



## Crowdfunding: Look Before You Leap

A recent online survey conducted by CEA showed that, on average, Association members spent more than \$600 out of pocket last school year on their own classrooms. Additionally, over the past several years, our bargaining unit members have also increasingly turned to crowdfunding sites such as GoFundMe or DonorsChoose to help provide items and supplies for their classrooms.

Crowdfunding is the practice of collecting small amounts of money from a large number of individuals to finance a specific project.

Recognizing the increased utilization of crowdfunding by bargaining unit members, the Board's Policy Review Committee (PRC) began work on a Board policy specific to crowdfunding in October 2017. Your Association was in attendance at these meetings of the PRC. We were adamant that crowdfunding remain an option for bargaining unit members.

Board Policy 6605, permitting crowdfunding, was adopted at the April 17, 2018, Board of Education meeting. The policy states that crowdfunding projects must have "specific approval of the Superintendent." In close consultation with your Association, the District began to formulate Administrative Guideline (AG) 6605 regarding crowdfunding.

Your Association and the District are very concerned about the potential risks that could be incurred through an individual's participation in crowdfunding. AG 6605 will address the approval process our bargaining unit members would be required to follow to engage in crowdfunding campaigns. Following this approval process eliminates the risk that our bargaining unit members could be subject to job-related discipline or Ohio Department of Education sanctions due to violating federal or state law, the CCS Code of Conduct or any CCS Board policy.

The AG was nearly finished when the Auditor of State released a special report in July outlining the legal, financial and reputational risks assumed by school districts that allow crowdfunding without proper oversight. Needing time to revise AG 6605 to comply with the Auditor of State's recommendations, the administration informed your Association on August 23—the first day of school—that an email would be sent out to all employees on August 24, immediately placing all current crowdfunding activities across the district on hiatus.

Your Association was concerned that our bargaining unit members already had numerous crowdfunding campaigns that were currently in progress. Some campaigns had been conducted over the summer in preparation for this academic year—what would happen to the funding already collected? Other campaigns were close to their goal and almost finished—what would happen to those

campaigns? Your Association explained to the administration that placing all crowdfunding projects on an immediate hold would cause a sudden and severe disruption across the district. As a result of these collaborative conversations with the Administration, the directives regarding pre-existing crowdfunding campaigns were dramatically modified in the administration's Sept. 6 crowdfunding email.

We know that if schools in Ohio were properly and constitutionally funded, perhaps teachers might not spend as much of their own money on their classrooms or engage in crowdfunding to help provide more resources for their students. The lack of a properly funded education system in Ohio should not force teachers to "pass the hat" to help provide for their students, nor should our generosity subject us to disciplinary or legal action.

Your Association will continue to safeguard the rights of bargaining unit members who choose to engage in crowdfunding. However, we'd much rather have the Ohio General Assembly fully fund education in the State of Ohio. The General Election in November is your chance to vote to support your profession and your students—and a properly funded state education system.

## Know Your Contract: Using the Reform Panel

The Reform Panel (Art. 1503) is a joint committee consisting of CEA and Administration. The panel seeks to improve educational processes by considering requests for variances to the *CEA Master Agreement* or board policy. The panel also forms committees on some state-mandated issues.

Schools can come to the Reform Panel to ask for variances from the contract. For example, if a middle school wants a schedule different from the eight-period day, or if a high school or middle school special education teacher wants to teach six periods rather than five in lieu of a duty, teachers could develop a proposal to submit to the Reform Panel. If teachers at a particular school want to institute school uniforms or segregate classes by gender, the Building Leadership Team can do research on the issue and create a proposal and rationale. If two-thirds of the staff approves the request, it may be presented to the Reform Panel. A majority of Reform Panel members must approve variance requests. The CEA President and the CCS Superintendent must agree to the changes.

You may begin the variance process by making a suggestion to your ABC. The Senior Faculty Representative conducts a secret ballot building vote, and then refers it to the Reform Panel with signatures from both the principal and Senior FR.

Create a cadre of staff members and parents to seek new and innovative programs that would benefit your students. Do your research and make a proposal. The Reform Panel will also help you define potential problems and recommend further steps.

We urge you to make requests that you think will benefit your school's effectiveness. This process allows you to create a new learning environment not limited by board policies or the CEA contract.

Information regarding Reform Panel procedures can be downloaded at <http://bit.ly/RP18procedures>. Go to <http://bit.ly/RP18variance> to download a copy of the Variance Request Form.

## Register to Vote

With the November mid-term election on the horizon, it is time to make sure you are properly registered to vote. Does your registration have you at your current address or an old one? If you've moved and have not updated your voter registration, your polling location may be different. If you are already registered to vote in Ohio, you can update your existing Ohio voter registration online by going to <http://bit.ly/2bZGrVb>. You can download a registration form at <http://bit.ly/2xkyqm5> to begin the process. The deadline for Ohioans to register to vote or to update their voter registration for the Nov. 6 general election is Tuesday, Oct. 9. You can also register to vote and change your address at your local Bureau of Motor Vehicles office when you go in for any driver's license/ID card transactions.



