CEC teacher feedback

It’s tough to find enough planning time for instruction, including the chance to collaborate and give students individual attention when they are having difficulties. Teachers told the Columbus Education Commission that testing requirements eat up much of their schedules. They also said that parents are not involved enough—and neither is the community at large.

This feedback was part of the commission’s efforts to create recommendations for the community to help Columbus City children succeed. On Feb. 28, nearly two hundred teachers met at East H5 to inform Mayor Michael Coleman and Council President Andrew Ginther of their needs. It is vital that the school board and the administration use the information in this list to make decisions regarding restructuring the academic programs for the district:

- More support with technology
- More opportunities for professional development
- Additional mentoring to improve teaching
- Increased parental, volunteer and community support
- Better-aligned curriculum
- More support with student discipline problems
- Assistance with large classes
- Assistance with planning and teaching special-needs students
- More on-site services for students who need medical, mental health and social service support
- More time to implement and evaluate innovative programs
- Equitable funding among schools
- Improved student preparation for kindergarten
- More elective courses for students
- More immediate access to needed supplies and resources
- Full-time school nurses and/or mental health specialists in every school
- Better communications with local mental health
- State-of-the-art computers and software for all students
- Universal Pre-K and an emphasis on basic skills education
- Media recognition for good teachers, good students and/or good programs
- Use of school buildings to serve as community centers
- To read a summary of the teacher forum, go to:
  http://bit.ly/cecteacherforumfeb28. CEA President Rhonda Johnson serves on the commission which will issue a report in April. Go to www.reimaginecolumbuseducation.org to read more about the CEC’s work.

Reorganization: It’s elementary

This is the time of the year when principals begin to organize their staffs. It’s mostly the elementary principals who seem to be confused by this process—every year. Principals must follow the rules when staff reducing and reorganizing staffs:

- Reductions are made by category: K and 1–5.
- Reducing a kindergarten teacher? You must reduce from among the current kindergarten teachers, the volunteer or the least senior teacher.
- Reducing in grades 1–5? Only the volunteers or the least senior teachers are staff reduced.
- Staff-reduced teachers cannot be reorganized into vacancies.
- Kindergarten teachers may not be reorganized into Grades 1–5 or 1–6 positions, and vice versa, unless a vacancy is available and with the agreement of CEA and Human Resources. CEA has been notified that one principal has wrongly proposedlooping between grade level categories.

If you have questions regarding the reorganization and staff reduction process, read Section 21.1.03 of the contract; or call CEA at 253-4731.

Dance of the lemons

It’s that time of the year again. Regional Executive Directors (REDS) put on their yellow tutus and pull out their baskets of lemons—the district’s ineffective building principals. Start the music. It’s time to dash about and toss the citrus fruit, hoping that each building will receive a better principal than the one it is trading. At intermission, some directors won’t be able to exchange their lemons, so they will set the stage to move their lemons within their own region to another school. Unfortunately, when Act II starts, the scene is vastly different for some schools. Good principals have been moved to make room for the lemons, and teachers are left to make lemonade. (Bring plenty of sugar.)

Some principal assignments for next year have already been announced. Look at the results of past CEA Staff Surveys at ceasurvey.ohnea.org/SelectReport.asp to see if the principal you’re getting is a lemon. We will have the current staff survey online by Monday, Apr. 15.

Keep checking our website for the list of principals for next school year. Meanwhile, enjoy a video of the dancing lemons at www.youtube.com/watch?v=JSTF3H-NAGk.
We are not OAPSE

Once again, we find ourselves having to repeat: One bargaining unit cannot take on the assigned work of another bargaining unit. This applies to teaching assistants as well.

We are relieved that the administration is not eliminating a class period; therefore, preserving 100 teaching positions. Administration has proposed eliminating 95 Target Teach instructional assistants at the elementary level. The proposal calls for assistants’ duties to be divided among the teaching staff. If the administration carries this plan to implementation, CEA will file an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP). Our highly valued assistants are OAPSE members. We stand unified with their union to protect their jobs.

Tell Ohio survey

Take some time during spring break to complete the statewide Tell Ohio survey. It’s not the CEA staff survey. The Tell Ohio survey, endorsed by all the state’s education organizations, is designed for use in classroom and curriculum planning. It focuses on time, facilities, support, student conduct, leadership, professional development and instructional practices. The National New Teacher Center (www.newteachercenter.org) administers this survey.

You should have received a letter in your school mailbox with an access code allowing you to take the survey. Visit www.tellohio.org before Apr. 12.

The March of Dimes is 75

The March of Dimes (MOD) is a non-profit organization, founded by Franklin Delano Roosevelt, with the goal of eradicating polio. After the polio vaccine was discovered, the mission of the MOD changed to prevent birth defects. The discovery of folic acid’s role in preventing neural tube defects heralded another MOD victory.

The MOD’s current mission is to help all babies have the healthiest starts in life, and the focus is on preventing prematurity. One of the major fundraisers for the MOD is the March for Babies, a 3-mile walk/run conducted in the spring each year. This year, the walk will take place on Sunday, Apr. 28, at the Resolute Athletic Complex (formerly known as the Easton Sports Barn).

Join the walk to support the March of Dimes. There is no minimum dollar amount that you need to raise in order to participate, and you can register your team online at http://marchforbabies.org/.

Contact Danelle Harenberg at modfamilyteams@gmail.com if you are interested in volunteering or would like help with forming your team, fundraising, or making a donation.

Get ready, OEA delegates

The OEA Representative Assembly is the supreme governing body of the state association. The fall meeting, held in early December, convenes to adopt the legislative program. The spring meeting is held to evaluate the legislative program, act on new business, introduce resolutions and elect officers.

Congratulations to the following members elected to be delegates to the 2013–14 OEA Representative Assemblies (in order of vote total):


Based on membership numbers, CEA was allocated 91 delegates this school year. Candidates will be given a confirmation of their status in the fall when CEA receives the new allocation of delegates for next school year.

Spring break—we need it

Break is finally here. We encourage everyone to rest and relax. This has been one of the most difficult years in recent history. We know that many issues are weighing on your mind: class sizes, the attendance scandal, lack of substitutes, splits at the elementary level, the departure of our superintendent, the transition evaluation process, principals who aren’t backing us up on discipline and the ever-changing requirements of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee.

We want you to know that CEA has your back. While you recharge, we are out there working to monitor situations and make sure you have a voice at the negotiating table. Teaching these days is tough. Consider yourselves heroes for all you do.

Special notes

☐ The votes of the following buildings/units were not counted in the CEA Spring Elections: Buckeye MS (ballots not returned); Columbus Prep. Schools for Boys (ballots sent to CEA by school mail; received on Mar. 7); Kingswood Center (ballots not returned) and Ohio Ave. ES (ballots not returned). All ballots were to have been received by 5 p.m. on CEA Elections Tally Day, which was Tuesday, Mar. 5.

☐ The following buildings/units completed their United Negro College Fund campaign since the last issue of The CEA Voice: Beaty Park ES, Clinton ES, Columbus Spanish Imm. Academy, East HS, Indiana K–8 and Maybury ES.