

The CEA Voice

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We Want to See You There

What a great way to start the school year, with a party. Yes, a party just for *you* because *you* deserve it. So join us as we kick off the school year celebrating *you*. We know those in the education profession rarely receive any positive



recognition or a simple thank you. CEA wants to give *you* the recognition *you* deserve and thank *you* in advance for all the hard work *you* are doing for our children.

Join us Friday, Sept. 11, for the CEA Fall Fling from 4–8 p.m. at the Hilton Columbus at Easton. Enjoy a wonderful evening of fun, fellowship, door prizes and great music. You will meet many fellow educators, learn how CEA is working on your behalf and find out how you can get involved to influence public policy. CEA just welcomed more than four hundred new teachers. This is your chance to show them what it's like to be a part of the CEA family and let them know you are there to help. New teachers can meet their more-experienced colleagues, develop camaraderie and make some valuable friendships. We hope to see you there. This is one of the most enjoyable events of the year. Admission and food are free. Beer and wine are \$2.

Become a Mentor Teacher

Are you interested in mentoring a university student this school year (student teacher, FEEP student, field placements, etc.)? Would you like to earn CEUs for doing so? Have you been employed as a CCS teacher for at least three school years? CCS teachers mentoring university students now have a wide range of opportunities to earn CEUs. CEU credits for mentoring university students range from .5 CEUs to 3.0 CEUs, depending on the type and length of placement.

If you have already applied, check your email to see if you have received a match. If you have not received an email, continue to check your email as the district is currently making numerous matches. If you applied and no longer wish to mentor a student or if you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact Karmen McCaslin at kmccasli@columbus.k12.oh.us. Thank you for considering mentoring a future teacher!

Complete the online application using the following link: www.columbus.k12.oh.us/studentrequest.

Sick and Personal Leave: Know the Contract

Article 702 of the *Master Agreement* provides teachers with two types of paid leave: sick and personal. Each year, teachers earn a total of 15 sick leave days. Teachers are credited with 1.5 sick days on the second payday of the month from September through June. Teachers also earn two personal leave days each year, and they are available for use beginning Aug. 1. If you need to be out, be sure to follow your school's policy for taking a day. You are required to either contact the administrator directly or enter the absence into SEMS yourself, but not both.

Additionally, CEA has negotiated a number of paid holidays for our members including, but not limited to, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Spring Break and Memorial Day. In order to receive pay for those holidays, teachers must be in paid status before and after the holiday. Go to <https://columbus.munisselfservice.com/> to make sure you know your leave balance.

Period-by-Period Attendance

Period-by-Period attendance began at schools that have grades 6–12 on Aug. 26, 2015. A video on Period-by-Period Attendance is available at <http://bit.ly/1Mw1fB0> to learn what is needed to take period-by-period attendance. Written documentation is also available through the Technical Learning Center. If technology should not be functioning for any reason or if you do not have access to a computer, the District has made available the weekly Register Report that all attendance secretaries will run for substitute teachers.

If you know that the computer in your classroom is not functioning, put a ticket in by calling the Help Desk at 365-8425 so that Kingswood can fix it. Elementary buildings will not be required to enter period-by-period attendance until the second semester. This requirement is a direct response to the auditor's findings regarding district attendance.

It's Time For Your ABC

One of the most important communication mechanisms of the school building is the Association Building Council (ABC). This group of at least five teachers, organized during the first month of each school year, is an advisory group that assists the principal and the school staff in developing policies and programs for the school. Details can be found in your *CEA Master Agreement* (Article 202.01). Here are the basics:

- The ABC consists of the building's senior faculty representative, two other members elected by secret ballot and two members appointed by the principal.
- All CEA members have the right to have matters placed on the ABC agendas and have the right to speak to the ABC on those items. Most ABC meetings are open to all CEA members in the building.
- The principal is not a member of the ABC and cannot vote on any agenda items, but should be in attendance at all ABC meetings.

Know Your Governor: Mike Smith

While Mike Smith officially began his three-year term on the CEA Board of Governors as Governor of District 3 on August 1, he has been inching toward CEA service all his life. His father, a retired U.S. Postal Worker, was active with his association, including leading the APWU Springfield chapter. “Over the years we have had many rich discussions about the worker-corporation relationship,” Smith said. So when he saw changes in the level of respect for teachers and for unions—especially at the Statehouse—he had to make his move. He became an Alternate and then Senior Faculty Rep at Huy ES, now Huy/A.G. Bell.



Mike Smith

“We are under attack,” said Smith, a two-decade teaching veteran who formerly taught at Fair Alternative and Northtowne Elementary. “And with what our fellow teachers have been going through. It’s time for people to stop staying on the sidelines.”

Smith, who begins the school year in a Grade 4/5 classroom, said the most important aspect of union service is, for him, the ability to solve problems as a unit. Early in his CEA service he enjoyed attending meetings where he learned about the spectrum of issues facing CCS teachers and saw people working together to find solutions.

Smith also taught in Hamilton Township Schools for five years, and has seen the challenges faced by a small school district with fewer resources and the value union membership brings. His goal as District 3 Governor, he said, is to encourage other association members to get involved. “I am glad we still have unions,” he said. “We as workers need to pull our weight, but everyone does. And we need to keep administrations everywhere accountable. Across the country, it’s getting out of balance.”