## Bargaining Team Deadline Extended To Sept. 28

The *Master Agreement* is set to expire in August of 2019. Your Association is now forming the CEA Negotiations (Bargaining) Team. This posting begins our process for the upcoming round of negotiations. Our comprehensive team will represent the diversity and varied experience levels of all of our members. Interested applicants should send a cover letter via school mail highlighting your interests and qualifications along with a résumé to: Teri Mullins, CEA Staff Consultant, CEA Office, Route 1 or [tmullins@ceaohio.org](mailto:tmullins@ceaohio.org). The selective interviewing process will be utilized to select the Negotiations Team members. Applications must be received no later than Friday, Sept. 28 at 4:30 p.m.

## Are You Retiring This Year?

Bargaining unit members who are planning on retiring at some point in the 2018–19 school year can be exempted from the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System. If you would like to exercise this option, you must submit the notice of retirement by Friday, Nov. 2, to Human Resources. Go to <http://bit.ly/csretireresign> to download a copy of the retirement/resignation notification form, or feel free to draft your own. Your Association strongly recommends hand delivering your notice of retirement and obtaining a timestamped copy. If you have further questions regarding this option, contact Teri Mullins, CEA Staff Consultant at 614-253-4731.



## CEA Membership = Free College Scholarship

The CEA Member Scholarship Fund is now open for applications. This benefit is for our members with children who are college seniors. The fund provides \$1,250 in tuition assistance for each senior attending a four-year college or university. Eligible students are college seniors between September 2018 and June

2019 with a 2.0 GPA. Payment will be made directly to the college or university. Parents or guardians must have taught in the Columbus City Schools for four years prior to the application date and must be continuous CEA or CEA-R members. Go to <http://bit.ly/2018CEAfall> to download the application form. The deadline is 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 19. If you have questions, call Kathy Wilkes at: 614-253-4731.

## Sick Leave: Follow the Rules

Sick leave is available for you when you or a family member becomes ill. It is important to know how sick leave works so that you do not put yourself at risk for disciplinary action or termination. Follow the rules as outlined in Article 701 of the *Master Agreement*. CEA will represent you if your sick leave has been questioned.

### Teaching

The only profession where you have to do more work to call in sick than if you just suffered through it.



In cases where abuse is substantiated, members could be docked 10 days for every one day of sick leave abuse. This is the equivalent of 1.3 paychecks.

Here are the rule highlights:

- Each full-time bargaining unit member earns 15 days of sick leave per year, accruing them at the rate of 1.5 days each month from September through June.
- New employees are allowed to go “into the hole” up to five sick days.
- Sick leave is for personal illness, absence due to illness in the immediate family or for death in the immediate family. See the contract for the parameters.
- If you are absent for one full school day or more, you must report your absence to the principal *and* to the Substitute Employee Management System.
- When you return to work, you must complete an absence form within three days.
- Absences longer than 10 continuous school days require an “Application for Leave.” Before you return, you must have a doctor's statement and district pre-approval.
- In the event the estimated duration of the absence is expected to be continuous for a period in excess of one week (5 school days), or when an absence has been continuous for such a period, the teacher shall advise the administration in writing of the estimated duration of the need for sick leave.

## Special Notes

- ❑ The first CEA Legislative Assembly of the 2018–2019 school year will be held on **Thursday, Sept. 20**, at **The Boathouse at Confluence Park**, 679 W. Spring Street. **Registration begins at 3:30 p.m.** with the meeting starting promptly at **4:30 p.m.** **All Faculty Representatives should plan to be in attendance. Dinner will be provided. RSVP** to Michelle Crouse at: [crousem@ceaohio.org](mailto:crousem@ceaohio.org). Be sure to include your name and the building/unit you represent.
- ❑ The **deadline to submit** teacher-developed **Student Learning Objectives** into the **ILEAD Portal** is **Friday, Sept. 28**. Additionally, teachers' first scheduled conferences with their evaluator should be accomplished by **Friday, Sept. 28**.
- ❑ **Sick Leave Bank enrollment ends Friday, Sept. 28. Donate two days in order to be able to borrow up to ten days.** The donation form is available on the CCS Intranet under “Human Resources” or the CEA website under the “Forms” tab.

### CEA Pre-Paid Legal Services Plan

#### OEA/NEA Attorney Referral Program

At Cloppert, Latanick, Sauter and Washburn, we have dedicated ourselves to teachers in and out of the classroom. Our experienced personal injury, divorce, dissolution, criminal, probate and real estate attorneys are available to you at moderate rates which are lower than we normally charge our private clients.

Contact us today and allow our experience to work for you.  
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