

# The CEA Voice

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Columbus Education Association

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## Ohio Ranking Slips

Ohio's schools rank 23rd in the nation. In 2008, we ranked 5th. This change in ranking was big news during the past week or so, and some observers are blaming our governor. During John Kasich's tenure, unemployment has decreased—but child poverty has increased. Progress Ohio notes that nearly 1 in 4 of our children lives in poverty.



The ranking from *Education Week*, which released its annual *Quality Counts* report on Jan. 6, stated Ohio's score was 74.9, a grade of C. Last year things did not look great, either. Ohio ranked 18th with a score of 75.8. The report notes that Ohio has some of the largest achievement gaps between students living in poverty and peers with higher incomes. On national test scores, our state ranks 43rd in the nation. The biggest gaps are in math and reading. In this specific area, Ohio slipped from 16th last year to 25th this year.

The report also gives Ohio a C+ in the Chance-for-Success category, a ranking of 27th, a C (ranking 20th) in School Finance and a C- for K-12 Achievement (ranking it 25th nationally).

Driving this trend are changes in key indicators based on state education spending, family income, education of parents, preschool enrollment and graduation rates. The Annie E. Casey Foundation reported that Ohio's child-poverty rate climbed last year to 23 percent, compared with 18 percent in 2008. Nearly 1 in 4 of our students lives in households that have family incomes below \$20,000. In Sept. 2015 the Children's Defense Fund-Ohio (CDFO) drew attention to a U.S. Census Bureau report showing that 593,831 children lived in poverty in Ohio in 2014, an increase from 591,328 in 2013. CDFO noted that child poverty rates declined for Hispanic, white and Asian children, but black children saw an increase and continue to have the highest child poverty rate.

Ohio Sen. Peggy Lehner, who chairs the Senate's Education Committee, has told news media outlets that the state has a lot of work to do. She noted that Ohio has eight large cities with escalating poverty rates. She told one newspaper, "We took our eye off the ball of education during the recession."

CDFO outlined policy changes that must include pro-work tax credits, more SNAP benefits, better housing subsidies and expanded funding for quality childcare. Lehner noted that the state has been working on a plan to improve student achievement, including new Common Core academic standards, online testing, the third-grade reading guarantee and teacher evaluations that include student performance. Ohio has allocated \$100 million over the last several years towards improving access to early childhood education and improving third-grade reading levels.

CEA continues to participate in reform efforts, advocating for strong support for teachers at all levels and for appropriate measurement of teacher and student progress.

In Columbus schools, 91 percent of last year's third-graders passed the state reading test. But so much more work is needed. Read more about the report at <http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/2016/shr/16shr.oh.h35.pdf>.

## Article 211

Columbus City Schools is gearing up for its staffing and transfer process known as Article 211. Article 211 in the *CEA Master Agreement* details how transfers within our district will take place. It spells out how staff reductions are handled. Take the time to read over this very important article.

Here are a few important upcoming dates:

- Jan. 19—Job Share packets due to HR
- Jan. 22—Requests for Voluntary Staff Reduction based on "Philosophical Differences" due to Victoria Frye in HR (270 East Street) by the close of business. (**Only signed hard copy letters will be accepted. No emails or faxes.**) Remember, this is only a request and must be approved by HR. **No voluntary staff reductions will be considered after this date.**
- Feb. 2 and 3—Article 211 Training for Senior Faculty Reps and Administrators (**FRs: In order to be a part of the Interview Panel you must receive this training.**)

The entire Article 211 Calendar is now posted on the CCS Intranet and the CEA website. CEA also emailed the calendar to our members. If CEA does not have your current email address, you can email us at [tellcea@ceahio.org](mailto:tellcea@ceahio.org) and ask to be added to our list.

An addition to this year's process is the Priority Schools and Department Round. This Round will occur prior to Round 1 and will only list vacancies in priority schools and departments. There will still be two full rounds with all vacancies listed after the Priority Schools and Department Round.

Also, if you are a new hire and you interviewed at the building and were selected by the administrator, you **will not** be staff reduced. If you want to be considered for staff reduction, you must make that request known to Human Resources by Jan. 22.

CEA will keep you posted of any changes or additions to the Article 211 process. If you have any questions, call (614) 253-4731.

## STOP and Tell Your Principal: I Would Like Representation

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

This is NOT insubordination. It is YOUR RIGHT to have representation before making any statements.

A number of our members have needlessly incriminated themselves because of statements they provided to their administrators. If you get called into a meeting with your principal, supervisor or district investigator 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 prin-

principal says you shouldn't or don't need to.

- Set the meeting at a time when your representative can attend. The administrator is obligated to do so.
- Take up to five school days to schedule the meeting to make sure your representative can be there.

You have the right to the representative of your choice, not your principal's choice. You can be represented by your FR or by an officer or staff member from the CEA office. 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. Remember you are not required to give a written or verbal statement to your administrator or district investigator without representation from your union. Questions? Call CEA.

