

The CEA Voice

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Columbus Education Association

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KidsOhio.org Will Be Missed

An important, locally based education policy analysis



organization is closing its doors. KidsOhio.org, a non-partisan, privately funded education policy analysis organization, will shut down as of Dec. 31. KidsOhio was created in 2002 by Abigail Wexner, and has been led since its inception by attorney Mark Real. The organization has focused on accurate

reporting about the condition of public education in Central Ohio. Real and his team have always striven to keep politics out of this process, relying on the numbers to frame the story. In Columbus, this has meant a focus on the problems faced by the children who attend our schools, and spot-on analysis of the trends—such as the increase in charter-school enrollment—that have affected us.

CCS has many reasons to be grateful to KidsOhio. For instance, with financial help from J.P. Morgan Chase, it studied the enrollment trends and successes of our career-technical education programs. Its conclusion was that these long-standing successful programs needed a marketing and publicity boost to help even more students. KidsOhio analysts published fact sheets dissecting Ohio's School Report Cards and highlighting the successes that have led to student improvement on standardized testing and toward the Third-Grade Reading Guarantee.

Most recently, KidsOhio provided factual information for the public about the district's need for a levy. It shared voter turnout numbers, revealing that only 1 in 6 eligible voters had been supporting Columbus school levies. It assisted with public forums to find out why the numbers have been low and helped to answer questions about the goals of Issue 57, the multi-pronged tax issue voters approved last month.

Your Association has always been appreciative of the unbiased, non-partisan approach that Real and KidsOhio have taken towards their reporting. Real received CEA's "Friend of Education Award" in 2004 for his involvement with KidsOhio. We hope that the example set by KidsOhio will inspire policymakers and leaders, and remain the gold standard for everyone who truly wants our students to succeed. KidsOhio's reports will remain accessible online for the next two years.

NEA: Nomination "Out of Touch"

We may soon see a U.S. Education Secretary who has very little, if any, experience with public education. Betsy DeVos supports charter schools, attended and has sent her children to private schools, and has no training or experience in education whatsoever.

The President-elect announced the nomination Nov. 23, saying "...we will reform the U.S. education system and break the bureaucracy that is holding our

children back so that we can deliver world-class education and school choice to all families."

But we know better. Billionaire DeVos is best known for her anti-public education campaigns. Her organization, the American Federation for Children, is the "social welfare" tax-exempt arm of the non-profit group the Alliance for School Choice. The Alliance touts that, along with its state-affiliated PACs, it contributed to 121 races in 12 states in the general election to support pro-school choice candidates. In 2016 DeVos and her husband gave \$2.7 million to Republican candidates and nothing to Democrats. DeVos is also one of the funders of the Mackinac Center, an anti-union Michigan think-tank.

In 2000, DeVos and her husband, Richard DeVos, Jr., unsuccessfully sought to change the Michigan constitution to allow private school voucher programs to siphon money from public schools. DeVos and her husband, who is the son of Amway founder Richard DeVos, established a Michigan charter school built focused on aviation.

In August, the Detroit Free Press published a story that said, "Michigan taxpayers poured nearly \$1 billion a year into charter schools — but state laws regulating charters are among the nation's weakest, and the state demands little accountability in how taxpayer dollars are spent and how well children are educated." *The Free Press'* yearlong investigation revealed "that Michigan's lax oversight has enabled a range of abuses in a system now responsible for more than 140,000 Michigan children."

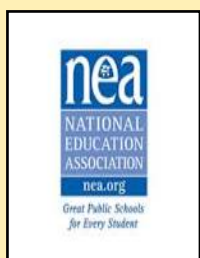
In, 2002, DeVosJr., a speech at the conservative Heritage Foundation advocating for a state-by-state strategy to expand vouchers and school choice by rewarding legislators who agreed, and punishing those who didn't.

Additionally, the DeVos family also supports anti-LGBT causes, including donating millions to Focus on the Family, a group that supports "conversion therapy" to change the sexual orientation of gays and lesbians. The controversial therapy is strongly opposed by the American Psychiatric Association as well as and other medical and civil rights organizations.

