

# The CEA Voice

Rhonda Johnson, President

www.ceaohio.org

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## Fingerprinting now required

House Bill 79, enacted by the 126th Ohio General Assembly, will become law on Mar. 29.

The law requires that applicants for any license or permit (including renewals) issued by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) complete an Ohio criminal background check through the Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCI).

The background check includes fingerprinting.

CPS has set a deadline of Mar. 26 for these completed applications to be submitted to Northgate. If you have done this, but haven't been fingerprinted, be aware that applications without the required fingerprint checks received on or after Mar. 29 will be placed on hold pending receipt of the required background results. These are submitted to ODE electronically through WebCheck.

Columbus Public Schools offers fingerprinting for employees on Tuesdays and Fridays 8–11 a.m. in Room 21 of the Columbus Education Center. As of now, the service is free of charge.

The new law will initially affect the following applicants:

- ☀ those seeking to transition, renew or advance their licenses;
- ☀ those seeking new licenses; and
- ☀ those seeking new and/or renewal adult education, pupil activity and aide/monitor permits.

Any applicant who has not lived continuously within Ohio for the past five years must also complete a federal background check through the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Results of both the state and federal background checks are valid for one year.

House Bill 79 also requires that holders of permanent or professional certificates undergo a background check at least once every five years. The department is currently developing procedures to handle this new requirement, and additional information will be issued later to assist current certificate holders with compliance.

Please contact Dean Fowls in the LPDC Office at Northgate at 365-5039 or at [dfowls@columbus.k12.oh.us](mailto:dfowls@columbus.k12.oh.us) with questions or concerns.



*Systemic Changes Survey.* It will identify factors such as personnel changes, leadership methods and instructional requirements that have changed since 2005–06 and determine what positive (and negative) effects some of these adjustments are having on teaching and learning.

The results will inform school improvement strategies and policy decisions in the district.

Principals and faculty representatives will use teacher rosters from both years (2005–06 and 2006–07) for grades 3–8 in math and reading (these are the only grades/subjects under study), when completing the survey.

We believe this cooperation between faculty representatives and principals is the best way to generate knowledge about school factors that affect changes in student learning rates.

The results of this study will be available at both the district and CEA offices.

## Reach Out and Read Campaign

The Columbus Education Association's participation in the Reach Out and Read Book Campaign was a huge success. The CEA

membership exceeded its goal of collecting 2,500 books. Our membership donated 2,638 books with a value of more than \$17,335. CEA, Children's

Hospital and the community applaud you for your generosity.

Special thanks go out to Sue Tharp and Borders Books for their generous donation to our campaign. We would also like to thank CEA-R for their contributions and their assistance with putting labels in the donated books.

A very special thank you goes to Vern Miller (Yorktown MS) for spending an entire day going through every book, putting labels in books and boxing them in preparation for them to be picked up.

This effort would not have been a success without the support of President Rhonda Johnson, the CEA Staff, Board of Governors and the Faculty Representatives in our buildings. Your help is greatly appreciated.

The culminating ceremony for the Reach Out and Read Campaign was held on Tuesday, Mar. 20, at Ohio Avenue @ Kent ES where Alumni Archie Griffin and Angela Pace helped celebrate the campaign here in Central Ohio. CEA was recognized for its participation.

Columbus Public Schools has the best teachers in the country. Our collective efforts will make it possible for the children in our community to start school ready to learn.



Tracey Johnson, Archie Griffin and Rhonda Johnson at Ohio Ave. @ Kent ES for Reach Out and Read Program

## Please help us study what's working

Battelle for Kids is conducting an Urban Acceleration Study in four of the state's big-city districts, including Columbus.

Elementary- and middle-school faculty representatives and principals are being asked to complete a two-page

## Campaign restrictions unfair

On Mar. 6, OEA, along with the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the Ohio AFL-CIO, began its quest to halt limits to campaign contributions.

The bill places limits of \$2,000 on contributions from individuals associated with companies that are doing business with the state for one year after business contracts expire. That includes donations from political action committees associated with those companies.

The unions are asking the Franklin County Common Pleas Court to issue an injunction preventing the law from taking effect Apr. 3. That's because the amended bill, passed by Republicans just before the close of 2006, also bars unions from contributing more than \$2,000 per election to elected officials responsible for approving labor contracts.

OEA and the state's other unions want the bill declared unconstitutional. Lawmakers who favored the bill contended that unions often try to influence politicians to pass legislation in favor of better working conditions by making large campaign donations.

In a memo to OEA staff, member local presidents and OEA's board of directors, OEA's legal department stated: "The law subjects labor organizations to arbitrary, discriminatory and punitive action. Moreover, it undercuts rights already granted to labor organizations by Ohio's Public Employees' Collective Bargaining Law."