Smith maintains a balance between teaching, CEA service and his time away from the district. When he isn’t working, Smith enjoys time with his two daughters, both in college, and outings kayaking and fishing. “On Saturdays, I’m rooting for my (University of Akron) Zips and Bucks,” he said, “On Sunday, I’m yelling at my Browns!”

Legal Services Available

CEA membership provides a benefit that all of us need at one time or another: A legal services plan with reduced rates for those personal matters requiring a lawyer—such as developing an estate plan, resolving domestic matters or dealing with a traffic violation. The “Basic Plan” (known as the OEA/NEA Attorney Referral Program) is provided for every active member. When you become a member of the Association, you automatically receive, at a reduced rate, legal assistance with matters in five areas: real estate, wills and estates, domestic relations, consumer protection and traffic violations.

For a reasonable fee, payable by payroll deduction, the “Comprehensive Plan” provides more extensive coverage for people who need it. Included here are matters such as personal injury. The best thing is that your immediate family is eligible. As a CEA member, you automatically receive four free half-hour meetings to discuss any legal matter, except income tax preparation. If you need more extensive legal assistance, including a document review, you can join the “Comprehensive Plan” and receive services at the discounted rate. A few legal services, such as help with business dealings, bankruptcy, taxes or defense in criminal matters, do not qualify for the discounted rate. Call Cloppert, Latanick, Sauter and Washburn, the law firm administering the plan, at 461-4455 for consultations.

Know Your Contract: Using the Reform Panel

The Reform Panel (Art. 1503) is a joint committee consisting of CEA and administration. The panel seeks to improve educational processes by considering requests for variances to the *CEA Master Agreement* or board policy. The panel also forms committees on some state-mandated issues.

Schools can come to the Reform Panel to ask for variances from the contract. For example, if a middle school wants a schedule differ-

ent from the eight-period day, or if a high school or middle school special education teacher wants to teach six periods rather than five in lieu of a duty, teachers could develop a proposal to submit to the Reform Panel. If teachers at a particular school want to institute school uniforms or segregate classes by gender, the Building Leadership Team can do research on the issue and create a proposal and rationale. If two-thirds of the staff approves the request, it may be presented to the Reform Panel. A majority of Reform Panel members must approve variance requests. The CEA President and the CCS Superintendent must agree to the changes.

You may begin the variance process by making a suggestion to your ABC. The Senior Faculty Representative conducts a secret ballot building vote, and then refers it to the Reform Panel with signatures from both the principal and Senior FR.

Create a cadre of staff members and parents to seek new and innovative programs that would benefit your students. Do your research and make a proposal. The Reform Panel will also help you define potential problems and recommend further steps.

We encourage you to make requests that you think will benefit your school’s effectiveness. This process allows you to create a new learning environment not limited by board policies or the CEA contract.

Is Your Registration Current?

We’re not referring to the sticker on your license plate—we’re talking about your voter registration. Chances are, you’re already registered to vote—but does your registration have you at your current address or an old one? If you’ve moved and haven’t updated your voter registration, your polling location may be different.

If you’re already registered to vote in Ohio, you can update your existing Ohio voter registration online by going to <http://bit.ly/voteregupdate>. If you’re not yet registered to vote, Ohio doesn’t allow for online voter registration, but you can download a registration form at <http://bit.ly/ohvotereg> to begin the process. The deadline for Ohioans to register to vote or to update their voter registration for the November General Election is Monday, Oct. 5.

Walk to Cure Pediatric Cancer

The CureSearch Walk will take place at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium on Sunday, Sept. 27. The cost is \$10 for adults; kids under 15 are free. This fee includes admission to the zoo and a meal. To sign up, go to www.curesearch.org and select the Columbus Walk. Fellow CEA member Cara Welling is walking for her son. If you want to join her son’s team, “Aiden’s Army” you can. Anyone can walk to honor and support any child or surviving siblings that may be in your family or attend your school. Proceeds from the walk will benefit research for pediatric cancers.

Special Notes

- ❑ **Attention Faculty Representatives:** The CEA Legislative Assembly will meet at 4:30 p.m. on **Thursday, Sept. 10**, at **The Boathouse Restaurant at Confluence Park** (679 W. Spring Street). Dinner will be provided. *RSVP* to Judy Nelson at jnelson@ceaohio.org. Include your name and the building/unit you represent.
- ❑ **CEA Members Scholarships** are available for your college senior. Distributed through the Columbus Foundation, this fund provides \$1,250 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. 23**. Go to the CEA site, at www.ceaohio.org, to obtain a form. Call Hannah Milley at 253-4731 if you have questions.
- ❑ **Enroll in the Sick Leave Bank** by donating two days. Once a member of the bank, you can borrow up to ten days. The deadline to join is **Wednesday, Sept. 30**. The application form can be downloaded at <http://bit.ly/slbapp>. Fill out the form and send it to CEC, Route 1. Make sure you make a copy for your records.
- ❑ **Members should have received a yellow card** that CEA uses to update information for our database. Your information remains private and is not shared with entities outside of the Association. CEA needs this information to keep in contact with you. **Complete the card and give it to your Senior Faculty Representative** or send it to CEA.
- ❑ **Give blood** with our union brothers and sisters at the **Central Ohio Labor Council’s First Annual “Unite for Life” Blood Drive** from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on **Thursday, Sept. 3**, at **The Plumbers and Pipefitters Union Hall** (1250 Kinnear Road). To sign up to donate, call the **Red Cross** at 1-800-733-2767 and enter the sponsor code: **Unite for Life**.