

The CEA Voice

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Columbus Education Association

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NCLB Will Soon be left behind with New ESEA

Almost 14 years since the signing of No Child Left Behind, Congress is within sight of ending that broken era. After weeks of negotiations, Senate and House education committee leaders announced they have a bill to finally replace No Child Left Behind.

NEA President Lily Eskelsen García applauded the bipartisan and bicameral work of Congress to finally replace NCLB, but called on Congress to focus on the following three core goals in the next ESEA:

- ❶ Closing opportunity gaps for students by creating a new accountability system that includes an opportunity 'dashboard';
- ❷ Giving students more time to learn by addressing over-testing, decoupling statewide tests and high-stakes decision making, and giving states and school districts flexibility to determine which tests best inform instruction and help students learn; and
- ❸ Ensuring that educators' voices are part of the decision-making process at all levels: federal, state and local.

"We look forward to working with members of both the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate when they return from Thanksgiving break to ensure that we produce a final bill that, when signed by the President, gives every student the opportunity, support, tools and time to learn."

Members of the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate are meeting to work out the details and are expected to vote in early December. Your lawmakers need to hear from you on what is best for students and classrooms in Ohio. We need you to take action to help win final approval of the ESEA reauthorization. Go to <http://educationvotes.nea.org/get-esea-right/> to urge your member of Congress to vote YES on ESEA.

When Bad Weather Arrives

Last year, the CEA Board of Governors adopted an official CEA Calamity Day Policy. Please note the following: When the Columbus City School District determines it is necessary to close schools, the CEA office will operate on a two-hour delay. The office will open at

11 a.m. and close at 5 p.m.

If the Columbus City School District closes schools early, the CEA office will close at 4 p.m. If

Franklin County is on a level-two emergency, the CEA office will be closed.



Know Your Rights

When your administrator pressures you to quickly provide a written or verbal statement about an incident that you witnessed or were involved in, you



have the right to call CEA. Do not be insubordinate, but do remind your administrator that you have the right to representation before making any statements.

If you are asked to meet with your principal or supervisor for an unspecified reason, take a moment to step back. It is your right under the law (NLRB v. Weingarten) to:

- Ask the principal or supervisor to clarify the reason for the meeting. Don't refuse to attend, but ask why.
- Get representation. If the meeting becomes disciplinary in nature, you are entitled to call CEA, even if your principal says you shouldn't or can't.
- Have the administrator reschedule the meeting at a time when the representative of your choice can attend.

You have the right to the representative of your choice, not your principal's choice. You can be represented by your FR or by a CEA staff member.

CEA suggests representation any time the purpose of the meeting is for one of the following situations:

- Any type of disciplinary action
- Investigation meeting
- Reprimand
- Infraction of a work rule or board policy
- Questions concerning request or use of sick or personal leave
- Allegations of abuse
- Parental, student or community complaint

For more information about professional behavior, read Article 404 of our Negotiated Agreement. Questions? Call CEA at 253-4731.

Know Your Contract

Classroom Visitors and Parent Conferences

We know the possibilities are endless when our students' families and caregivers visit our schools. It's important to maximize their involvement in their children's educations. Unfortunately, in today's high-stakes world of education, visitors can disrupt the learning process in our classroom. The *Master Agreement* provides you rights regarding visitation to your classroom in Article 207. Note the following:

- All visitors to a school must check in at the office.
- If you are expecting a visitor, you should be advised by the office that he or she has arrived and is on the way.
- If you are not expecting a visitor, he or she should be escorted to your classroom.
- You have the right to reschedule a visitor when prior arrangements have not been made.
- No electronic devices will be used to make a record of the visit or conference except by agreement of the teacher.

For more information on visitation to your classroom, reference Article 207 of the *Master Agreement*. If you are experiencing issues with classroom visitation, please speak with your Senior FR or call the CEA office at 253-4731.

Declare Your Candidacy for Spring Elections

Spring CEA Elections are approaching. An elected position is a great way to give back to your Association and keep us strong. Starting on Jan. 4, you may declare your candidacy for the following Association positions: CEA President; CEA Vice President; Governors in Districts 1, 2, 7, 8 and 9; High School Governor-At-Large; 2016 NEA Delegates, 2016 NEA State Delegates At-Large and 2016–2017 OEA Delegates.

