

# The CEA Voice

Tracey D. Johnson, President

Volume XLV, No. 22

Columbus Education Association

January 26, 2015

## The reason we remember

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was an agitator who did not rest until the nation was stirred to change. Roland Martin, an award-winning journalist recognized by many as one of the voices of African Americans throughout the country, stood at the microphone at the Annual CEA Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Awards Dinner and reminded the CEA audience that although the civil rights leader's message was silenced by an assassin's bullet, his work lives on.



Roland Martin

Looking out across the audience, Martin acknowledged the progress that has allowed people of all races to share a meal in a nice hotel. But he asked attendees to consider why they take time to mark MLK day, "What is it we are trying to accomplish in this world? In the year 2065 what are they going to say about you?" Martin went on to ask if people will be talking about themselves or still will be talking about Dr. King's "dream."

Martin delivered this year's keynote address as about 600 CEA members, administrators, students and community leaders gathered to acknowledge Columbus' social justice advocates. CEA presented Dr. C. Dexter Wise III, Pastor of Faith Ministries Interdenominational Church with the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award and Cora Miller, retired CCS teacher, librarian and CEA Administrative Assistant, with the Helen Jenkins Davis Award. The Davis Award is named for Columbus City Schools' first black teacher.

Dr. Wise is noted for his compassion and creativity when it comes to concern for our community's youth and for his public, visible support of teachers. He voiced moral support for labor during the fight against Senate Bill 5 and offered material support for the Reynoldsburg Education Association members, who lost pay during their recent strike.



Dr. C. Dexter Wise III

Cora Miller was a founder of the CEA Scholarship Program and the Minority Involvement Program—from which the annual King Dinner emerged. Working behind the scenes, she has helped many minority members of the Association grow in their leadership skills.



Cora Miller

Roland Martin called for more activism. The nationally syndicated columnist, radio host and author is noted for his outspoken coverage of issues affecting the black community, including award-winning coverage of voter suppression.

Martin also has reported on the publicity surrounding the critically acclaimed movie, "Selma" but, as he pointed out, none of the actors nor the director received an Oscar nod. He also discussed the controversy over Hollywood's refusal to back George Lucas' 2012 Tuskegee Airmen saga, "Red Tails," which features a predominately black cast.

Martin questioned debates about politics and urged Americans to look beyond the posturing and see the work to be done to achieve real equality for all people. He reminded the audience that their comfort is an illusion, referencing Martin Niemöller's poem, "First They Came for the Communists," about silence ultimately leading to persecution in one's own backyard. King, he said, was silenced involuntarily. He added this question, directed to the slain leader on behalf of the dinner audience and people everywhere: "Are we going to continue doing what you admonished us to do the night before you were killed?"

Go to <http://bit.ly/MLK15cea> to view photos from the event.

## Your 211 Calendar

The 211 Calendar is your guide to the schedule of job postings and interview opportunities for 2015–2016. Here is the latest schedule. This calendar does change from time to time. We'll keep you informed of any changes to dates and information.

- Feb. 3: Identification of principal assignments for 2015–2016 school year
- Feb. 6: Deadline to request a voluntary staff reduction
- Feb. 13: Members are notified of administrative staff reductions
- Mar. 3–Mar. 9: Round 1 postings
- Mar. 10–16: Round 1 interviews
- Mar. 23–27: Round 2 postings
- Apr. 13–16: Round 2 interviews
- Apr. 29–30: Job fairs

To view the full 211 calendar, go to: <http://bit.ly/art211va>.

## Thinking about requesting to be staff reduced?

Article 211 of the *Master Agreement* permits members to request to staff reduce themselves from schools, programs or buildings for health or safety reasons or for philosophical differences (i.e. instructional program, teaching assignment, etc.). The reduction must be mutually agreed upon by Human Resources and CEA.

If you want to make a request to be staff-reduced from your current teaching assignment based on philosophical differences, you must write a letter that clearly states the reason(s) for your request. Letters should be sent to Victoria Frye, Human Resources, Columbus City Schools, 270 E.

State St., Columbus, OH 43215. You should hand deliver the letter and ask for a copy to be time stamped for your records. The deadline to request to be staff reduced is Friday, Feb. 6 at 5 p.m. Emails and faxes will not be accepted. You will not be allowed to make requests for staff-reduction status after Friday, Feb. 6.

## State considers test shrinkage

Teachers are not the only ones who think our kids spend too many hours taking standardized tests. As Congress prepares to consider the future of the “No Child Left Behind” laws, Ohio Superintendent Richard Ross is recommending a reduction in those hours. He has proposed that the legislature amend the rules, eliminating the third-grade reading test and some of the diagnostic tests in the primary grades. The idea is to reduce testing time to only 2 percent of classroom time. Percentages now are closer to 2.6 percent, especially for the 3rd and 10th grades. That is 20 hours of testing. Ross wants it lowered to a maximum of 19.8 hours for all standardized tests.

The student testing reduction does not include the new Common Core tests in social studies, science and American history and government. OEA supports the recommendations.

