

The CEA Voice

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Testing...Testing...Testing...Testing...

CEA and OEA have been at the forefront of the effort to try and communicate your concerns around the testing nightmare. Your Association has heard your concerns about how teaching has become about testing and all of the problems testing has caused. From the amount of time spent on testing, to problems with the tests, to the use of data for high-stakes decision making, to the need for time to get these new systems implemented correctly, CEA has been at the table advocating for our members. Here's some of what we've done so far:

In December, OEA President Becky Higgins, CEA member **Jeanette Johnson** (Berwick K-8) and other OEA members met with State Superintendent Dr. Richard Ross. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss how testing has impacted the teaching and learning conditions of educators across the state. Less than a month later, Dr. Ross issued a report to the Ohio General Assembly that called for a 20 percent reduction in state testing.

In January, U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) met with a roundtable of OEA members to discuss the impact of testing on student learning. Included in the group were CEA members **Traci Arway** (Special Education Coordinator), **Daria Denoia** (PAR), CEA Vice President **Phil Hayes** and **Kevin Jackson** (Champion MS). CEA members told Sen. Brown that testing was "out of control" and that the disproportionate amount of time spent on testing crowds out time for teaching and learning.

Just days after the roundtable, Sen. Brown signed on as a co-sponsor for the Support Making Assessments Reliable and Timely (SMART) Act. It would make funding available to assist states and local education agencies in aligning testing materials to college and career ready standards. The funding can also be used to speed up delivery of test data to educators and parents. Additionally, states can use the funding to undertake audits of existing practices to eliminate unnecessary assessments.

CEA President **Tracey D. Johnson** is a member of the Ohio 8, a strategic alliance composed of the superintendents and teacher union presidents from Ohio's eight urban school districts—Akron, Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Toledo and Youngstown. The Ohio 8 helped craft the talking points on testing to give to legislatures. The group has testified in the House Education Committee and asked lawmakers for more local control in testing and to establish a statewide educator-driven framework for testing, accountability and flexibility in meeting state assessment requirements. For more information, go to: <http://ohio8coalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/HB-74-Testimony-3-11-15.pdf>.

In March, OEA President Becky Higgins, **Kevin Jackson** (Champion MS) and other OEA members delivered testimony to the Senate Education Committee about the issues with testing.

Jackson described to Senators the chaos caused by low laptop batteries during the spring PARCC testing at Champion MS.

"I went from a test proctor to an American ninja warrior," said Jackson. "You should have seen my agility trying to find an outlet to plug all the dying computers into without disturbing the students testing position or environment. Cords were strung around my room like a ropes course where I had to duck under or jump over to navigate the room.

CEA Secretary **Dominique Vacharesse**, a special education

teacher at Ft. Hayes HS, submitted written testimony to the committee. In her testimony, she questioned the appropriateness of tying high-stakes decision making to brand-new tests.

"Students are so concerned about passing high-stakes tests [that] they feel defeated when they do not earn a score test makers deem as passing," said Vacharesse. "If students adopt the "why bother" attitude simply because they failed a high-stakes test, which does not consider their effort to master concepts taught in the classroom on a daily basis, it demeans the learning process. This is not conducive to a positive and safe learning environment."

Recently, State Senator Peggy Lehner announced the formation of a Senate Advisory Committee on Testing. The committee will be made up of various educational experts from across the state and will make recommendations to the Senate on state required assessments. CEA member **Kimberly Jones** (Mifflin MS) is one of seven teachers on the committee.

"The committee will help inform the Senate as to what policies and tests add the most value to our children's education," said Lehner. "I look forward to their insight and recommendations."

Jones and the members of the committee will be evaluating the administration of the new tests given to students in the 2014-2015 school year and will make recommendations to the Senate on how to improve state testing.

Finally, at CEA's Organization and Activist training earlier in March, members learned the finer points of lobbying legislators and to network with partners to aid us in our mission to advocate for our students and their families.