NEA President Lily Eskelsen García reacted sharply to President-Elect Donald Trump's nomination, saying: "The Trump administration has demonstrated just how out of touch it is with what works best for students, parents, educators and communities."

Bargaining Priorities Survey Closes Soon

CEA members were sent a link to the Bargaining Priorities Survey to their personal email addresses on Friday, Dec. 2. The survey will remain open until 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 18. For security reasons, members cannot access the survey from a CCS computer or the CCS network. Members who do not have a home computer or a non-CCS e-mail address may complete the survey at the CEA office. Office hours are 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Monday–Friday. If you did not receive the email containing the survey link, please be sure to check the bulk, SPAM, and clutter files for your email account. If you have not received the link to the survey, please email bargaining@ceaohio.org.



MLK Dinner Tickets Going Fast

Our annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Awards Dinner is almost here. Tickets to this event go very fast. Call CEA today and make your reservation. The 38th annual event is Thursday, Jan. 12, 2017, at the Hyatt Regency Columbus. Tickets are \$30 per person, or \$240 for a table of eight.

This year, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award goes to Bishop Jerome Ross, Sr. of Triedstone Missionary Baptist Church. Art teacher Kenya Davis will receive the Helen Jenkins Davis Award. This year's keynote is cutting-edge historian Michael Eric Dyson, author of many books, including *April 4, 1968*, which contextualizes Dr. King's legacy.

OEA RA: "Big Fights to Come."

More than seventy CEA members represented you as delegates at the Ohio Education Association Representative Assembly (RA) Saturday, Dec. 3. The OEA RA is the policy-making body of OEA. The RA meets biannually in the fall and spring to establish OEA policies and objectives, elect officers, establish dues, adopt a budget, adopt/update its legislative program and act on resolutions, new business items and conduct necessary business.

"There are going to be fights," warned OEA President Becky Higgins of the drastically altered political landscape, "Big fights to come." Higgins spoke at length about Betsy DeVos, the President-elect's nominee for Secretary of the US Department of Education. Calling the school choice champion's nomination "unacceptable," Higgins described the DeVos appointment as "tantamount to having the fox guard the chicken coop." Decrying the current teacher evaluation system's over reliance on student test scores, Higgins noted the opportunity under the Every Student Succeeds Act to create an evaluation system that "puts an emphasis on rewarding good teachers and helping teachers grow in their jobs and improve."

Vice President Scott DiMauro laid out OEA's legislative priorities for the year. Most important is the continuation of our fight against unfair charter school funding, and pushing for more accountability, especially when it comes to online charter schools' attendance. Other recommended legislative priorities include working on ESSA implementation, changing OTES, and addressing the implicit bias in school discipline, particularly the school-to-prison pipeline. "If there's a silver lining in this election," said DiMauro, "it's that 77 percent of school levies on the ballot in November were passed by voters."

RA delegates soundly voted to endorse Carol Corruthers for reelection to the active member seat on STRS. For the two retired member seats, delegates also voted to endorse incumbent Bob Stein and newcomer Rita Walters.

Delegates approved two emergency New Business Items (NBIs) prior to the end of the RA. The first NBI directed OEA to "officially and vehemently oppose" the appointment of DeVos as US Secretary of Education. It further directs OEA to develop an action plan for enlisting its members and allies in an organized campaign to oppose the nomination. The second NBI tasks OEA to develop an online "Legislative Scorecard" on all members of the Ohio Legislature that outlines their votes on legislation that is important to and has an impact on OEA members.

Additionally, RA delegates and management staff contributed more than \$20,000 to the OEA Fund for Children and Public Education. The Capital District/CEA delegates contributed nearly \$2,000 to the fund.

Spring CEA Elections

The Spring CEA Elections will be here before you know it. Consider running for one of the following positions: Governors for Districts 1, 4, 5, 10 and Middle School Governor At-Large (three-year terms); 2017 NEA delegates, 2017 NEA State Delegates At-Large and 2017-2018 OEA Delegates. Members may declare their candidacy from Jan. 4 to Feb. 3. Campaigning begins Jan. 4 and ends Mar. 7. Voting begins Feb. 22 and ends

Mar. 7; votes will be tallied Mar. 8. In the event of a spring runoff election, campaigning will begin Mar. 9 and end Apr. 11. Voting begins Mar. 29 and ends Apr. 11; votes will be tallied Apr. 12.

