

# The CEA Voice

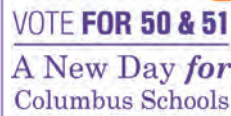
Volume XLIV, No. 8

Columbus Education Association

October 7, 2013

## Issue 51 means accountability

This year, we have the chance to improve CCS accountability. Issue 51 will create an Independent Auditor to eliminate fraud and abuse. Mayor Michael Coleman's Columbus Education Commission reported that the state auditor issued findings against the district in eight of the last 10 annual audits. Public confidence has diminished. The Independent Auditor will review and certify all state-mandated financial reporting and work closely with the State Auditor and the District Treasurer to:



**VOTE FOR 50 & 51**  
A New Day for  
Columbus Schools

- ◆ Conduct financial audits of accounts of all district officers, offices and programs
- ◆ Certify all funds available for operations, building and borrowing
- ◆ Determine the amount of millage for voted tax levies
- ◆ Recommend and monitor internal controls in policies and procedures
- ◆ Listen to complaints and investigate legitimate accusations of wrongful acts, waste, fraud and abuse

Tell your friends. Issue 51 is an important proposal that will bring accountability to the district. It will ensure that we have the checks and balances in place to protect the assets aimed at educating our children.

## Club 50.51

The most exciting aspect of union membership is the ability to stand united and make a big statement. Now is your moment. Contribute to the levy campaign and join literally thousands of other educators in declaring your support of efforts to give our kids what they deserve in life. When Election Day rolls around, CEA wants to tell the voters that we have 100-percent participation in Club 50.51.

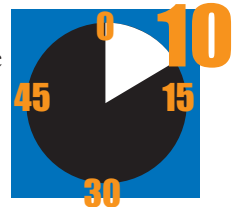


It's easy. We accept checks made payable to "Reimagine Columbus Education Committee." Or give online through PayPal on the campaign website at [www.newcolumbus-schools.com](http://www.newcolumbus-schools.com). Click on "Donate."

We will list your name in *The Voice*. When you donate \$50.51 you will receive a lapel pin and become a member of Club 50.51. Contribute \$100 or more and become a member of the Centurion Club. You will receive a gift and an invitation to a special event hosted by CEA President Rhonda Johnson. Remember the One-Mill Club and Club 75 from 2008? Your support helped us win then, and it can help us win now. Some of your colleagues are already Centurion Club members: Ann Aeschbury, Marilyn Allen, Karen Andermills, Lori Cannon, John Coneglio, Michelle Coneglio, Carla Davis, Phil Hayes, Tai Hayden, Bob Hern, J. Howell-Sanchez, Kevin Jackson, CJ Jamison, Rhonda Johnson, Tracey Johnson, Rick Logan, Cindy Love, Christy Maser, Teri Mullins, Ezetta Murray, Jenny Plemel, Christine Ray, Izetta Thomas, Carol Wagner, Diana Welsh, Dorothy Wilson, Kari Yates and Dwayne Zimmerman.

## It's only 10 minutes

On Thursday, Oct. 3, faculty representatives attended trainings to help them conduct "Ten-Minute Meetings" about the levy. The agenda for the meeting in your building includes early voting procedures, key aspects of the measure and instructions for donating to the levy fund. FRs received copies of absentee ballot applications, one-pagers explaining the levy and campaign volunteer forms.

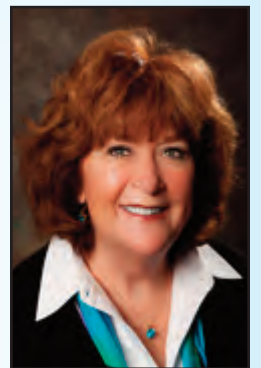


We want all members to attend the sessions your FR will arrange. This is the most important union work at the moment.

## Capital Day: No ordinary PD event

You will laugh. You will dance. You will be inspired. Capital Day, CEA's annual day of professional development, will be Friday, Oct. 18, at the Hyatt Regency Columbus. The morning begins at 7:30 a.m. with registration and a continental breakfast. Activities begin at 8:30 a.m. with greetings from Interim Supt. Dan Good. Following his remarks, Dr. Debbie Silver will deliver the keynote speech. The luncheon speaker is Dr. Adolph Brown.

Keynoter Debbie Silver, humorist and author of *Fall Down 7 Times and Get up 8: Teaching Kids to Succeed*, aims to remind teachers of how important they are in the lives of children. The former Louisiana Teacher of the Year explains motivational theory and provides down-to-earth examples of concrete, applicable guidelines for helping students overcome setbacks and failure. With 30 years spent as a teacher, staff development instructor and university professor, Debbie Silver doesn't just know her way around the classroom—she is familiar with the challenges educators face at every level, from kindergarten to college.



**Dr. Debbie Silver**

Luncheon speaker Adolph Brown has addressed more than 900,000 people internationally: surgeons, gang members, business executives, school superintendents, armed forces, lawyers, realtors, college professors, K-12 students, federal prison workers, sales representatives, mental health specialists, faith communities, politicians, law enforcement officials, educators, professional sports teams and more. His message of motivation focuses on classroom management and accelerating, in virtually all students, the ability to read, write, speak, focus, organize information and succeed academically—regardless of special learning challenges and learning styles.



