

The CEA Voice

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Columbus Education Association

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The home stretch

The Columbus Education Commission will meet Apr. 26 to draft its official recommendations for improving Columbus K-12 educational opportunities. It is calling for an aggressive timeline, especially in early childhood education and technology.



The Columbus Dispatch reported that school governance could be affected, but the Commission has not recommended any such changes.

The Commission has drafted a recommendation to provide school breakfast for all children and to form an Early Childhood Council, organizing Columbus nonprofit groups throughout the city to take part. It is also talking about after-school activities for all kids and providing more arts programs so more kids can participate.

Here are the major areas being drafted:

- Students with a purpose: Equipping schools, teachers and counselors to help our kids prepare in a cohesive and comprehensive fashion for the growing pathway to life success when they graduate—whether that is college, technical training, apprenticeship, military service or other avenues. Every student should graduate high school with some college credits or industry credentials in hand, providing a pathway that will lead toward a good job.
- State-of-the-art teaching tools: All students should have access to technology that expands learning opportunities in school, at home and in the community. By using different learning strategies, we can connect them to the increasingly technological world they live in, engaging them with real-world opportunities for their futures.
- Kindergarten-readiness: Provide affordable, comprehensive pre-K learning for every child in the district by working with a variety of community partners and including parenting classes.
- Community ownership: Mobilize the entire community to support the education of all our children. Our kids need opportunities for growth in many areas that organizations, businesses and others in Columbus can provide.

At its Apr. 10 meeting, the group heard from two presenters on school climate/dropout prevention and charter school leadership. Speakers were Bob Balfanz of Johns Hopkins University and Mike Feinberg, co-founder of the Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) charter schools. Here are the highlights of the presentations:

- School climate matters. Most disciplinary problems at

school don't involve violence; they occur because students are falling through the cracks in multiple areas of their lives. Teachers have many distractions during the school day, and they can't focus on every child individually all the time. Yet such a focus is what it takes to address students' difficulties.

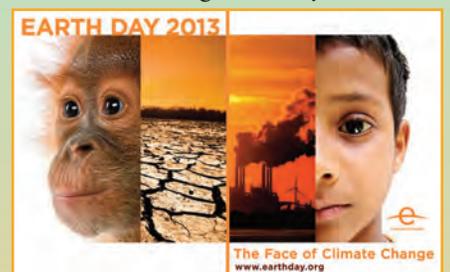
- Leadership is critical, and everyone needs to be involved in monitoring and addressing school climate. Leadership is often the deciding factor when teachers request transfers and when students drop out. Ohio has been labeled one of the nation's "dropout factories," where in some schools twelfth-grade enrollment is 60 percent or less of the ninth-grade enrollment three years earlier.
- One solution: Three Columbus high schools, Mifflin, Linden-McKinley and South, are part of a program called Diplomas Now that strives to make school more exciting and prevent students from dropping out. Freshmen get more English and math and take classes in behavior management and study skills. Students who are absent, fall behind or get into trouble are placed on a "focus list" so the adults in the building know they're at risk of dropping out. They receive extra attention.

On Friday, Apr. 26, the Columbus Education Commission will meet from 9 a.m.–5 p.m. at the Columbus Metropolitan Library. Members will consider draft strategies on neighborhood schools and quality teachers and principals, along with a plan for implementing all recommendations.

Honor the Earth

It's easy to forget about climate change unless you are:

A man in the Maldives worried about relocating his family as sea levels rise; a farmer in Kansas struggling to make ends meet as prolonged drought ravages the crops; or if you are a polar bear in the melting Arctic.



Climate change has very real effects on people, animals and the ecosystems and natural resources on which we all depend. Left unchecked, the results will be devastating.

That's why this year, on Apr. 22, more than one billion people will take part in Earth Day. Across the globe, individuals, communities, organizations and governments will participate with educational activities to raise awareness of the issues facing our planet. This year the theme is, "The Face of Climate Change." There are many activities that will teach your students about this important topic and how

they can help sustain the planet. Here is one great idea:

Give students everyday objects, like a cell phone or soccer ball, and have them discuss what they know about them, and then research some of the answers:

- Where is the item made?
- How far did it travel to get to you?
- What is it made from?
- What else was needed to make this item?
- How often and for how long do you expect to use this item?
- How much did it cost to purchase?
- How much does that mean each use costs?
- When you no longer need this item, where does it go?
- What will happen to it then?
- How is this a problem?
- What else could be done?

For more ideas, visit www.educationworld.com and www.earthday.org.

Two letters, one big job: FR

In the spring of odd-numbered years, we elect Faculty Representatives. Voting will be Apr. 30–May 30. This is the most important leadership position in your building/unit. Consider running and getting involved in the ground-level work of CEA. The FRs take your concerns to CEA, so we can get them resolved. FRs are there to represent you during difficult times, such as when your principal calls you into the office for “a little chat,” or when your administrator isn’t following the rules.

