

# The Voice

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Columbus Education Association

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## A Very Special Martin Luther King Awards Banquet

CEA is pleased to share that the keynote speaker for this year's Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Awards Dinner is none other than Martin Luther King III, the eldest son of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King. This year's banquet will be Thursday, Jan. 14, 2016, at the Hyatt Regency Columbus, so save the date.

Martin Luther King III was just 10 years old when his father was assassinated. In his adult years, he has remained committed to his parents' ideals, continuing their efforts for equality and justice for all people. King has traveled worldwide and has developed unique insight into the civil rights battles being waged every day.

King attended Morehouse College, just as did his father, his grandfather and his great-grandfather. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in political science in 1979 and, shortly afterward, the eldest King demonstrated his commitment to world-wide humanitarian concerns. At the request of the White House, he represented President Jimmy Carter in two official delegations to promote peace in foreign countries. Later, in 1984, as a member of the Board of Directors of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, King ventured to five poverty and drought-stricken African nations on a fact-finding tour. The outcome of the tour was the creation of the Africa Initiative, a program developed to end starvation in Africa.

In 2006, he founded the nonprofit organization Realizing the Dream, Inc., which merged with the King Center in 2010. King shared his father's message with a receptive global audience, spearheading nonviolence education workshops and programs in Bosnia Herzegovina, India, Israel, Kenya, Sri Lanka and the United States. Through a mix of nonviolence conferences and youth development programming, King, Realizing the Dream, and other members of the GEN II Global Peace Initiative have spread Dr. King's message to a new generation.

To commemorate the 44th anniversary of his father's assassination, King III highlighted youth violence prevention as a public health issue. His project, "April 4th Revisited: Saving Lives, Building Dreams," was an initiative launched in collaboration with the national Prevention Institute as a call-to-action to mark this as a day for building momentum for non-violence and peaceful communities nationwide.

King and his wife, Andrea Waters, have a daughter, Yolanda Renee King, the only granddaughter of Martin Luther King, Jr. In 2010, King III received the Ramakrishna Bajaj Memorial Global Award for outstanding contributions to the promotion of human rights at the 26th Anniversary Global Awards of the Priyadarshni Academy in Mumbai, India.



Martin Luther King III

This broad package of charter school reforms is intended to improve the accountability and transparency of Ohio's charter school system. Further, the bill seeks to ensure that bad sponsors and operators do not abuse the system. These meaningful improvements in HB 2 will begin to help protect students and public schools from Ohio's broken charter school laws.

"We applaud the state legislature for taking action at long last to improve the oversight and accountability of Ohio's charter schools," said Ohio Education Association President Becky Higgins. "With the enactment of stronger laws, the burden will now fall on the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to make sure sponsors and operators of charter schools fulfill their mission and provide positive educational outcomes for Ohio's students."

There is still more work to be done to fix Ohio's broken charter schools. For example, leaders in both chambers of the General Assembly have recently acknowledged there are problems with the current way in which charter schools are funded. It places an unfair burden on local school districts, which are forced to subsidize the cost of students who transfer to charters because state funding is insufficient to cover the full expense. In addition, ODE has acknowledged there is a problem with students having more than one identification number if they attend a charter school, which opens the door to potential fraud and abuse. The OEA looks forward to working with House and Senate lawmakers to address these issues.

The HB 2 conference committee report amendments were based on the Senate-passed version of the bill. Some of the notable amendments:

### Accountability

- Requires ODE training for charter school sponsors.
- Sponsors rated "ineffective" cannot sponsor new schools and must establish quality improvement plans.
- After three consecutive "ineffective" ratings, sponsorship authority is revoked.
- Sponsors rated "poor" have sponsorship authority revoked immediately.
- Clarifies that a request to change sponsors for schools is made to ODE; if request is denied, an appeal may be made to the State Board of Education.
- Strengthens oversight of blended learning charter schools by requiring sponsors to annually review the model as part of annual assurances to ODE.
- Clarifies that annual performance evaluation of operators begins with the 2015-16 school year and shall be published annually by ODE no later than Nov. 15.
- Clarifies that the governing authority of a charter school is solely responsible for development of the school's annual budget but may consult with their designated fiscal officer.
- Clarifies the requirement that all new charter schools must obtain a \$50,000 bond or guarantee prior to opening to cover the cost of an audit should the school close.
- Conversion charter school performance data on district report card addendum must include at least graduation rate, test passage and gap-closing.

