

The CEA Voice

Tracey D. Johnson, President

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Link Arms for Our Families

Collaboration: It's a word CEA members understand. It's how we get things done. It's how we make positive change for ourselves and for our students and their families.



United Way of Central Ohio (UWCO) understands this word, too. For many decades it has linked with other organizations and service agencies to form a united front against the root causes of the persistent problems facing our community.

The Columbus Education Association and the Columbus City Schools already have formed a United Way team and, together, we comprise a vital link in this effort. Already, the Columbus Schools team and UWCO have helped our families in obvious and more subtle ways that will have lasting effects on their lives. We have helped improve kindergarten readiness, removed barriers to health care, encouraged good nutrition and fitness, helped our neighbors prepare for disasters and emergencies, created safer neighborhoods and provided safe and decent housing for many more of our neighbors.

When you receive your pledge materials, take a moment to consider how CEA, CCS staff and administrators and all other union members across our school district have helped United Way benefit our neediest families and support community efforts to improve all of our lives. Be a part of UWCO's nine Bold Goals focusing on the interconnected areas of education, income, health and home. By 2020, we want more people in central Ohio to reach their full potential through a quality education leading to a productive career, enough income to support a family, good health and a safe place to live.

It is so easy to get involved with this important community-wide work and, for us, it is so natural. We know what it means to "Live United." Now let's use our own strength, along with everyone else in Ohio's largest urban school district, to make central Ohio a better place to live.

Meet Your CEA Officers and Staff

Many of you have spoken with us on the phone, seen us on stage at CEA events, or met us at the Fall Fling or one of our banquets and celebrations. We are your CEA officers and staff. Once upon a time, not so long ago, we stood where you are now. Here's a little bit about each of us:

CEA President **Tracey D. Johnson**, recipient of CEA's Distinguished Service Award, has been involved at every level of CEA leadership, starting with the Minority Involvement Program and moving on to the bargaining team, the CEA Board of Governors (Middle School Governor At-Large) and OEA and NEA delegate. Tracey has been involved in battles on all fronts, from helping a colleague fight an unfair termination to helping defeat Senate Bill 5. Johnson taught for 15 years at Fair ES, and at Linmoor, Johnson Park and Yorktown MSs. She also served as a Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) Consulting Teacher. Her goal is to build CEA capacity at every



Tracey D. Johnson

level. Her flair for public speaking started early. Before going to college, Tracey graduated from the Cincinnati School for Creative and Performing Arts.

CEA Vice President **Phil Hayes** started his CEA service as a Faculty Representative at Brookhaven HS. It wasn't long before the social studies teacher served as a committee chair, a bargaining team member, an NEA/OEA delegate and as CEA's internal electronic communications coordinator. Hayes, who was a Teacher of the Year in 2001-2002, was the first classroom teacher to testify against Senate Bill 5. At each of our events, you will see Phil, still at the lectern, representing us and inspiring us.



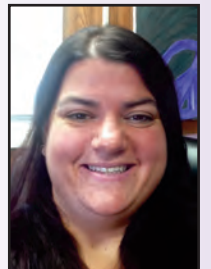
Phil Hayes

CEA Staff Consultant **Bob Hern** attended Huy ES, Medina MS and graduated from Brookhaven HS. Later, he came to CCS to teach technology at Northeast Career Center. Bob started his CEA service in 1998 as a Faculty Representative, inspired by CEA's help when his paycheck didn't arrive. Now, Bob supports others so they can concentrate on what's important in the classroom. He is also our graphic designer, producing *The CEA Voice* each week. He is our event recorder. You might see him with a camera, snapping photos at all of CEA's events.



Bob Hern

CEA Staff Consultant **Teri Mullins** represented you when we stood at the Statehouse to fight Senate Bill 5. You inspired her to get more involved in CEA. Teri taught special education for 13 years at Wedgewood MS. She also advised the STEM Club. Teri has an inside perspective: She attended Duxberry Park ES, Franklin MS and East HS. She has served as an OEA and NEA delegate and an alternate building Faculty Representative. She served as District 6 Governor in 2008. She is currently the bargaining team chairperson and serves on the Joint Evaluation Panel.



Teri Mullins

CEA Staff Consultant **Ezetta Murray** taught at Maize ES and got involved with CEA after the Association helped her solve a problem with her paycheck. She joined the Minority Involvement Program committee, then the CEA Elections Committee, and then served as a Senior Faculty Representative. Murray organizes and manages our annual Making Strides campaign, walking with us to cure breast cancer. She is our cheerleader for the United Negro College Fund. She is a world traveler who also likes to make jewelry. Ezetta serves on various district committees and serves as CEA's Chief Negotiator.



Ezetta Murray

Dominique Vacheresse was completing her master's degree in education and witnessed the statewide campaign to defeat Senate Bill 5. A special education teacher who also had attended several Columbus City Schools, she attended civic and political events and was impressed with the power wielded by organ-



Dominique Vacheresse

ized labor. Dominique is now part of our CEA family, serving as Secretary of the CEA Board of Governors.

Tom Busher manages our CEA budget. As Budget Director, he oversees the revenue and expenditures of all CEA accounts and is the CEA financial representative with Capital District, CEA Foundation and numerous financial organizations that conduct business with CEA. Tom was a business teacher at Southeast Career Center where he taught the accounting program for juniors and seniors. A retired member of the Association, Tom has served as Faculty Representative, ABC member and past member of the Ohio Business Teachers Association (OBTA).



