March 14 Safer Together Day

During the March 6 CCS Board of Education meeting, the board adopted a resolution in support of our students and staff in response to the gun violence in our communities and our nation. District Administration met with a focus group of students to get their thoughts on how we should respond to the call for a nationwide student walk-out on Wednesday, March 14. The District calls the day Safer Together Day.

What is the National School Walkout? Students, school faculty and supporters around the world will walk out of their schools to honor those killed in the massacre at the Parkland High School in Florida earlier this year for 17 minutes at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, March 14. Those participating are encouraged to wear orange – the color used by many who support gun control.

Columbus City Schools’ Interim Superintendent Dr. John Stanford stated he supports any student or staff member wishing to support this effort. Suggestions were sent to schools regarding possible activities but each school has been given autonomy as to how they will support the Walk-Out. He stated that no student or staff member will be punished for participating in the 17-minute walk-out.

We commend the Board and District Administration for taking a bold stand in support of our students and staff and for allowing them to raise their voices around the issue of gun violence.

Staff Cuts Reduced

This is what collective action looks like. On March 6 the CCS Board voted on personnel reductions in response to the pending deficit the District is facing. The initial proposed reductions were 163 positions across certificated and classified staff members. At the meeting those reductions were reduced to 61 with the hopes that most will be absorbed through attrition.

While we do not want anyone to receive a lay-off notice, we are glad to see these significant reductions. This is a direct result of our Association and its members standing up and letting our voices be heard. The CEA leadership attended several meetings with District Leadership and Board members advocating on behalf of the membership. Members sent emails, attended Board Meetings and forums and raised the voices on behalf the profession, their schools and their students. The reductions in possible layoffs are a direct result of our collective action.

We are able to accomplish great things when we all stand up and raise our voices. Together we are stronger.

Governor’s Administration Voices Support for Education Consolidation

House Bill 512, sponsored by Representative Bill Reineke (R-Tiffin), seeks to consolidate the Ohio Department of Education, the Ohio Department of Higher Education, and the Governor’s Office of Workforce Transformation into a new, cabinet-level agency, the Ohio Department of Learning and Achievement. The bill also proposes to transfer most of the functions and policy-making powers of the State Board of Education (SBOE) to the new department. Under the bill, SBOE would oversee teacher licensure and educator misconduct. OEA is opposed to this bill.

On Tuesday, February 27, 2018, supporters of the bill offered proponent testimony in a hearing before the House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee. The proposal was praised by officials from Governor Kasich’s administration. John Carey, Chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education and Ryan Burgess, Director of the Governor’s Office of Workforce Transformation stated that the bill will lead to greater coordination and collaboration. Among other providing testimony in favor of HB 512 were Dennis Franks, Superintendent of the Pickaway-Ross Career and Technology Center; Ron Larussi, Superintendent of the Mahoning County ESC; and Tom Gunlock, former President of the State Board of Education.

In opposing the bill in its current form, OEA believes the proposed consolidation of these state departments would dilute the unique roles and needs of each department. OEA is skeptical that the proposed “super” department will promote additional collaboration. OEA is also not convinced that the functions of the preK-12, higher education, and workforce development systems would be adequately carried out under this plan.

Further, OEA is very concerned with the diminished role of the State Board of Education. Members of the Board serve an important democratic function that allows for public, parent and educator input on K-12 education issues. While we share the stated goal of increased collaboration, OEA believes that the stated objectives for this bill can be achieved without the merger of these state departments.

 Senate Bill 216 – Public School “Deregulation Act” Continues to Receive Hearings

The Ohio Senate Education Committee held a seventh hearing on Senate Bill 216 (R-Huffman) on February 28, 2018. The committee accepted several amendments to the bill, which are outlined below. More amendments are expected at future hearings. Senate Bill 216 is a wide-ranging bill with numerous policy proposals that impact educators and students. OEA has a variety of positions on specific provisions in the bill and recognizes that the bill is still evolving. However, as an overall package, the OEA opposes the bill as it currently stands. To view OEA’s testimony delivered before Senate Education Committee, go to http://bit.ly/2GQ0Evf.

Of primary concern are provisions OEA views as diluting or eliminating safeguards in teacher licensure that are designed to ensure the professionalism and preparedness of educators serving students in the classroom. On the other hand, OEA supports teacher evaluation reforms that are designed to advance continuous teacher improvement and student achievement. In some areas, the bill raises important issues that merit further consideration of more narrowly-tailored solutions.

SB 216 amendments accepted by the Senate Education Committee on February 28, 2018 made changes to the bill’s provisions regarding school safety, the use of the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment and gifted education professional development. For the full list of changes, go to: http://bit.ly/2oO6dL...
LA Attendance


PAR Pool

Congratulations to the following CEA members who were selected to be in the Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) Pool: Tammi Gale, Independence HS; Erica Golden, Scottwood ES; Harold Howard, Woodward Park MS; Samuel Leopold, Columbus Gifted Academy; Maya Marlowe, Weiland Park ES; Kelly McLeese, Columbus Scioto; Britney McCord, Linden-McKinley STEM; Meredith Mucha, Speech and Language Services; Eryn Sandhage, West Broad ES; Jennifer Sheehan, Woodward Park MS; Shawa Streeher, Maize ES; Merele Wilder, Cedarwood ES; Scott Wilson, East HS.

Selection to the Pool does not guarantee an automatic placement. Members are called as needed based upon the certification needs of the Program. Members selected to the PAR Pool can be in the pool for up to five years. Congratulations to our teacher leaders.

Reminders:

# The Scholarship Committee is taking applications for CEA and CEA-R Scholarships for our members' children. Applications are due at 4:30 p.m., Thursday, March 29, 2018. You can find the application at: https://bit.ly/ceaspringschol18. The Scholarship application must include the following:

1. A statement of the student’s personal philosophy and goals.
2. Two references: One from a current academic instructor with whom the student has studied during the past year, and one from someone other than a relative. Send completed applications to:
    - Columbus Education Association
    - Attn: Spring Scholarship
    - 929 E. Broad Street
    - Columbus, OH 43205

# Voting in the CEA Spring Election ends on Mar. 13. Votes will be tallied Mar. 14. In the event of a spring run-off election, campaigning will begin Mar. 15 and end Apr. 24. Voting begins on Apr. 9 and end Apr. 24; votes will be tallied on Apr. 25.