As educators, we must take control of our profession. We must stand up together and advocate for what we know is right. If you are interested in becoming part of the CEA Social and Economic Justice Committee, call CEA at 253-4731. If we're not at the table, we're on the menu.

Teacher Linkage: Roster Verification Process Overview

Many Ohio teachers receive a Value-Added report each fall that provides important data from the previous school year. This data can be used in instructional decision making that becomes part of, or all of, the student growth measure of their teacher evaluation. The Roster Verification process allows teachers to attribute instructional influence on student academic progress and to receive teacher value-added reports. A key element of Roster Verification is engaging teachers in the process, to build greater awareness and trust in measures of effectiveness. The active participation of teachers and principals is essential for validating which teacher teaches what subject to which students. The process for teachers includes: establishing a roster of students taught throughout the year; indicating the month(s) when students are in and out of the classroom (i.e., mobility); and reporting the percentage of instruction a teacher has for a given student for a given subject. While this may seem simple, the greatest challenge states and districts currently face is accurately capturing all of the complex variables that describe the relationships among teachers and students, including student mobility, staff changes, etc. The following teachers will link this year: Grades 4-8 Reading and Mathematics, Grades 5 and 8 Science, Grade 6 Social Studies, High School subjects of English 9, Integrated Math 1

and Physical Science.

CCS Roster Verification Process Timeframe and Responsibilities for 2015

The process for Roster Verification occurs in three easy steps:

1. School Set-Up Period: Principals (and support teams, as desired) gain access to verify the staff list and staff assignments.
2. Teacher Roster Verification Period: Teachers gain access to verify their class rosters and set up linkage attribution for the students they taught, how long they taught them, and the percentage of instruction they provided each student. Principals/ support teams should be monitoring teacher completion.
3. Principal Review and Approval Period: Principals review staff attributions and alerts before giving final approval. Principals will be able to review and approve rosters as completed, before the Teacher Roster Verification Period ends.

Responsibilities within the Link/Roster Verification Application

Principals are responsible for completing the following steps:

1. Establish a support team for your school.
2. Review the teachers and classes initially loaded.
3. Facilitate completion of the Link/Roster Verification process.
4. Review for accuracy and approve the final link data that will be used in the analysis.

Teachers are responsible for completing the following steps:

1. Ensure all students are accurately included on each class roster, and modify rosters by adding/deleting students where necessary.
2. Indicate class enrollment by setting student entry and exit dates.
3. Set percentage of instruction provided.
4. Submit class rosters for principal review and approval.

If you have any questions regarding Teacher Linkage, there are a variety of resources depending upon your learning style. Some of the options are:

- + Ask your principal or someone from your support team.
- + Go to battelleforkids.org and take any of the instructional modules (free) or visit the Frequently Asked Questions.
- + Call Shannon Clemons at 365-7641 or email her at sclemons5483@columbus.k12.oh.us.
- + Call Dr. Keith Harris at 365-5786 or email him at kharris4670@columbus.k12.oh.us.
- + Call Dr. Mabelle Kline at 365-6719 or email her at mkline@columbus.k12.oh.us.
- + Call The Management Council (MCOECN) at (855) 396-2229.
- + Call Battelle for Kids at (866) 543-7555.

Thank You for Supporting Our Third Graders

CEA members generously donated nearly 1,200 books valued at over \$7,100.00 to this year's CEA Book Drive. The books collected will go directly into the hands of our third grade students. As you know, as a result of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, more than 1,600 of our third graders are in jeopardy of being retained. Your generosity helps us support the district's literary initiatives. Thank you to all who supported this year's campaign in your building.

A special thank you goes to the CEA Book Drive Committee: **Megan Hinz** (West HS); **Carrie Hoover** (North Linden ES); **Crystal Wilson** (Champion MS) and **Teri Mullins** (CEA). Also, congratulations to **Rachel Concitis** (Winterset ES), the winner of the iPad Mini and carrying case.

