

The CEA Voice

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Governor's plan supported

Governor Strickland took a bold step forward when he presented his proposed state budget. Included was a comprehensive plan to improve education in our state.

The Governor has given us a plan that is both daring and creative. He is hard at work trying to keep the promises that he made during the campaign.

Governor Strickland intends to move the state in a new direction. He is putting an end to the negative attacks on public education. Please remember that there are individuals in the legislature who will stand in his way. It is important for us to rally to his support.

Let's look at some of the major points in the plan.

- ☑ Increase per-pupil funding by 3 percent during each of the next two years.
- ☑ Increase the state's share of the education foundation formula by 5.5 percent over the biennium.
- ☑ Increase parity aid (the equalization fund) millage by one full mill and produce an 8 percent increase in this fund to \$521 million.
- ☑ Increase poverty assistance to local districts by 22 percent to a total of \$500 million.
- ☑ Provide state funds for extra costs for special education, transportation and vocational education.
- ☑ Give the Ohio Department of Education authority to penalize charters that do not submit proper data.
- ☑ Place a moratorium on the creation of new charter schools.
- ☑ Reduce the per-pupil aid provided to e-school charters to \$3,000.
- ☑ Establish strong rules in auditing, review and accountability for charters and their sponsors.
- ☑ Discontinue the voucher program except for the original one in Cleveland.

Anyone can see that the proposed budget is filled with important changes that can help our district. But, we will have to take action to gain the advantage. One major negative is that since we are viewed as a *rich district* in Ohio, we will not receive any significant increase in basic funding. The tools are in place for us to repair the damage of the past few years as our school system lost millions of dollars to charters and vouchers.

At their last meeting, the CEA Board of Governors went on record strongly supporting the plan of Governor Strickland.

Signatures will help Ohio's schools

Our lawmakers are poised to reexamine the school-funding system. A new administration is in place. And recent publicity about the failures of a system supposedly repaired is drawing renewed attention to the matter.

While the CEA supports Gov. Ted Strickland's proposed education budget, it does not solve the school-funding problem of over reliance on property taxes. You can do your part to achieve a high quality, fairly funded system by gathering signatures to place a state constitutional amendment on the November ballot. It will:

- √ Realistically calculate the cost of a child's education and require the state to pay more of this cost.
- √ Create an accountability system of public reporting of these expenditures and their results.
- √ Reduce the number and amount of new local property tax levies.
- √ Provide tax relief for senior citizens and homeowners through a cap on increases through inflation.
- √ Protect state funding for school facilities, local governments and higher education

Residents of Ohio can circulate petitions anywhere in the state. Those who sign them must be registered Ohio voters. You cannot sign a petition that you circulate.

You also must have a separate petition for each county where it is being circulated and witness each signature.

Location rules:

You can circulate a petition in public places, including school board meetings or events (in grocery stores and malls you should secure management's permission).

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

For additional questions or if you need forms, see your FR, or call CEA.

Assault information posters

CEA is distributing assault posters to buildings and members this week. Each building will receive one of the large posters (11"x17"), and each bargaining unit member will receive an 8.5"x 11" sticker that adheres to grade books and other surfaces.

Each poster contains valuable information about what to do if you are assaulted and the steps required when you recognize abuse and neglect among your students.

Please make sure you pick up one of these posters from your Senior Faculty Representative. We must be diligent about reporting these cases in a timely manner.



The results are in

The Association would like to thank the members who participated in the recent CEA elections.

The results are as follows: District 2 Governor, Jan Bell; District 7 Governor, Taiyia Hayden; and District 9 Governor, Cindy (CJ) Jamison, all elected without opposition. District 10 Governor, Lori Cannon, was elected with 48 votes (challenger Beth Stevenson received 43 votes).

The results for the election of the delegates to this year's NEA Representative Assembly, listed in the order of the most votes received, are as follows:

Local delegates: Dean Fowls, Dorothy G. Wilson, Greg Mild, Ezetta Murray, Barbara Flu-Allen,* Bruce Green, Judy Wright, Michele Mays, Barry Stebbins, Bob Hern, Lori Cannon, Susan McCoy, Carla Robinson, Jan Bell* and Dwayne Zimmerman.

State delegates: J. Sanchez, Diana Welsh, Alice Munnerlyn, Dale Rucker and John Coneglio.

Top ten alternates: Kenya Davis, Ann Ventling, Deborah Starr, Rita Hinz, Annette Shaw, Jeanette Johnson, Claudia Eschelbach, Kari Pietrangelo, Deborah Huffman-Mirib and Michelle Stasa.

The final results have been tallied in the race to be delegates to next year's OEA Representative Assemblies. All 66 members who declared candidacy have been elected.