Job-Sharing Deadline Nears

The deadline for completed job-sharing applications is 5 p.m. Friday, Jan. 6. If you are interested in job sharing, you should have received a list of potential job-share partners. Note that each job-sharing partner must complete a separate application, and the documents must be signed by both job-share partners, as well as the principal or supervisor where the job share is to occur. Once the job-sharing request is approved, the job share cannot be dissolved unless all parties agree (teachers, principals or supervisors and HR). We recommend that you hand deliver these documents to HR and obtain a time-stamped copy for your records. If you have further questions, contact Ezzetta Murray at CEA at (614) 253-4731.

Retiring Soon? You Must Inform the District

If you plan to retire this year, and if you want enhanced severance pay, our contract requires members to notify the district of retirement intentions by Feb. 1.

It is important that you make the best financial decision for yourself. Early notice helps the district plan more effectively. Advance notice may prevent a colleague from being laid off. It may help the district decide where the greatest classroom needs are. Some members like to wait and see if a buyout is offered. This is not a good strategy. District circumstances change from year to year. Take some time to think about this. Call us if you have questions.

United Way Campaign Ends

This year's United Way Campaign ended on Friday, Dec. 2. Please make sure your school/unit has turned in their campaign envelopes to the CEA office prior to winter break. The prize winners will be announced in the Dec. 19 edition of the *CEA Voice*. We thank the following schools/units whose campaign envelopes were received since the publication of last week's *Voice*: 6th Street Annex, Alpine ES, Avondale ES, Berwick Alternative K-8, Broadleigh ES, Cedarwood ES, Clinton ES, Colerain ES, Cols. Alt. HS, Cols. Span. Imm. Acad., Cols. City Prep. For Girls, Columbus Ed. Ctr., Columbus Scioto 6-12, Devonshire ES, Dominion MS, Eakin ES, East Columbus ES, Easthaven ES, Eastmoor Academy HS, Ecole Kenwood ES, Fairmoor ES, Gables ES, Highland ES, Huy/AG Bell ES, Indian Springs ES, Indianola Informal K-8, Leawood ES, Lincoln Park ES, Lindbergh ES, Linden STEM ES, Linmoor Ed. Ctr., Livingston ES, Mifflin HS, Mifflin MS, North Linden ES, Northgate Intermediate ES, Oakland Park ES, Ridgeview MS, Salem ES, Sherwood MS, Siebert ES, South HS, South Mifflin STEM ES, Starling PK-8, Sullivant ES, Trevitt ES, Walnut Ridge HS, West HS, West Mound ES, Whetstone HS, Winterset ES and Woodward Park MS.

Special Notes:

CEA Fall Election Runoff: Campaigning for the runoff election for the two Middle School Governor-at-Large positions began on Nov. 17 and will end Dec. 13. Voting began Nov. 29 and ends Dec. 13; votes will be tallied on Dec. 14.

Teacher Leadership Initiative: The deadline to submit your online application for TLI has been extended to Dec. 31, 2016. Please disregard the online application's posted deadline of December 16. To submit your application, go to <http://bit.ly/1617CEAtli>. Applicants will be notified of selection in early January of 2017. For information about applying for this program, contact Dorothy Wilson at CEA at (614)253-4731.

License Renewal Support: The members of LPDC will be having support sessions to help you write, revise and submit your IPDP. They will also be available to help you count CEUs and review your PD Profile in CiMS. The upcoming support sessions will be held 12/13, 1/10, 1/19 and 2/23 from 4-5:30 p.m. in Computer Lab 1 at Hudson Distribution Center. Please sign up on CiMS if you are planning to attend.

CEUs for TBTs: Please make sure you are earning CEUs for all professional development activities you attend. If you are involved in a TBT, make sure your team has selected a facilitator (a teacher on the TBT) to enter the proposal and track attendance. The facilitator will need to attend CiMS Facilitator training and can register in CiMS. Contact jmeade2968@columbus.k12.oh.us with any questions.