### Transparency

- Requires annual reporting of expenditures by charter school sponsors and that the expenditure report be consid-

## HB 2: Long-Awaited Charter School Reform Package Passes Ohio House & Senate

*(As published in the OEA Legislative Update)*

The HB 2 conference committee report was agreed to by the Ohio House, 91-6, and by the Ohio Senate, 32-0. The passage of this long-awaited charter school reform bill is an important first step in overhauling Ohio's troubled charter schools.

ered during the evaluation of sponsors.

- Clarifies that verification of data in charter school financial disclosures is done through an annual financial audit.
- Requires student attendance records to be made available to the ODE, the Auditor of State and the school's sponsor to the extent permitted under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Requires governing board members to file a disclosure statement each year that names relatives or business associates employed by the sponsor, operator or a vendor contracting with the school.

#### Other

- Moves the deadline for the completion of a study of the California "similar student" measure to Dec. 1, 2016, requires a report and recommendations to the State Board of Education and the General Assembly and removes the requirement that the measure be implemented.
- Clarifies that furniture, computers, software, equipment or other personal property purchased by an operator with state funds that were paid to the operator by a charter school is the property of the charter school, not the operator (addresses Ohio Supreme Court ruling in White Hat case).
- Permits a public four-year university to sell services to a charter school they sponsor on a no-profit basis.

Social Security status of charter school employees hired by private operators: In conference committee, language was added to the bill that would exempt charter school employees hired by private operators from retirement system membership if the operator pays into Social Security. The provision in the bill reflects a compromise between the retirement systems and a charter school operator who has been paying into both STRS/SERS and Social Security. Beginning next school year, new employees with such an operator would be in Social Security only. Current charter employees who are contributing to state retirement systems are grandfathered and would continue to be members in STRS/SERS. HB 2 does not make any changes in retirement system membership, contributions or benefits of current or future school district employees.

Several legislators expressed opposition to the retirement system amendments, both in terms of policy and process. During House floor debate, members of both parties committed to a thorough review of the language to avoid unintended consequences that could harm teachers, school employees or the retirement systems.

## Another Great LA

We thank our Faculty Representatives for attending the October Legislative Assembly. This is where your FRs receive important information that you need to know, and where they share your concerns. We thank these FRs for taking the time to join us for this important monthly meeting:

Alpine ES, Art, Arts Impact MS, Avalon ES, Avondale ES, Beechcroft HS, Berwick PreK-8, Briggs HS, Broadleigh ES, Buckeye MS, Burroughs ES, CAHS, Cassidy ES, CEA, Cedarwood ES, Centennial HS, Clinton ES, Colerain ES, Columbus Africentric EC ES, Columbus Africentric EC SS, Columbus City Prep. School for Boys, Columbus City Prep. School for Girls, Columbus Downtown HS, Columbus Gifted Academy, Columbus North International HS 7-12, Columbus Scioto 6-12, Columbus Spanish Imm. K-6, Como ES, Devonshire ES, Dominion MS, Duxberry Park ES, Eakin ES, East HS, East Linden ES, Eastgate ES, Easthaven ES, Eastmoor Acad. HS, Fairmoor ES, Fairwood K-6, Forest Park ES, Gables ES, Georgian Heights ES, Guidance Counselors, Hamilton STEM Acad. K-6, Highland ES, Hilltonia MS, Hubbard Mastery School PreK-6, Hudson Comm. Ed. Center, Hudson St. Warehouse, Huy ES/A.G. Bell Program, I-PASS @ Linmoor, Independence HS, Indian Springs ES, Indianola Informal K-8, Innis ES, Johnson Park MS, Kingswood Center\*, Leawood ES, Liberty ES, Lincoln Park K-6, Lindbergh ES, Linden STEM Acad. PreK-6, Linden-McKinley STEM 7-12, Livingston K-6, LLI, Maize ES, Marion-Franklin HS, Medina MS, Mifflin HS, Mifflin MS, Moler K-6, Music, North Linden ES, Northland HS, Northtowne ES, Nurses, Oakland Park ES, Oakmont ES, Ohio Ave. ES, Olde Orchard ES, OT/PT, PAR, Parkmoor ES, Parsons K-6, Psychologists, Ridgeview MS, Salem ES, Scottwood ES, Shady Lane ES, Sherwood MS, Siebert K-6, South HS 7-12, South Mifflin STEM Acad PreK-6, Southwood K-6, Special Ed. Coordinators, Speech & Language, St. Vincent, Starling K-8, Stewart ES, Sullivant ES, Trevitt ES, Tutors, Valley Forge ES, Walnut Ridge HS, Watkins ES, Wedge-

