically be entered into a drawing to win a new iPad with Retina Display, 3G capability and 16 Gb of memory or one of 20 gas cards worth \$25 each.

If it’s bad news, tell us now

Would you want your doctor to give you the test results for a rare disease now or have you wait a few months while a cure is being discovered? Of course not. Yet our administration has been meeting since September to discuss cuts to next year’s school budget and won’t give us an answer on teacher staffing.

Should you look for other jobs? CEA says: Do what is best for you and your family.

A recent memo from Supt. Gene Harris outlined the problem: The school board has delayed a request for a tax increase until the fall, and with no additional revenue, cuts of \$25 million or more will be necessary to balance the budget.

We are hoping that attrition due to retiring baby boomers will spare us. But this may not be possible. We have heard that the governor’s budget includes education increases, but now we learn that they are minimal. Harris writes, “CCS Treasurer (Penelope) Rucker advises that we have budget reductions in place beginning July 1, 2013.”

We appreciate that administrators and board members have been deliberating carefully. They have gotten feedback from teachers, classified staff and administrators. But it certainly seems that layoffs are imminent. Harris adds, “We are again looking at nearly every aspect of the district, including school and department budgets, curricular and extra-curricular programs, staffing, school schedules, facilities and maintenance, materials, supplies, services, etc.... We have no choice...failure to act now would potentially result in devastating consequences for our staff, our students and the district the following year.”

Administrators are set to decide by May 15. But we say, just give us the bad news now. Should I look for another job? Should I work this summer? Should I buy a house? Will I be able to pay for day care? Do what is in the best interest for yourself and for your family. Hope for the best. Prepare for the worst.

We will keep you informed of developments as they occur.



Article 211 calendar finally here

We finally have our 211 calendar. Isn't it wonderfully anticlimactic?

Putting this process on hold has meant a great deal of stress for all of us. We also find it interesting that the administration does not know how many teachers will be laid off next school year. Which begs the question, exactly how will the 211 process work? Will positions be posted and then withdrawn? Stay tuned.

In the meantime, take note of the dates below from Version 6 of the 2013 Article 211 calendar. Don't hold your breath. There were 13 versions last year. Keep checking the CCS Intranet and the CEA website for updates.

March 15–19: Staff members are notified of administrative reductions

Mar. 26: 211 training for district offices, 8–10 a.m., and Regions I and II elementary and middle schools, 1–3 p.m.; Northgate, Room F

Mar. 27: 211 training for high schools, 8–10 a.m., and Regions III, IV and V elementary and middle schools, 1–3 p.m.; Northgate, Room F

Apr. 8–24: Round 1 postings

Apr. 25–30: Round 1 interviews

May 10–14: Round 2 posting

May 15–20: Round 2 interview

May 29–30: Job fairs

National Women's History Month

At the CEA 34th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Awards Dinner, we honored one of our teachers, Dr. Sybil Yvonne Brown, who has mentored dozens of students at Northland HS toward science scholarships and careers. Brown is one of thousands of teachers throughout the United States who have inspired students. And it turns out that this year's theme for Women's History Month, which began Mar. 1, is "Inspiring Innovation Through Imagination: Celebrating Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics."



Sybil Yvonne Brown

It's hard to believe but easy to forget that women did not always have a voice in civic affairs, let alone the classroom. They were denied higher education. Teachers could not have families and were barred from teaching certain subjects. Until the 1980s, even our history textbooks remained almost devoid of women who accomplished great things in politics, science, the arts and other arenas.

This commemorative month marks the anniversary of the 1857 demonstration of New York textile and garment workers against low wages and twelve-hour workdays. Other professionals, including teachers, joined the protest. In 1901, Margaret Haley resigned from her teaching position and went to Chicago, where she helped found the precursor to the American Federation of Teachers—though she later lost control of the organization to a male teacher. In New York, Grace Strachan and the Interborough Association of Women Teachers fought for equal pay for equal work.

Here are some educators from the past whom we honor:

- ♦ Katharine Lee Bates is best known as the author of the words to "America the Beautiful." Less known is her work as a poet and as an English professor and head of the English Department at Wellesley.
- ♦ "Lady Dean" (Dean of Women) of Tuskegee Institute, Hallie Quinn Brown taught in public schools and universities and was also a lecturer and organizer for the causes of civil rights for African Americans and equal rights for women.

- ♦ Marjorie Lee Browne was one of the first black women to receive a doctorate in mathematics.
- ♦ Beatriz Galindo was tutor to Queen Isabella, Catherine of Aragon and Juana the Mad.
- ♦ Maria Mitchell was the first professional woman astronomer in the United States and was a professor of astronomy at Vassar College.
- Maria Montessori developed the Montessori Method of childhood education.

Add your own hero to our list. We all know teachers who have inspired us. Read more at www.nwhp.org.

Thank your school social worker

Don't overlook our social workers. They are out there everyday helping our kids with crisis intervention, mental health assessments, counseling, linking and referring students and families to community agencies and collaborating with school staff and community agencies to reduce or minimize barriers to student achievement and attendance.



Now we've got an official chance to thank them. National School Social Work Week is March 3–9. It's a great time to acknowledge the vital services that these education partners provide to our schools. CCS wants to keep students in school and to help them achieve success. Social workers comprise a key ingredient in that effort.

They are on the front lines, developing, advocating and delivering programs that respond to such human needs as homelessness, poverty, family break-up, mental illness, disability, alcohol and substance abuse, domestic violence and many other issues.

When you see your school social worker, thank her or him for the valuable services that are provided to CCS students so they come to school each day ready to learn.

CEA annual scholarship awards

Each year, CEA awards college scholarships at our annual awards banquet. Now is the time to apply. The deadline for applications is Friday, Apr. 26, at 5 p.m.

Two scholarships are available: the \$1,500 Christa McAuliffe Scholarship, awarded to an education major, and the \$1,000 CEA General Scholarship. Also, a one-year scholarship is awarded by CEA-R, and a senior at South HS will be awarded the Grossman Memorial Scholarship.

Go to http://bit.ly/TbVRib_CEA_Scholarships2013 to download an application form.

Special notes

- ❑ Campaigning and voting in the **2013 CEA Spring Elections ends Mar. 4**. Votes will be **tabulated on Mar. 5**.
- ❑ Make sure CEA has your **personal, non-CCS email address**. We need it to be able to send you information about bargaining. Additionally, CEA will be conducting this year's **professional staff survey** electronically. Send your information to tellcea@ceaohio.org.
- ❑ Apply for a **Dream Grant of \$500 to \$5,000** to help you meet student achievement goals. Applications are due online by **4 p.m. on Friday, Mar. 29**. Go to <http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us/dreamgrant>. For more information, contact the Curriculum Leadership & Development Office at 365-8993.
- ❑ **Vote for a CCS school**. The **NBC4 Make a Difference Grant** will help provide support for our students. Voting is open until **Wednesday, Mar. 6**. Go to www.NBC4MakeADifference.com. Click on the "vote" tab and search for the school name.