Tom Busher

Neil Moore is CEA Elections Chair. The Spanish teacher (following in the footsteps of both his parents) spent hours, for many years in a row, sorting and hand-counting your ballots. Now the system is computerized, and Neil was part of this transition. But his CEA involvement extends much further. Neil stepped in to become the Senior Faculty Representative at Whetstone HS when the long-serving FR moved on to another position. He stood with us at the Ohio Statehouse to oppose the union-busting Senate Bill 5. His mission is to get younger CEA members more involved.



Neil Moore

Are You Retiring This Year?

Staff members planning on retiring at some point in the

2015–2016 school year can be exempted from the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System. Ohio Substitute House Bill 362 states: “A board of education may elect to not conduct an evaluation of a teacher who has



submitted notice of retirement and that notice has been accepted by the board not later than Dec. 1 in the school year in which the evaluation is otherwise scheduled to be conducted.”

Members who would like to exercise this option must submit their notice of retirement by Oct. 30, 2015, to Human Resources. Go to <http://bit.ly/ccsretiresign> to download a copy of the retirement/resignation notification form. Your Association recommends hand delivering your notice of retirement and obtaining a time-stamped copy. If you have further questions regarding the option not to conduct the evaluation due to retirement, contact Mira Wright at 365-8307. If you have general retirement questions not related to the evaluation process, go to <http://bit.ly/ccsretire>.

Cast Your Vote Early

Voting is important. It's the way you can send a message: “I vote for officials who support public education.” This November you will vote on a variety of governing leaders, including mayor of Columbus and members of the Columbus Board of Education and other school boards throughout central Ohio. It is these board members who decide policy in our classrooms. Visit your county Board of Elections and cast your vote. In Franklin County, the Board's offices are located at 1700 Morse Road. Early in-person and absentee voting for the Nov. 3 General Election begins Oct. 6 at your county's board of elections. You can find a list at www.sos.state.oh.us/SOS/elections/electionofficials/boeDirectory.aspx.

In Franklin County, the board is located at 1700 Morse Road. Mark your calendar. Here is the voting schedule:

- Oct. 6–23: Tuesday–Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.
- Oct. 19–Nov. 2: Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.
- Saturday, Oct. 31: 8 a.m.–4 p.m.
- Sunday, Nov. 1: 1 p.m.–5 p.m.

Professional Leave: Act Now

CEA is fortunate to have in its contract (Section 702.16) an item that provides us time to refresh ourselves with professional development. There is \$200,000 available to bargaining unit members each year to pursue professional development opportunities outside the school district. These include attending a conference or workshop or traveling in a teacher education program. Forms to apply for professional leave are available on the “Forms” section of the CEA website or the Intranet, along with the full leave guidelines and the deadline schedule for applications, based on the activity date. The fund is usually depleted before winter break; so if you have been thinking about some special training activity, apply as early as possible. Remember, the purpose of professional leave, whether it is for a conference, workshop or longer program, is to improve the performance of teachers in the classroom.

What If You Ran Out of Leave?

Sometimes a life-threatening illness drives us over the designated number of sick leave days. That's why we have Catastrophic Leave (Section 701.07). This is different from the Sick Leave Bank, which can grant up to 10 days at a time for teachers needing additional sick time for illnesses that are not life threatening. “Catastrophic Leave” is for colleagues who are experiencing very serious illnesses or for those who must take care of a family member experiencing such illness. An employee who has exhausted all sick and personal days and faces a life-threatening illness may receive as many as 45 donated days, if approved by the Joint Catastrophic Leave Committee.

Donations can be made directly to the bank by filling out a sick leave form, or days can be given for specific teachers. These days can be donated at any time. Please think of your colleagues and donate. It takes just 7.5 donated days to cover a two-week paycheck for an individual on catastrophic leave. Your donation of as little as one day will make a difference.

To donate, enter your name at the top of the CCS “Report of Employee Absence” form. In the “Comments” section, write the words, “Catastrophic Sick Leave Donation.” Be sure that you and your principal or supervisor sign the form. We often experience a shortage of donated days, so please consider making a donation.

Special Notes

- ❑ **Open Enrollment for your medical benefits will begin Oct. 6 and end Oct. 30. Everyone must reenroll even if you are not making any changes.** Look for emails and information mailed to your home from the CCS Employee Benefits Office. Also, see the Sept. 28 *Voice* for information on how to enroll.
- ❑ **Lace up your shoes to fight breast cancer. Register for the Making Strides Walk, scheduled for 7:30 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 11, starting from COSI, 333 W. Broad St. Free registration begins at 7 a.m.** Create your own team, or join ours, the CEA Dream Team. Go to www.makingstrideswalk.org/columbus to register. List “Columbus Education Association” as your team company. Call **Ezetta Murray** at 253-4731 to request your T-shirt.
- ❑ **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 www.ceaohio.org to download an application. Call **Hannah Milley** at 253-4731, if you have questions.
- ❑ **CEA's special election will be Oct. 27–Nov. 10 for District 4 and 5 Governors to fill unexpired terms ending in 2017. Qualified candidates must be minimum two-year CEA members working in those districts. Declare your candidacy Oct. 5–15 and start campaigning.** Find a form at www.ceaohio.org under “Forms” or call CEA.

CEA Pre-Paid Legal Services Plan OEA/NEA Attorney Referral Program

At Cloppert, Latanick, Sauter and Washburn, we have dedicated ourselves to teachers in and out of the classroom. Our experienced personal injury, divorce, dissolution, criminal, probate and real estate attorneys are available to you at moderate rates which are lower than we normally charge our private clients.

Contact us today and allow our experience to work for you.

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