

The Voice

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Columbus Education Association

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Instead of Fear, Love

Martin Luther King III delivered this year's keynote address Jan. 14 to more than 700 CEA members, administrators, students and community leaders gathered at the Hyatt Regency to acknowledge Columbus' social justice advocates. CEA presented Pastor Frederick V. LaMarr of Family Missionary Baptist Church with the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award and visionary language arts teacher Yolanda M. Stewart, Ph.D., with the Helen Jenkins Davis Award. The Davis Award is named for Columbus City Schools' first black teacher. The event was nearly sold out as CEA, for the first time, featured Dr. King's son, Martin Luther King III.

Martin Luther King III was ten years old when his father was assassinated on April 4, 1968. Six years later, Martin's paternal grandmother was killed while playing the church organ.

Young Martin could have spent his life living in fear—had it not been for the example of his elders. On Apr. 8, 1968, still reeling from her husband's death, Coretta Scott King gathered her children and took them to Memphis to lead a long-planned march. In 1974, 15-year-old Martin accompanied his grandfather, Rev. Martin Luther King, Sr., to jail to visit the man who had murdered his wife.

King recalled that day to the CEA audience at the 37th annual dinner honoring his father. His grandfather, he said, could have responded with violence. Instead, his response was, 'Son, I'm gonna pray for you. I know and believe prayer changes things.' "My grandfather used to say, 'I refused to allow another man's actions to reduce me to hatred. I am every man's brother.'"

King, founder of Realizing the Dream, Inc., now merged with The King Center, and an ardent and much-honored civil rights activist who has traveled the world carrying his father's philosophy and vision, brought to attendees a message about the power of empathy. King recalled recent events that have divided people including recent police shootings, the display of the Confederate flag on government buildings, increasing incarceration of the poor and a shift in values visible in violent cartoons, video games, tattoos and modes of dress.

King said he has seen how choices made in the heat of the moment make a difference in outcomes. He contrasted the aftermath of the police shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson,

Missouri, which erupted into a media circus and quick judgment of the victim, with that of the shootings of nine church members in Charleston, South Carolina, by a man who first sat attending services. Two days after the church shooting, surviving church members gathered and prayed in faith and forgiveness. "A tectonic shift occurred in the nation," said King. "In 48 hours, Confederate flags around the nation began to come down."

King urged more embracing of "the power of the mind" to stop, think and react in a nonviolent way. Perhaps it will lead to priorities that make sense: support of teachers with adequate resources, bolstering of efforts within the black community to build capacity for education and employment, listening and sharing our mutual needs and concerns and altering our responses to violence.

CEA President Tracey Johnson reminded the audience that eleven CCS students have lost their lives to senseless violence this school year and called for a moment of silence. The gesture echoed King's remark, "We need to think about the things that we do. We've got to use the mind constructively as a society, so that we eradicate what my dad and mom called the triple evils—poverty, racism and militarism and violence."

To view pictures of the event, go to <http://bit.ly/ceamlk2016>.

State of the District

When the East HS Marching Band stopped swaying and playing, the house lit up with applause. A full auditorium of teachers, fellow students and other supporters of the Columbus City Schools waved CCS pennants and cheered, celebrating the hard work of the student musicians.

Those moments comprised only one interlude of acknowledgement during a 2 1/2-hour "State of District" showcase Jan. 12. School board members, CCS executives, school principals, labor association representatives, community leaders and alumni spoke, live and through recorded videos, of their contributions to the District and its impact on their lives. Superintendent Dan Good capped off the evening with a recap of the District's vision for the future.

The program began with an extensive buffet prepared by the culinary students from the Columbus Downtown HS. Guests toured booths featuring community partners and various schools touting their students' work. The main program featured student performances by singers, dancers and musicians from across the District.

Emcees for the evening were CCS student ambassadors, hand-selected high school seniors from every CCS high school. The message of the evening was one of solidarity, featuring the motto "Columbus Proud" as presenters noted CCS' numerous programs, including the expansion of pre-kindergarten, mentoring, specialty schools, early college credit, career-technical education, free breakfast, the performing arts, STEM and athletics.

Here are some highlights:

+ Columbus Board of Education President Gary Baker

noted that the District is growing, and community organizations and leaders can provide keys to its future success.