wood MS, Weinland Park ES, West Broad ES, West HS, West Mound ES, Westgate ES, Westmoor MS, Whetstone HS, Windsor STEM Acad. PreK-6, Winterset ES and Woodward Park MS.

## Know Your Governor: Kim Ogilbee

Kim Ogilbee's son is about to become a teacher. There is little doubt his mom will remind him how important his labor association is—especially as unions face ever-increasing criticism. Ogilbee's own involvement in CEA changed her professional life, particularly when she saw the power of large numbers of educators convening at the Ohio Statehouse to prevent a bad law, Senate Bill 5, from getting onto the books.



Kim Ogilbee

"I saw the need for teachers to stand together in order to help themselves and their students in what has increasingly become a hostile political environment," Ogilbee said.

Now a District 6 CEA Governor, Ogilbee stands strong at Starling Pk-8, where she teaches sixth-grade science and social studies. Before that, she taught at Johnson Park, Wedgewood, Mifflin and Hilltonia MSs.

Her involvement in CEA was gradual. "You hear about CEA when you begin with the district," she said. "Then you start to notice what CEA does. And finally, CEA was there to support me when I needed advice and support."

Following the defeat of SB 5, Kim decided to step it up, serving as a delegate to the OEA Legislative Assembly and a Faculty Representative. "I decided it was time for me to formally give back to the people who had been there for me and to pay it forward to my son and other new teachers like him," she said.

Ogilbee's goal as a governor is to "be transparent. And by that I mean be available personally and make available to teachers information that is pertinent to them. Too often, we hear about the 'Office.' I want to be the face of the CEA Office to District 6 and be the window to what goes on there."

"One of my proudest moments as a member of CEA happened when marching with our group during the Pride Parade in 2014. As we worked our way through the streets of downtown, people were happy to see us. They were shouting that they loved teachers. One of my students at the time ran out into the street to hug me and tell me he loved me. I still get goosebumps! The people of Columbus and their children are what matters. Not the legislators."

## Special Notes

- ❑ **Open Enrollment for your medical benefits ends on Friday, Oct. 30.** All CCS employees are required to complete an insurance enrollment form, even if they are not making any changes to their benefits. You may do this virtually (Core program only) or in person (Core and the Voluntary programs). To enroll virtually, first make a Call Center appointment at [www.iSelectSchedule.com](http://www.iSelectSchedule.com). Use enrollment #61436 and log into your Employee Self-Service Account.
- ❑ **The CCS United Way campaign is under way.** When you authorize a payroll deduction to support United Way, you are helping your students, their families and many other people across our communities to obtain health care, job training, access to preschool and much more. Please fill out the pledge materials and help us "Live United."
- ❑ **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](http://www.ceaohio.org) to download an application. Call **Hannah Milley** at 253-4731, if you have questions.
- ❑ **Campaigning has begun** for CEA's special election, to be held **Oct. 27-Nov. 10 for District 4 and 5 Governors** to fill unexpired terms ending in 2017. Your participation in this election is central to the work we do. We thank everyone who has chosen to run.

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

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