

The CEA Voice

Rhonda Johnson, President

www.ceaohio.org

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Rumblings for NCLB change

The fifth anniversary of the signing of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act was Jan. 8. Legislators are working on its reauthorization. NEA and other organizations are calling for changes before that happens.

In the fall of 2006, the Center on Education Policy convened two meetings on the NCLB teacher provisions. The first one focused on the requirement for qualified, experienced teachers to be equitably distributed among high-needs and lower-needs schools. The second addressed NCLB's definition of a highly-qualified teacher.

Participating organizations suggested seven policy steps, including strengthening teacher recruitment and retention programs and improving the transparency of school, district and state data on teacher qualifications and experience. Individual districts are waging battles over various NCLB provisions.

In Baltimore, more than 150 highly-qualified teaching assistants were told they would have to move to schools receiving Title I funds, resulting in their leaving schools where they had built relationships with staff and students. *The Baltimore Sun* reported that officials bowed to educator pressure and left the assistants in place.

In Fairfax County, Va., officials are challenging federal flexibility in testing English language learners. *The Washington Post* reported that school leaders plan to block NCLB-required testing if flexibility is not permitted for recent immigrants. Currently, the law requires these children take the same grade-level tests as their English-speaking peers.

In addressing this issue, Fairfax County School Board Member Stuart D. Gibson said, "When it comes between doing what's educationally sound for children and doing what's best for bureaucrats, I'm siding with children every day of the week."

Bush, Spellings give lip service on NCLB

In a recent meeting with U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, House Education Chairman George Miller and other key congressional leaders, President Bush said NCLB is a top priority.

He said, "We've all agreed to work together to address some of the major concerns that some people have on this piece of legislation, without weakening the essence of the bill, and get a piece of legislation done. We showed in the past that we can work together to get positive results, and I'm confident we can do so again."

The President listed items that are non-negotiable: grade-level math and reading performance from every student by 2014, state standards and aligned curriculum, annual assessments and collection of disaggregated data.

Spellings called on business leaders to be key players in helping gain support for renewed legislation. Speaking to

the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, she emphasized the need to measure student progress, address needs and close achievement gaps.

Teachers speak out on NCLB

NEA has compiled teacher stories that tell, at a grass-roots level, what effect NCLB has had on educators.

NCLB/ESEA: It's Time for a Change! Voices from America's Classrooms is a collection of personal stories from nearly 400 NEA members. Here's a comment sent in by John Pruitt, a high school counselor in Richfield, Utah:

As the person in charge of testing at my school, I totaled the average time that a sophomore student might spend in testing (standardized, CRT and NRT) to be about 54 hours over three years. That is roughly equivalent to more than one quarter in a given school year at our school! That is time the teacher could have used to actually teach those students (a novel thought under ESEA).

Want to weigh in? There's still time. Visit www.nea.org/esea/tellyourstory.html.



Tutoring program submitted for approval

The CEA Foundation has been given the green light from the CEA Board of Governors to apply for status as a provider of after-school tutoring under NCLB. The board approved the filing of the Foundation's application to be considered by the Ohio Department of Education.

Under federal law, students at under-performing schools—those that aren't meeting federal standards—are eligible for the additional, federally-funded help.

CEA proposes concentrating first on reading at the primary grades (K-2). Five schools will be selected for initial service, providing tutoring one hour, four days a week. All instruction will be one-on-one or in small groups. CEA's proposal also features tutors who are highly qualified. Professional development will be provided.

CEA is aware of at least two other school districts where the union is a provider for this type of tutoring.

Consideration for the tutoring jobs will first be given to Columbus teachers. Read *The Voice* for more details as the application process moves forward and plans are finalized.



Reporting assault is vital

If you are a victim of a student assault, you should report the attack. This information should be reported to administration, as well as the police.

Unfortunately, teachers aren't always reporting when an assault occurs.

It is essential that teachers follow through with the paperwork. That means completing the CPS Incident Report Form and filing criminal charges when assaulted. If these incidents are not part of a police report, they cannot be properly addressed, and unruly students can't receive appropriate assistance.

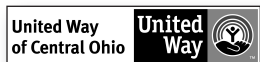
CEA President Rhonda Johnson noted the effect of this oversight, "District data show there are few teacher assaults. But there are more of them than are being reported, especially when teachers try to break up fights. Data need to reflect the fact that teachers are being assaulted."

For more information and the steps on how to report an assault, surf to <http://www.ceahio.org/newsPage.aspx?artID=175>.



United Way prize drawing winners

Congratulations and thanks to everyone who participated in the 2006 United Way Participation Prize contest. Our Grand Prize Winners of a 15" Thin LCD TV are Robin M. Jeffries and Nikki Myers. The complete list of winners follows:



15" Thin LCD TV	Grand Prize	Robin M. Jeffries, Woodcrest ES
15" Thin LCD TV	2nd Grand Prize	Nikki Myers, Project Grad
Harmony Mosaic	3rd Grand Prize	Judith Gore, Eastmoor Academy
Harmony Mosaic	3rd Grand Prize	Wendy Mattucci, Shepard Center
Harmony Mosaic	3rd Grand Prize	Lisa M. Milbry Hudson Center
Blue Jacket Tickets	\$200 Prizes	Dorothy Wilson, Northgate Center
Blue Jacket Tickets	\$200 Prizes	Eileen Weidner, Devonshire ES
Blue Jacket Tickets	\$200 Prizes	Martha Breton Williams, CSIA
Blue Jacket Tickets	\$200 Prizes	Doni Jackson, Colerain ES
Apple iPod	\$200 Prizes	Catherine Waddell, CEA-R
Apple iPod	\$200 Prizes	Douglas Swartz, 17th Avenue Center
Polaroid DVD Player	\$200 Prizes	Franklin T. Cory, CEA-R
Polaroid DVD Player	\$200 Prizes	Joycelyn C. Calhoun, Virtual HS
DVD/VCR Player	\$100 Prizes	Jean G. Wilks-Williams, CSIA
DVD/VCR Player	\$100 Prizes	Marvin Straughter, Woodward Park MS
Kitchen CD Player	\$100 Prizes	Janet James, Hudson Distribution Center
Kitchen CD Player	\$100 Prizes	Amy Hammond, Oakmont ES
Air Purifier	\$100 Prizes	Linda Williams, Beery MS
Pogoda Fireplace & Bench	\$100 Prizes	Robert Brown, Psychological Services
Gift Card	\$50 Prizes	Melissa Dudley, PAR
Gift Card	\$50 Prizes	Laura Hammer, Linden Park ES
Gift Card	\$50 Prizes	Carolyn Williams, Clinton ES
Gift Card	\$50 Prizes	Linda Fleischer, Kingswood Data Center
CD Boombox	\$50 Prizes	Bernice Smith, Shepard Center
CD Boombox	\$50 Prizes	Joyce Nowell, Fort Hayes Bus Compound
CD Walkman	\$50 Prizes	Monica Abbott, Woodward Park MS
CD Walkman	\$50 Prizes	Nicholas Brandt, Beery MS
Household Tool Kit	\$50 Prizes	Cheryl Boley, Neil Ave. Center
Household Tool Kit	\$50 Prizes	Scott Hartman, Northtowne ES
4 Movie Tickets	\$50 Prizes	Delore A. Porter-Patton, Indianola MS
4 Movie Tickets	\$50 Prizes	Susan K. Ford, CEA-R
CD Clock Radio	\$50 Prizes	Iris Ziglar, North Linden ES
CD Clock Radio	\$50 Prizes	Gloria Edgerton, Kingswood Data Center

Please come to the CEA office to collect your prize as soon as possible.

Closing charter schools

Finally, we have received some guidelines from the state legislature for the closing of failing charter schools. However, the rules are still too loose.

The new rules state that if a school has failed for three or four years (depending on grade level), it will be closed. This is a long overdue regulation. Yet it must be viewed only as a beginning because the closing of some failing charter schools may take a long time under the new regulations.

The law also includes an exception: *dropout recovery* schools. These are charter schools that specialize in students who have already left the public school system. No rules for these schools were included.

Nation's schools ranked by *Education Week*

Education Week recently published its 11th-annual edition of *Quality Counts: From Cradle to Career*. This study ranks all 50 states and determines who is doing the best job. *Ed Week* defines this year's report as investigating the connections between state K-12 education systems and early-childhood education, postsecondary schooling and the world of work.

Some of the statistics are eye-opening. For instance, Ohio is ranked 10th nationally in achievement—indicators such as test scores and attendance are considered. However, it slips to 27th nationally in the category measuring its students' chances for success. The category is based on factors such as family income, parental education level, the number of 3 and 4-year olds enrolled in preschool and the number of eighth-graders proficient on the NAEP math test.

To read more, surf to www.edweek.org and choose *Quality Counts 2007* at the lower left of the screen. You can then choose Ohio's report, or examine the national findings.

Special notes

- Members who are interested in official leadership positions may declare their candidacy for open seats now through Feb. 16.** The following positions are open: Board of Governors in Districts 2, 7, 9 and 10; and delegates and alternates to the 2007-2008 OEA and 2007 NEA Representative Assemblies. **Campaigning** for these positions will take place from Feb. 20-Mar. 5. Members will **vote** for candidates March 6-19. The CEA Elections Committee will **tabulate** the votes on Mar. 20. Declaration forms are available from the CEA.
- NEA offers finance seminars**—The NASD Investor Education Foundation has awarded a grant to *BetterInvesting*, which is partnering with NEA Member Benefits to deliver web-based personal finance seminars to NEA members. The *Investing in Your Future* program will **include a series of seminars on financial planning and investing topics**, as well as online stock and mutual fund analysis tools, educational resources and a game to encourage participants to construct quality portfolios. It will be free of charge to NEA members. The launch is planned for **March 2007**.
- Blue Jackets tickets available!** We may be overly-optimistic, but the season isn't over and the Blue Jackets are **hot**. We've got some great seats behind the west goal. You can purchase tickets on a first-come, first-served basis for each of these games: Wednesday, Feb. 14, **St. Louis (4)**; Friday, Feb. 16, **San Jose (4)**; Thursday, Feb. 22, **Edmonton (4)**; Sunday Feb. 25, **Nashville (2)**. Call CEA at 253-4731 for ticket availability.
- Income tax time:** Members who qualify may be able to deduct their Association dues. The amounts are: **Pay Plan A (21 pays)–\$718.98; Pay Plan B (26 pays)–\$717.93;** changed from Pay Plan A to B–\$668.94; changed from Pay Plan B to A–\$767.97; Half-time Plan A–\$405.92; Half-time Plan B–\$405.53. **Dues spent on lobbying efforts are not deductible on your federal tax return. The amount for this past year was \$30.45. For your convenience, the above amounts already reflect the deduction of this figure.**