Ross also recommends that school districts stop using the tests to evaluate teachers in some subjects, including music, foreign language and some levels of social studies and science. Instead, he proposes a controversial method—using whole-district or whole-school scores to rate the progress of all the teachers as a unit. Other recommendations from Ross include:

- Monitoring the new state tests for their effectiveness and possible reduction
- Compiling more research on ways to use a single test for multiple purposes
- Trimming the kindergarten readiness test
- Using state tests to identify gifted students

## Served your country? No license fees

ODE is eliminating fees for educator licenses to recognize the contributions of military families. If you are a veteran or a current member of the military, including the National Guard or Reserves, the fees for any Ohio educator license, permit, certificate or renewal will be waived. A spouse of an active-duty service member may also be eligible to receive a no-fee license.

In addition, all eligible military applicants and their spouses will be able to use the G.I. Bill program benefits to pay fees associated with taking the Ohio Assessments for Educators licensure examinations. Incoming licensed teachers from other states who are veterans or members of the military may obtain the One-Year Out-of-State Educator License soon after applying.

For more information, go to <http://1.usa.gov/1AHdTCg> or contact the Office of Educator Licensure at 877-644-6338 or [educator.licensure@education.ohio.gov](mailto:educator.licensure@education.ohio.gov).

## Speak up, speak out

The CEA Staff Survey provides invaluable information about our schools to our members. The survey paints a picture of a school’s strengths and its opportunities for growth from the experts—the individuals who work there.

Your Association uses the information provided by our members to document and resolve ongoing concerns and challenges at schools across the district. The Superintendent used the data from the 2013–2014 staff survey to guide the planning process for the principal’s summer leadership institute. Members use the information provided in the staff survey to

make decisions on where to interview during the 211 process.

The survey will close on Sunday, Feb. 1, at 11:59 p.m. If you did not get the email message containing the survey link, or if CEA does not have your current non-CCS email address, please send it to [tellcea@ceaohio.org](mailto:tellcea@ceaohio.org) to participate in the survey. You will be able to access this survey from home or from work.

## Dues Deductions 2014

Tax time is coming. Some CEA members may be able to deduct a portion of their union dues on their income tax returns. These are considered unreimbursed employee expenses and may be deducted on Schedule A (Form 1040) Line 21.

This type of deduction is subject to a minimum which must amount to more than 2 percent of your adjusted gross income. Consult IRS Publication 529 for more details. Visit [www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p529.pdf](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p529.pdf). Search for “union dues.”

The table above shows your deduction for NEA, OEA and CEA dues for the 2014 tax year.

Full Dues	
Plan A (21 Pays)	\$831.53
Plan B (26 Pays)	\$831.79
Switched from:	
Plan A to B	\$774.63
Plan B to A	\$888.79
Half Dues	\$466.49
Quarter Dues	\$275.19

## It could be deductible

As you file your tax return, keep this in mind: You may be able to deduct personal expenses related to your teaching job. Qualifying expenses include books, supplies, computers, software and supplemental materials. A maximum deduction of \$250 is allowed. Go to <http://www.irs.gov/publications/p529/index.html> to learn more.

## Special Notes

- ❑ **Running for a CEA office in the spring?** You have until 5 p.m. on Feb. 20 to declare your candidacy for one of these: **Governors for Districts 3, 6, and two High School At-Large (three-year terms), Governor for District 10** (to fill the unexpired term ending on July 31, 2017), **2015 NEA Delegates, 2015 NEA State Delegates At-Large\*** and **2015–2016 OEA Delegates**. The **campaign period ends Mar. 30**. Voting will take place from **Mar. 17–30**. Votes will be **tabulated on Mar. 31**. In the event of run-offs, voting will take place from **Apr. 21–May 4**, with votes tallied on **May 5**.

\*OEA must receive NEA State Delegates At-Large forms by 5 p.m. on Jan. 30 to be included in the 2015 CEA Spring Elections.

- ❑ **Have you filled out your continuing contract application?** If you are eligible for the **2015–2016 school year**, you must fill out and submit the paperwork by **Mar. 6**. The form is located on the CCS Intranet under Human Resources/HR Administration/Mira Wright or can be downloaded from the CEA website at <http://bit.ly/1415continue>. For questions on eligibility requirements, contact Nancy Young at 365-5658.
- ❑ **Feb. 1 is the deadline for enhanced, or super, severance pay.** If you are retiring this school year, you **must notify the district of your retirement intentions by Feb. 1, 2015**, or risk losing some of your benefits. Notification letters go to the **CCS Human Resources Department**. The letter should include your **name**, your **employee ID** and your **last day of service**. You should **hand deliver the letter** and ask for a copy to be time stamped for your records.
- ❑ **Have a particular teaching preference?** Now is your chance to make your request for the **2015–2016 school year**. Section 211.05 of the *Master Agreement* allows members to express their teaching assignment preferences in writing for the following school year to the building principal. The deadline is **Feb. 1**. There are no guarantees, but our agreement gives members this opportunity.