

The CEA Voice

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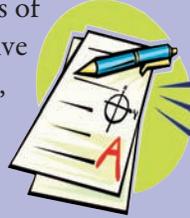
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Columbus Education Association

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ODE clarifies testing regulations

We all want our students to succeed. At a time when public education relies heavily on the results of high-stakes testing, it may be tempting to give our students extra assistance and, as a result, questions of ethics arise.



School districts, teachers and administrators have been accused of sharing test questions in advance, not following proper procedures and many other testing irregularities.

The Ohio Department of Education has procedures to identify and report testing irregularities. The guidelines include such vital information as how to define a *test incident* and what to do if you discover one. Here are the high points:

A test incident is an occurrence that inappropriately influences a student's performance on a test, including: distractions such as noises, fire drills, sudden illness and defective test booklet pages; extra time given to take a test, use of a calculator or denial of 504-Plan accommodations; and security violations such as use of cheat sheets, distribution of test copies before administration and altering of a student's answer.

Staff must report all test incidents immediately to the district's designated staff person, who then reports it to the state education department within two business days of the occurrence.

Non-district staff, a school board member, parents or friend/relative of a student or staff also can make reports.

Be sure you know and understand all testing procedures prior to administering the Ohio Graduation and Ohio Achievement Tests. Your certification or licensure could be jeopardized for any testing violation.

The March 2007 issue of *Ohio Schools* provides an in-depth explanation of testing incidents and how to report them in the article, "Testing 101." You can also visit www.ode.state.oh.us, or call CEA for more detailed information.

Help gather signatures to improve Ohio's schools

It has been four years since the last Ohio Supreme Court ruling that Ohio's school-funding system is unconstitutional. Yet our lawmakers have done little to respond.

Teachers, parents and activists statewide are taking this funding issue to the next level, calling for an amendment to our state constitution.

Petitions are now available, and we call on you to help us gather as many signatures as possible. CEA will be sending petitions to the FRs to help in this effort.



Here are particulars of the amendment, which would appear on the November ballot:

- Will realistically calculate education's cost and require legislative action to make the state pay more of this cost
- Create public reporting of and accountability for these expenditures and their results
- Reduce the number and amount of new local property tax levies
- Provide relief for senior citizens and homeowners by allowing only a capped portion of local school taxes to increase with inflation
- Protect state funding for school facilities, local government and higher education

Guidelines:

- Residents of Ohio can circulate petitions anywhere in the state. Signatories must be registered Ohio voters
- Have a separate petition for each county where it is being circulated
- Witness each signature

You can circulate a petition in most public places, including at school board meetings or events, or at grocery stores and malls, as long as you have management's permission.

Teachers and staff may circulate petitions, but not while they are on duty, and not during regular school hours.

For more specific guidelines, contact CEA or your Faculty Representative.

Support UNCF

The 60th annual campaign in support of the United Negro College Fund has begun. UNCF is our nation's largest, oldest and most comprehensive, minority higher education assistance organization. When you donate, you are providing operating funds and technology



enhancement for the 39 historically black colleges and universities.

UNCF also provides scholarship support to more than 65,000 students at nearly 900 colleges and universities. About 60 percent of these students are the first in their families to attend college, and 62 percent of their families earn less than \$25,000 annually.

Many former Columbus students have directly benefited from UNCF support over the years. Our dollars are literally changing lives. Join the Columbus Education Association this year in supporting the United Negro College Fund. Campaign materials will be sent to the Senior Faculty Representative.

Across the nation

Houston: The administration awarded bonuses to nearly 3,000 teachers as part of the district's merit pay program. The awards (some exceeding \$7,000) caused a furor because some of the overlooked educators were *Teacher of the Year* honorees or had earned National Board Certification. Some of the teachers who received bonuses were apparently being reviewed for termination.

Broward County, Fla: More than 300 teachers who work at charter schools voted to join the Broward Teachers Union. The new members serve more than 5,000 students and have been recognized for their success. Their unit will be able to bargain under state law and establish its own, separate contract.

San Francisco: The Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) recently suggested as an alternative program for Columbus Public Schools, is the subject of a longitudinal study just getting under way. The \$14.6 million study is being funded by Atlantic Philanthropies, a private foundation. The study will compare progress of KIPP students with groups attending public schools. There are currently 52 KIPP schools in 16 states and the District of Columbia enrolling more than 12,000 students. Across the KIPP network, 49 of the existing 52 schools are charter schools. The majority of KIPP schools, 45 of 52, are middle schools designed to serve fifth- through eighth-grade students.