**Dr. Adolph Brown**

Morning and afternoon learning sessions include:

- The Warrior Method: An Educational Program for Teaching Healthy Black Boys
- What You Don't Know About Gangs Might Hurt You
- Social and Emotional Learning and Literature: Making the Connection
- CCS Teacher Evaluation System
- PLC–Checkup: What's Working and What We Can Do Better
- Conversations About Building Relationships to Expand Post-secondary Options
- Integrating the Ohio Department of Education Assessment into your Physical Education Program
- Bully Proofing Youth
- The “Write” Answer: Guaranteed Student Learning
- Boys in a Bind: Discovering and Bridging the Gender-Literacy Gap
- Fall Down 7 Times, Get Up 8: Teaching Kids to Succeed
- Preparing Struggling Students for the Common Core

In addition, on a first-come first-serve basis, employees can get flu shots at no cost when they provide their insurance cards. This opportunity is being brought to you by the team of CCS Staff Wellness, Medical Mutual of Ohio and Maxim Health.

We hope to see everyone on Friday, Oct. 18, Capital Day. Register on PD Planner at <http://columbus.schoolnet.com> by 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 15. Lunch is free, but parking is not.

## Insurance changes

Don't forget that you must declare your enrollment for employee insurance benefits by Nov. 1 for coverage beginning Jan. 1, 2014. There has been one change in the plan. To keep insurance premiums at the 8-percent-increase cap, CCS has increased annual out-of-pocket maximums to \$600 (from \$500) for single, in-network coverage and to \$1,200 (from \$1,000) per family, in-network. Co-pays are now included in the maximum out-of-pocket costs. Here are the details:

Teachers			
Benefit	Select	Choice	
		Network	Non-Network
Maximum annual out of pocket	Network medical copayments will accumulate to the maximum out of pocket along with any applicable medical deductible is in coinsurance. (Pharmacy copayments do not apply)		
Individual	\$ 600	\$ 600	\$1,200
Family	1,200	1,200	2,400

Remember: Employees must meet with a benefits counselor to enroll or re-enroll for coverage. You can schedule a time at your building to meet in person with a counselor, or you may enroll or re-enroll online with a benefits counselor.

## No splits in K–3

For years, elementary teachers and students in Columbus have suffered through split classes. Last year, the number of splits exceeded 90. Everyone knows that within the common core, teaching two grade levels—especially in K–3—is nearly impossible and not a good practice.

This year, we presented data about this issue at our Joint Labor-Management Committee meeting. The superintendent reduced all splits at K–3. Finally, we are being heard.

Some 4–5 splits remain, but we can deal with the issue for the short term. We urge teachers at the 4–5 level to departmentalize to reduce some of the stress.

The upside of reducing the number of splits is that the district is hiring more than 60 new teachers. The downside is the



district is hiring more teachers now instead of when school started. We realize it's a mixed blessing. Not all of the vacancies are the result of a reduction of splits. Most of the shortages resulted from the district allocations team's miserable attempt to determine the number of teachers needed for this school year.

Nonetheless, if you know anyone who has a license to teach elementary, tell them to apply.

## Pre-tax flexible dollars

Many members do not take advantage of the Flexible Spending Account benefit. The money you set aside for flexible spending accounts is tax-free. It can be used to pay your co-pays, deductibles, prescription drugs, etc. It pays for other out-of-pocket expenses not paid in full by insurance, like no-line bifocal eyeglasses. You use the funds with a PayFlex card, which is similar to a debit card. Here's how it works:

- ❖ First, estimate how much you expect to spend on eligible health care expenses for the plan year (Jan. 1, 2014–Dec. 31, 2014). Consider medical, dental, vision and hearing expenses not covered by the benefit plans, as well as co-pays for office visits, prescription drugs, deductibles and other eligible expenses. Then determine the amount you want to have deducted from your pay for the year. Deductions are made in equal amounts based on your pay plan.
- ❖ Once you enroll, you will receive a PayFlex Card that looks like a credit card and can be used anywhere MasterCard is accepted. You may begin using the card on Jan. 1, 2014, for the amount you have elected for the year. For example, if you elect to put \$500 in the FSA, \$500 is available right away on the first day, even though the deductions for the total amount have not yet been made.

It's like an interest-free, pre-tax loan from you. The maximum contribution you may elect is \$2,500 per plan year. The minimum contribution is \$260 per plan year. Your “2014 Employee Benefits Enrollment Guide” provides detailed information about flexible spending accounts. Call CEA if you have questions.

## Special notes

- ❑ Are you making strides with your fellow CEA members? Join us at the **Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk on Sunday, Oct. 27**. The three-mile walk **begins at 10 a.m. at COSI, 333 W. Broad St. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.** Go to [www.makingstrideswalk.org/columbus](http://www.makingstrideswalk.org/columbus) to register. Most importantly, add **Columbus Education Association** as your company. Call Ezetta at CEA (253-4731) with your shirt size once registered.
- ❑ **Need legal services?** You have until **Thursday, Oct. 31**, to enroll in the comprehensive plan for \$500. To download an enrollment form, go to [http://bit.ly/LegalSvcApp2013\\_14](http://bit.ly/LegalSvcApp2013_14). **Contact Cloppert, Latanick, Sauter and Washburn at 461-4455** if you have questions.
- ❑ **Applications for Ingram Teacher Grants** (from \$500 to \$1,000 each) must be **submitted online by Friday, Oct. 11, at 4 p.m.** A CCS email account is required. Submit your application at <http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us/ingramgrant>. Contact Andrea Richardson (365-8993) at Northgate Center if you have questions.
- ❑ **CEA Members Scholarships** are available for your **college senior**. Distributed through The Columbus Foundation, this fund provides **\$1,000 in tuition assistance**. Only CEA members who have taught in CCS for the past four years are eligible. Your student must have at least a 2.0 GPA in order to apply. The deadline is **5 p.m., Friday, Oct. 25**. To download an application, go to <http://bit.ly/ceascholarship2013>. Call Cora Miller at 253-4731 if you have questions.