- + Dale Heydlauff, AEP Foundation President, highlighted AEP's funding of the Credits Count program, providing college-level STEM courses for high school students.
- + Alesia Gillison, CCS Chief Academic Officer, announced that 92 percent of CCS third graders met state reading standards last year, and that 1,700 four-year-olds now attend pre-kindergarten in the District. Superintendent Good emphasized several new efforts:
- + Linking students to the workplace and job training.
- + Introducing a new mobile app that contains district information and alerts.
- + Forming new efforts to make school neighborhoods safer and expand adult education centers.
- + Developing a new effort to engage alumni.

Dr. Good also announced that CCS' mentoring initiative has achieved White House recognition. "All of this," Good said, "is how we are turning education into empowerment for our students."

Take the Professional Staff Survey

Spring is coming, and with it comes the Article 211 selective interview process. Whether you have to interview this spring or you are thinking about interviewing, we know you want to make an informed decision. What better way to find out about a potential new school than from the CEA members that currently work there.

Because this is important for our members, it is part of the contract. The *CEA Master Agreement* provides for a district-wide evaluation of each school by the membership. Members will be able to rate work locations on professional environment, democratic procedures, teacher involvement and other important areas. Members will also have the opportunity to provide additional open-ended, anonymous responses on the survey.

The 2015–2016 annual staff survey will be administered online. An email containing the link to the survey was sent to members' non-CCS email addresses on Friday, Jan. 22. The survey will close on Sunday, Feb. 7, at 11:59 p.m. If you did not get the email message or if CEA does not have your current non-CCS email address, send it to tellcea@ceaohio.org to participate in the survey. You will be able to access this survey from home or from work.

The survey results for each school/building will be published on CEA's website, so you can make informed decisions during the 211 process.

When you complete the survey, you will automatically be entered into a drawing to win one of five \$100 VISA gift cards or one of twenty gas cards worth \$25 each.

Article 211 Training

Article 211 Training for Faculty Reps and Administrators is approaching. In order to participate in the Article 211 Interview Panel, everyone on a building's or unit's panel must receive the appropriate training. If the Senior Faculty Representative is unable to attend the training, an alternate FR should attend in their place. The trainings listed below will take place at the **Hudson Distribution Center, Professional Library**, 737 E. Hudson Street:

- ◆ **Tuesday, Feb. 2, 9–11 a.m.** (Div III, Div IV, Div V and Div VI) **1–3 p.m.** (Departments)
- ◆ **Wednesday, Feb. 3, 9–11 a.m.** (Elementary Div I) **1–3 p.m.** (Elementary Div II)

Administrators should provide coverage for FRs to attend this important training.

The \$1 Million State Superintendent

The new state superintendent is to be paid \$1 million? Just make sure he would be required to meet the same evaluation mandates as teachers.

Recent conversation among political leaders in Columbus as they search for a new state superintendent indicate that the pay for that position, at just under \$200,000, is too low. Key Education Committee leaders in the House, Senate and State Board of Education have discussed higher pay, even up to \$1 million.

They are asking themselves the question, 'If we pay Urban Myer \$6.5 million a year to coach the Buckeyes, why should we only pay the head of Ohio schools \$200,000?' We think they should be asking the same thing about every teacher in the state. Educators should be paid what they are worth. It seems ironic that the state superintendent salary discussion is ignoring the heavy lift teachers are subject to when it comes to evaluation and assessment of their performance—some of which is based on variables completely out of their control like poverty, parental involvement and ever-changing state mandates.

If the new state superintendent were subject to the same evaluation and assessment as those at the local level, it would provide much-needed perspective on the ridiculous nature of these mandates and how very little they have to do with the challenges of teaching students in need. Budgets are about priorities. If the state has \$1 million for the salary of one person, then it should have \$1 million to ensure every child in Columbus City Schools has the resources needed to ensure success. If leaders in Columbus believe educators should be paid more, let's make sure those resources support all educators—those on the front lines and those in the ivory tower—both are equally important to the success of students and our state.

Special Notes

- ❑ **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 *Master Agreement*. There are no guarantees, but our agreement gives members this opportunity.
- ❑ **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.**
- ❑ **You may be able to deduct a portion of your CEA dues on your income tax return.** Dues are considered an unreimbursed employee expense 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 two percent of your adjusted gross income.

| Full Dues | |
|------------------|----------|
| 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 |
| Half Dues | \$473.77 |
| Quarter Dues | \$279.56 |

Consult IRS Publication 529 for more details. Visit <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p529.pdf>. Search for "union dues."

- ❑ **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 under Licensing/Contract. We recommend you hand deliver to Human Resources and receive a time-stamped receipt.
- ❑ **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 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.