If you still have books in your building, drop them off at the CEA office, or contact Teri Mullins at 253-4731 to arrange a pick-up. Did you forget to participate? It's not too late to donate. You can purchase books and bring them to the CEA office, or order books online at Barnes & Noble (or any other retailer) and have them delivered directly to the CEA office to the attention of Teri Mullins. The shipping address is 929 East Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43205.



Calamity Days are Now e-Days

This year, CCS, along with about 75 percent of the state's school districts, will calculate the number of hours—versus days—of instructional time lost to the cold, snow and other situations.

Given the differences in our bell schedules, grade configurations, and allotted recess time, we have schools with a variety of instructional hours provided over the course of the year. This means that your building may have to make up more, or less, time than others in our district when schools are forced to close.

See your principal to find out how many hours/days you have remaining in your building's scheduled year. If you need to make up hours, you may be asked to implement the "e-Days" plan and send additional work home with students. Last year, we missed eight days of school and sent additional assignments home in April. Students who don't complete the work will be counted absent.

Under the law, students in grades K–6 are required to receive 910 hours of instructional time and students in grades 7–12 are required to receive 1,001 hours. Each building is asked to decide whether to stick to this limit or add hours, and to define its own length of an instructional day. If e-Days don't prove adequate for making up the hours, additional days can be added to the school year. The Ohio Legislature created this option to give school districts more flexibility when making up lost time.

An Additional NBCT to Congratulate

Join CEA in congratulating the renewing National Board Certified Teacher: **Jennifer Kinkela**, Early and Middle Childhood/Physical Education.

Special Notes

- ❑ Election campaigning will end on **Mar. 30**—and so will the voting period for **Governors for Districts 3 and 6, 2015 NEA Delegates, 2015 NEA State Delegates At-Large and 2015–2016 OEA Delegates**. Mark your ballot! We will tabulate the votes **Mar. 31**. If there are run-offs, voting will take place from **Apr. 21–May 4**, with votes being tallied on **May 5**. The races for both High School Governors At-large and the race for District 10 Governor were uncontested and these seats have been filled by acclamation.
- ❑ You could receive a **Teachers' Dream Grant: \$500–\$5,000** for innovative projects focusing on academic enrichment, increasing student achievement, closing the achievement gap, improving school/community relations and improving the classroom learning climate. **Submit your request online by Apr. 17, 4 p.m.** Call **Andrea Richardson** at 365-5733 for more information.
- ❑ **Apr. 17 at 5 p.m. is the deadline for CEA Scholarship Applications**. Eligible high school seniors have proven cumulative grade-point averages (GPA) of 2.5, are children or grandchildren of CEA or CEA-R members and full-time students while enrolled in college. Awards include the \$1,500 Christa McAuliffe Scholarship; the \$1,000 CEA General Scholarship; the Grossman Memorial Scholarship; and a one-year scholarship awarded by CEA-R and the Rhonda Johnson Scholarship Fund. Visit <http://bit.ly/2015ScholGuidlines> to download an application or call the CEA office at 253-4731.
- ❑ Registration is open for **CCS/OSU Outreach Courses for Summer Term**. Visit <http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us/osu> (you may need to use Internet Explorer), click on "Summer 2015 Courses," then read through the information pages to get to the list of courses. They include subjects in Reading, Special Education and TESOL.
- ❑ CEA wants to thank **Centennial HS** and **Dominion MS** for completing their UNCF Campaigns.
- ❑ **Note the following 211 calendar dates: Mar. 23–27, Round 2 postings; Apr. 13–16, Round 2 interviews; Apr. 29–30, Job Fairs** (Hudson Distribution Center Library).
- ❑ Are you interested in teaching at one of the **District's summer school locations**? If so, go to: <http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us/summerschool/>. To access the summer school application you must use your original CCS password.
- ❑ The following school has an **approved alternate interview panel**: **St. Vincent**.