Here’s how the election process works: We elect one FR and one Alternate for every 20 unit members or fraction thereof. Anyone who is on the ballot in the FR election should not participate in its administration. Instead, building faculty councils (minus current FRs who are running again) conduct the election by secret ballot. If you have more than one Faculty Representative, the Senior FR is the one who has been in that position for the longest, continuous amount of time.

In addition, FRs are responsible for:

- Attending all meetings of the Legislative Assembly
- Attending all District meetings
- Reporting the results of all CEA meetings to the faculty
- Conducting elections for the Association
- Arranging for representation at meetings if unable to attend
- Enrolling new members
- Calling CEA building meetings as necessary

This week, Senior Faculty Representatives will receive FR election information packets from CEA. If you have any election questions, please call CEA Elections Chairperson Michele Mays at 253-4731.

How to apply

CEA bargaining unit vacancies were posted on the CCS Intranet on Apr. 19. A hard copy should also be made available by the building administrator.

If you are interested in applying for a posted position, send a cover letter and a resume (with a copy of your certificate/license) to both the Senior FR and the building principal/supervisor. We suggest that application materials be hand delivered. You must meet all job qualifications and have all required credentials at the time you apply for the position. Interviewees will be selected from among these applications. Not everyone who applies for a position is guaranteed an interview. However, the two most senior applicants for each vacancy must be offered an interview.

Credit flex needs you

Applications for Flexible Credit Committees are on their way to buildings. If you have a secondary certificate/license or teach special education at the secondary level, you may apply to serve on the Application Review Committee and on the Credit Determination Committee. The process to determine membership on these committees is the same process we have used for the Textbook Selection Committees. Your ABC and principal will nominate teachers. The CEA and the administration will make the final selections.

Teachers nominated for committees should be currently teaching in one the following subject areas or will be teaching in that subject area for the 2013–2014 school year: Business, Career/Technical, Health and/or Physical Education, Language Arts, Math, Science, Senior Capstone, Social Studies, Technology, Unified Arts and World Languages.

Completed nominations should be sent by school mail or by fax (253-5052) to CEA President Rhonda Johnson, Columbus Education Association. The deadline for nomination applications is 5 p.m. on Friday, May 17. If you have any questions, please contact Cheryl Watson at 365-6599 or at cwatson4173@columbus.k12.oh.us.

Change your play plan

Contract teachers have until Aug. 30 to change their pay plan for the 2013–2014 school year. Employees have the option to choose:

- * Plan A—twenty-one (21) pays September–June
- * Plan B—twenty-six (26) pays September–August

The plan remains in effect until the employee makes a change. Pay Plan Change Forms are available on the CCS Intranet under Departments/Treasurer/Payroll and on the Employee Self Service System Resources Link.

Special notes

- ❑ **Senior FRs** must submit requests **by fax (253-5052)** for **alternative interview panels** to the CEA President prior to interviewing. The following alternative interview panels have been approved: Beatty Park ES, Binns ES, Centennial HS, East Linden ES, Highland ES, Indianola K–8, Lindbergh ES, Livingston ES, Northgate Center, Ohio Ave. ES, Olde Orchard ES, Psychological Services, Walnut Ridge HS, Watkins ES, Westgate ES and Yorktown MS.
- ❑ **Share your ideas—anonously.** You now have the opportunity to share your ideas on how to improve the **CCS Transition Evaluation** by completing a brief survey. This survey, conducted by Community Research Partners is completely confidential. We urge CEA members to take part at <http://s-2b1a4c-i.sgizmo.com/s3/i-100008094-397886>.
- ❑ **Fee waiver applications for Autumn 2013** will be in mailboxes on **Monday, Apr. 22**. The completed applications are due back to Northgate by **Friday, May 3, at 5 p.m.** If you have **Priority I** or **Priority II status**, include the proper documentation. **Documentation is required with each fee waiver application. Your priority status will change to Priority III without proper documentation.** Call **Norma Oldham**, Northgate, **365-8993**, if you have any questions.
- ❑ Save the date for one of our best-loved events. **The 37th Annual CEA Awards & Retirement Banquet** is **Saturday, May 18**, at the **Hilton Columbus Downtown**. Social hour is 6 p.m. with dinner at 7 p.m. There is no cost for retirees, honorees and Senior Faculty Representatives to attend. Call CEA or see your Senior FR to make a reservation.
- ❑ The following buildings/units completed their **United Negro College Fund campaign** since the last issue of *The CEA Voice*: Beechcroft HS and Indian Springs ES.