Note: The current District 1 Governor will resign effective July 31, 2016. The newly-elected governor will take office on August 1, 2016.

Declarations will continue until Feb. 16, and formal campaigning will be from Feb. 17–Mar. 14. Members will vote from Mar. 1–14, with votes tabulated by the Elections Committee on Mar. 15. In the event of a run-off election, the formal campaigning period will be from Apr. 4–25. Voting for run-off elections will take place from Apr. 12–25, with votes tallied on Apr. 26.

Consider running for an elected position. Your involvement will ensure that the needs and concerns of our Association are heard at the local, state and national level. Declaration of Candidacy forms are available at www.ceaohio.org under the "forms" tab, or from Judy Nelson at (614) 253-4731. For questions, contact CEA Elections Committee Chair Neil Moore at (614) 264-2188.

Meet your CEA Governor Jeannette Johnson, District 5

Jeannette has used CEA as a resource since she began teaching at Koebel ES in 1989. When teachers there did not get all the supplies they needed, she turned to her FR and District Governor. They volunteered to help resolve the problem. "It was one of our big concerns because teachers have out-of-pocket supply costs," she said. Soon, with CEA's help, her building received additional computers and textbooks.



Jeannette Johnson

Colleagues also began urging her to get more involved in

the Association.

Ultimately, Johnson became an Alternate Faculty Representative, and then went on to become her school's Senior FR. Through her service, she began to learn more about the art of diplomacy. "I've always worked with all the administrators," she said. "We try to take care of a lot of things in-house. It's all about building that relationship."

Johnson has taught at Koebel, Stewart and Berwick PreK–8, where she now teaches third grade. She has served on many committees, and currently is a member of the Joint Evaluation Panel.

During the fight to defeat Senate Bill 5 Johnson was on the front lines. She was amazed at how involved teachers became, bringing along their families to Statehouse rallies and putting in lots of hours beyond the school day.

In 2014–2015, Johnson joined the NEA's Teacher Leadership Initiative. She was also invited to sit on a panel with the state superintendent and OEA to represent members in a statewide discussion about testing. After that she said, "Everything just came together, and I felt I had a lot more to offer."

As a Governor, Johnson said she enjoys educating teachers about the Association. "I tell the first-year teachers that you have to get involved. You have to know what's coming. We have to have a place at the table."

Special Notes

- ❑ **The 2014–2015 school year was the last opportunity for bargaining unit members to participate in PAS.** Due to the late release of the 2014–2015 PARCC assessment results by the Ohio Department of Education, the PAS evaluation process has been delayed. CCS has received the state data and the PAS Committee has initiated the process. The next step is to send all of the data files to the external evaluator. More information will come regarding timelines for notifications of PAS awards, and the appeal process will be communicated to all PAS participants.
- ❑ **The Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Awards Dinner** is set for **Thursday, Jan. 14**, at the **Hyatt Regency Columbus**. During the evening we honor the memory of Dr. King, and we also present awards to individuals who exemplify the spirit of his work. This event is always well attended, so make sure you purchase your tickets early. Tickets are \$30 each with tables of eight at \$240. Contact CEA to reserve a seat. **Martin Luther King III will be the keynote speaker.**
- ❑ **The Joint Professional Leave Committee** reports that bargaining unit members' outstanding professional leave requests exceed the amount of money remaining in the fund. **No further applications will be accepted for this school year.** Your Association will provide information on dates and deadlines for the Professional Leave fund for the 2016–2017 school year later this spring.
- ❑ Join Officer Chantay Boxill from the **Columbus Police Department's Gang Unit** to learn how gangs impact your students, school environment, student achievement and more. "Gang Awareness" will be presented on **Tuesday, Dec. 1**, and **Wednesday, Dec. 2**, from **4:30–6:30 p.m.** at **Columbus Downtown HS**. To reserve your spot and earn .2 CEUs, register in CiMs for PAR Professional Development—"Gang Awareness".
- ❑ **Miami University's Project *Dragonfly*** is accepting applications for 2016 Earth Expeditions graduate courses that offer extraordinary experiences in 15 countries throughout the world. New in 2016 are courses in Galápagos and Paraguay. These courses offer firsthand experiences at critical field sites in Africa, Asia, Australia and the Americas. The due date to apply is Jan. 28. For more information, go to <http://EarthExpeditions.MiamiOH.edu/formaleducator>.