## STRS health care initiative brewing

CEA is supporting an effort to create a dedicated funding stream for the STRS Ohio Health Care Program.

The funding would come via a 2.5 percent increase in both employee and employer contributions to STRS, phased in over a five-year period in 0.5 percent increments.

Implementing these increases will take legislative action. But the results will clearly be worth it. The proposal, which currently has the majority support of Ohio's public educators, will:

- Provide a gradual phase-in that will generate \$94 million for the first year and \$500 million within five years
- Provide health-care funds for the state's 114,000 retired educators
- Provide coverage for disabled teachers and retirees with preexisting conditions
- Ensure the solvency of the Health Care Program for years to come
- Help employers recruit and retain quality educators.
- Involve employers in managing payroll and health care costs
- Provide a member-driven solution to the health care cost increase statewide

## A new view of high school

Over the past decade, the need for reform of the traditional high school model has become painfully apparent. The dropout rate in 2005 was 30 percent nationally. And among high school students matriculating to college, the graduation rate has been even lower.

More than half of college freshmen never finish their degrees, and a substantial number of them need remedial courses to achieve the rigor required to pass their courses.

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development recently highlighted the need for change in its quarterly publication.

All of these overviews draw similar conclusions: The comprehensive *one-size-fits-all* high school is outmoded. Students need relevant educational information to help them with the skills that are important in today's market.

Student abilities need to be measured in different ways. Standardized testing does not measure everyone's potential.

Learning must be personalized to meet the needs of students from various backgrounds and with varying abilities and interests.

Scheduling formats must be flexible and include learning outside the classroom, such as internships, online courses and independent study options.

The local community must be involved, especially local business leaders who support a mentor-mentee, hands-on model of career and technical training. Classroom standards and expectations must be high—for EVERY student.

Many of these ideas have begun to spread, developing into numerous concepts such as smaller schools focusing more intensely on the needs of specific groups of students, experiments with various-sized blocks of learning time and multiple assessment approaches.

In Hamilton County, Tenn., high schools moved from a two-pronged diploma approach (college-prep or vocational) to a single path for all students, regardless of their post-graduation plans. To solve the problem of the large, impersonal environment, schools built learning communities, both of learners and teachers; established career academies focusing on specific paraprofessions; arranged for internships; and involved the local business community in the planning and instructional process.

The results have been promising: In 2005, more students moved from ninth to 10th grade—89 percent compared with 81 percent in 2004.

Students who achieve composites of 21 on the ACT can attend a state school with full-tuition scholarships.

As Ohio looks at ways to help its students become more successful, let's remember these positive outcomes and push for change. We can do it, with high standards, flexible programming and a team approach.

## OEA membership card has benefits

OEA has created a group discount program that includes savings on purchases of food, dry cleaning, movie tickets, hotel rooms and other services. Log into the members only section of the OEA Website at [www.ohea.org](http://www.ohea.org) using your membership card ID number. Then browse the savings by inserting the ZIP code of the area where you will be traveling.

Some of the 1,000 plus retailers who honor the card are Carnival Cruise Lines, Mrs. Fields Cookies, Discovery Channel Store, Target.com, Pearle Vision and Dell.

For more information on Educator Access, call 866-203-5167, or write to [customerservice@memberweb.com](mailto:customerservice@memberweb.com).

## Special notes

- Plan on attending a session to learn about the **National Board Certification process** and how to qualify for financial support from the State of Ohio. Sessions will be held at **Shepard Center** on **Tuesday, Apr. 17**, (4:30–7 p.m.); and **Tuesday, May 1**, (4:30–7 p.m.). Contact Carole Moyer at 365-8241 for more information.
- Mark your calendar for **Thursday, May 3, at 6 p.m.** and plan to attend **Cassady ES's 20th Anniversary Celebration**. Call **Maureen McClary** at (614) 939-9588 for information.
- Retirement Open House for Sandy Manley** will be on **Friday, Mar. 30**, at the Moose Family Center, 2101 Noe Bixby Road, from 3:30–10 p.m.
- The **Alabama Civil Rights Tour, June 14–17**, gives an inside view of the Civil Rights Movement in Birmingham and Montgomery. Ashland graduate credit is available. The package covers bus transportation, two nights lodging, all tours, breakfast daily, one lunch and tickets to the Blues-Music Fest. The cost is \$349 (based on double occupancy). For information contact Glo Kenley at 898-9505 or [gloriabk@msn.com](mailto:gloriabk@msn.com). For information, about graduate credit, contact JoAnnette Byas-Marston at [jbmars@gmail.com](mailto:jbmars@gmail.com).