### Three Work Days for 190 Return

One of the new provisions that was collectively bargained in the 2015–2017 CEA Master Agreement includes a timely return of 190s. Article 208.12 requires principals to “return all 190 Corrective Measure forms to the originating staff member with the corrective action noted within three (3) work days of receiving it unless there are extenuating circumstances, in which case it shall be returned reasonably promptly.”

When you turn in a completed 190, make sure you sign and date the document. Your administrator is required to return the signed and dated 190 with the corrective action noted on the form three work days from the date it was turned in. If you are not receiving your 190 back within three work days after you've turned it in to your administrator, please call the CEA office at (614) 253-4731.

### Dues Deductions 2015

Tax time is coming. Some CEA members may be able to deduct a portion of their union dues on their income tax returns. These are considered unreimbursed employee expenses and may be deducted on Schedule A (Form 1040) Line 21. This type of deduction is subject to a minimum which must amount to more than 2 percent of your adjusted gross income. Consult IRS Publication 529 for more details. Visit [www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p529.pdf](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p529.pdf). Search for “union dues.” The table above shows your deduction for NEA, OEA and CEA dues for the 2015 tax year.

<b>Full Dues</b>	
Plan A (21 Pays)	\$835.20
Plan B (26 Pays)	\$834.49
Switched from:	
Plan A to B	\$777.54
Plan B to A	\$892.15
<b>Half Dues</b>	\$473.77
<b>Quarter Dues</b>	\$279.56

### Educator Tax Deduction Made Permanent

It is tax time, and we have some good news. Congress has made the educator tax deduction permanent. It allows you to deduct eligible unreimbursed classroom spending up to \$250. Now the deduction is indexed to inflation and includes professional development as an eligible expense.

So many of us dip into our own pockets for classroom supplies for our students and many teachers pay for their own professional workshops and classes. During the 2012–2013 school year, the National School Supply and Equipment Association found that educators spent a total of \$1.6 billion of their own money to help meet their students' needs. The average teacher spent \$485, and 10 percent spent \$1,000 or more.

As you file your tax return, keep this in mind: You may be able to deduct personal expenses related to your teaching job. Qualifying expenses include books, supplies, computers, software and supplemental materials. According to the IRS, you are an eligible educator if, for the tax year, you are a K–12:

- Teacher
- Counselor
- Aide
- Instructor
- Principal
- You work at least 900 hours a school year in a school that provides elementary or secondary education as determined under state law.

Go to <http://www.irs.gov/publications/p529/index.html> to learn more.

### PAR CEU Classes

The Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) office will be offering a series of professional growth opportunities for teachers of all skill and grade levels. Participants will receive 0.2 CEUs and materials will be provided.

Date	Topic
Jan. 19 or 20	Educating Homeless Children and Youth (Project Connect)
Feb. 2 or 3	Parent and Student Engagement Strategies that Work
Feb. 16 or 17	Special Education/E.D: Identification and Intervention
Mar. 1 or 2	Mentoring African American Males
Mar. 15 or 16	Learning for All: Differentiating in the Classroom
Apr 5 or 6	Getting to Know our ESL Students: Background Information & Strategies that Work
Apr 19 or 20	Using Technology in the Classroom

Register today on PD Planner for any or all of these sessions. Classes will be held Tuesdays or Wednesdays from 4:30–6:30 p.m. at Columbus Downtown HS, 364 S. Fourth St. Call the PAR office at 365-5110 for more information.

### Special Notes

- ❑ If you are retiring, you have until Feb. 1 to apply for enhanced, or super, severance pay. If you are retiring this school year, you must notify the district of your retirement intentions by Feb. 1, 2016, or risk losing some of your benefits. Notification letters go to the CCS Human Resources Department. The letter should include your name, your employee ID and your last day of service. You should hand deliver the letter and ask for a copy to be time stamped for your records.
- ❑ Feb. 1 is the deadline to request a preferred teaching position for the 2016–2017 school year. Make your request in writing to your building principal, per Section 211.05 of the CEA Master Agreement. There are no guarantees, but our Agreement gives members this opportunity.
- ❑ Declare your candidacy through Feb. 16 for 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. Campaigning ends Mar. 14. Members will vote from Mar. 1–14, with votes tabulated on Mar. 15. If necessary, run-off campaigning will be from Apr. 4–25, with voting from Apr. 12–25. Candidacy Forms will be available at [www.ceaohio.org](http://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.
- ❑ Mar. 5 is the deadline to apply for a continuing contract for the 2016–2017 school year. The form is located on the CCS Intranet under Human Resources/HR Administration/Mira Wright or can be downloaded at [www.ccsob.us/HRAdministration.aspx](http://www.ccsob.us/HRAdministration.aspx) under Licensing/Contract. We recommend you hand deliver to Human Resources and receive a time-stamped receipt.