Your Association *thanks* all of the members who participated in this election. Congratulations to everyone who ran for an open position.

*Automatic delegates by virtue of office

Get out of MySpace.com

It has come to the attention of the attorneys who represent CEA and its members, (Cloppert, Sauter, Latanick and Washburn Law Firm) that a number of teachers, primarily younger teachers, have pages on *Myspace* and/or *Facebook*. In the past nine months, they have had a number of cases with various school districts and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) in which these websites have been received negatively. It is their advice that if a teacher has a *Myspace* page or *Facebook* page, they take it down immediately. Do not simply log off and allow it to close automatically. If you have one of these pages, go in and manually remove any and all references to yourself. The reasons for this are addressed in the paragraphs below.

First, students can find teachers on *Myspace* and *Facebook*. They can view the website, try to link onto the website as friends and thereby implicate the teacher in a *friendship* or relationship that does not actually exist.

Secondly, there have been various administrators who have stated that only predators and teenagers are on *Myspace*. Various administrators have indicated that they will examine *Myspace* and *Facebook* pages and use this as evidence against teachers in any allegation of inappropriate conduct. Further, the ODE has indicated that teachers having *Myspace* pages and/or *Facebook* pages are acting inappropriately. The ODE does not like teachers having these websites and have used these website pages against teachers in at least two hearings over the past few months. The ODE has insisted that a *Chinese Wall* be drawn between a teacher and student. In other words, no friendships, no close personal relationships, no counseling or other contact with students beyond the classroom. This expressly implicates *Myspace* and *Facebook*.

Accordingly, as action has been taken against teachers' licenses in part based on these pages, it is our advice that if teachers have *Myspace* or *Facebook* pages, they take them down immediately to protect themselves and their jobs.

TBS needs your support

Want to know more about who's running for public office? Need a place to look for updates to state and federal legislation that affects you (or an avenue for your input)?

Teachers for Better Schools (TBS) is the organization for you. TBS is the political action arm of CEA. It is a separate political action committee that advocates for the benefit of teachers in the political arena.

Among its duties is screening and recommending candidates for various political offices. This endorsement process is highly respected and sought after.

TBS also raises money for political candidates, levy and bond campaigns and other ballot issues affecting Columbus teachers and the school community. And it is there to be your voice in the legislature.

CEA does not use any dues money to promote individual candidates or issues. Instead, CEA members can contribute by payroll deduction.

All it takes is \$1 per pay. It is really very little to give. You won't really miss it in your paycheck. But when you add up all those single dollars, it becomes a potent monetary force. Surf to: www.ceaohio.org/staticDocs/tbs_form.pdf for a form. Please consider joining so that we can stand together united.

Make sure a university is accredited before you enroll

There have been several instances where teachers have taken coursework through an online university with the expectation of earning an advanced degree only to discover too late that the university is not accredited. Columbus Public Schools will not accept any coursework from a non-accredited college or university. If you have any doubt about the accreditation status of a college or university, please call Cheryl Creamer in Personnel at 365-5658 before you enroll.

National Board event brings teachers together

The CEA Minority Involvement Program (MIP) Committee, the Columbus Public Schools and The Ohio State University hosted the second event to honor our current National Board Certified Teachers and to support minority teachers in pursuit of National Board Certification on Mar. 29 at the Hyatt Regency Columbus.

Attendees included OEA Vice President Patricia Frost-Brooks and Secretary-Treasurer James Timlin; ODE National Board Consultant Rasha Hetata; National Board Certified teachers and guests. Superintendent Harris shared her support of the National Board process and its impact on student achievement. Dr. Sandra Stroot explained the many ways that OSU assists teachers interested in the career-changing process.

The highlight of the evening was Lily Eskelsen, Secretary-Treasurer of NEA who delivered a message of pride in the teaching profession, respect for all those who work in America's schools and the importance of public education as the foundation of everything we hope to accomplish in our country.

Special notes

- ❑ Colerain ES is hosting a **retirement celebration for Lillian Smith and Linda Roberts**. Dinner will be held at the **Buckeye Hall of Fame Café** on Thursday evening, May 31. Call Colerain ES at 365-6001 for more information and to make reservations.
- ❑ **Aeneas Alldredge** (Dana ES instrumental music teacher) was named **Columbus Symphony Elementary Music Educator of the Year**. The annual awards program, presented by the McGraw-Hill Companies, recognizes educators who inspire central Ohio children and adults to explore and to love music.
- ❑ **2007 Summer School Teacher Applications** will be available on the CPS website from Mar. 26-Apr. 20. Teachers may complete and submit their applications online. You will **need to use your CPS email username and password** to access the link. Access the site directly: <http://cpsweb.columbus.k12.oh.us/summerschool>. Questions may be referred to the Summer School office at 365-5010.