Annapolis, Md: Maryland Gov. Martin O'Mallery (D) started his tenure with an address calling in part for increased school funding. His "State of the State" speech called for a boost of \$1 billion for public schools. He also called for development of more charter schools and for slot machines, from which revenue could be used to fund education.

Minority Leadership Training Program

OEA is holding its Minority Leadership Training Program June 15–16 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Dublin.

This program targets minority members who want to get involved in association activities and leadership roles. The training focuses on understanding organizational culture, appreciating diversity and inclusiveness and identifying and demonstrating skills required for effective leadership in a multicultural setting.

The session is limited to 50 participants. Registration deadline is May 23. Contact Julia Parsley at parsleyj@ohea.org or call CEA for more information.

Catastrophic leave bank needs days

The Catastrophic Leave Bank is in desperate need of donations. We need to make sure our members have the ability to seek relief when their need is greatest. Please consider donating at least one day now. Fill out a sick leave form at your building requesting your donation be specifically directed to the **Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank**.

Summer math and science camp registration open

The College of Education and Human Ecology's Office of Diversity, Urban & International/Global Affairs announces that registration is now open for the Teacher Quality Enhancement Project 2007 Summer Math & Science Camp. Registration ends Apr. 2. Space is limited.

The camp takes place on OSU's main campus from June 25–July 13 (Mon.–Fri., 8 a.m.–12 p.m.). Transportation, classroom supplies and food will be provided. There is no cost to attend.

To participate, registrants must attend a CPS middle school for the 2007–08 school year and must be a 5th grader becoming a 6th grader, a 6th grader becoming a 7th grader or a 7th grader becoming an 8th grader next school year. Eligible participants will be notified on or before May 1.

Contact the TQE Program Director, Kirk Ross, at ross.527@osu.edu for more information.

Take the survey; improve the district

The Teaching and Learning Conditions Survey being conducted by the Ohio Department of Education, surveys educators across the state to learn more about the factors affecting teacher hiring, retention and mobility. This survey is not the CPS Professional Staff Survey you recently completed.

The results from the ODE survey will provide data that can be used to identify issues that need attention, so that teachers can do their jobs more effectively—leading to greater student achievement.

Each school will receive its results, and faculty can then use them for in-depth conversations that can lead to positive change, both at the local and state level.

The survey—taken via the Internet—contains about 40 questions. It takes about a half-hour to complete. Topics covered include staff perceptions regarding time, facilities and resources, empowerment, leadership and professional development.

Each survey is anonymous. Your responses go directly to ODE, not CPS. But to receive results, each school must garner a minimum of 40 percent building participation.

We encourage all licensed/certificated staff to participate in this important endeavor. Teachers will receive unique access codes in the district mail for use in accessing the online survey. Surveys should be completed between **Mar. 19–Apr. 20**.

To monitor how many people from your school have participated, log onto www.ohiotic.org. After May 1, you can look at survey results and take advantage of online tools that can help make your school a better place to teach and learn.

Special notes

❑ National Board Certification orientation sessions:

Teachers interested in taking their professional growth and accomplishment to the next level should plan on attending one session this spring to learn about the National Board Certification process and how to qualify for financial support from the State of Ohio. All sessions will be held at **Shepard Center** on the following dates: **Tuesday, Mar. 13** (4:30–7 p.m.); **Tuesday, Apr. 17**, (4:30–7 p.m.); and **Tuesday, May 1**, (4:30–7 p.m.). Prior registration is not required. Any questions can be directed to Carole Moyer at 365-8241.



❑ **Blue Jackets** tickets are available on a first-come, first-served basis for the following game: **Sunday, Mar. 25, St. Louis** (2). Call CEA at 253-4731 for current ticket availability.



❑ **Borders and Waldenbooks** are offering a **25 percent discount off the list price** to all educators from **Mar. 22–27**. Discounted items include books, CDs, DVDs and more. Just bring proof of educator status with you. There will be a **special reception on Friday, Mar. 23, 4–8 p.m. at Borders Stores**. There will be food, refreshments and prizes.

