

Message from the CEA President

Dear Members,

Welcome back! I sincerely hope the New Year finds you rested and rejuvenated after a much needed winter break.

With 2020 upon us, I cannot help but reflect on the past year. In 2019, our union had many accomplishments. First, I am proud to state that CEA saw very few memberships dropped as a result of the Janus Decision and we have increased Union membership by 117 individuals. Second, with membership strong, we kicked off the *#ColumbusStudentsDeserve* contract campaign. In unprecedented numbers, CEA members showed solidarity as they marched, picketed City Hall, and voted to support issuing a strike notice, if needed, during bargaining. Without question, the energy and resolve of CEA membership pushed the bargaining team over the finish line where a new three year contract was ratified. These efforts placed much needed attention on issues that matter to staff, students, and the community. To address the woeful lack of resources, the CEA Foundation awarded its first round of mini grants to assist members in their work. In addition, CEA leadership remains committed to keeping lines of communication open between the Union and administration and we have increased our visibility by visiting each building in the District. We are committed to represent our membership, and voiced our displeasure at the District's gaming of the state report card that placed every third-grade student on a RIMP without any additional resources. Yet, with all that has been accomplished, the CEA Office also recognizes that we have many challenges ahead. Environmental conditions, teacher assaults, lack of administrator support, meaningful discipline, and the lack of substitutes continue to be issues in too many of our buildings.

In 2020, your Union is looking forward to working with our new Board of Education Members and the Superintendent to bring about real change. We expect the District to bring back a comprehensive plan to address the lack of substitutes based on the numerous suggestions brought to them by CEA. We look forward to the District filling the positions during 211 that were negotiated in the last contract such as the increase in social and emotional practitioners, more nurses, and the hiring of PEAK teachers for middle and high schools. It is the expectation in this office that members will see the value in their Union by continuing to see a presence of CEA leadership in their buildings. Members can expect their Faculty Representatives to receive training on how to increase their capacity to advocate for the folks in their buildings so that all members are empowered. CEA members can expect their union to fight and voice its concerns when administration makes policy that does not make sense or creates more burdensome testing and paperwork. CEA will continue to partner with those who advocate for our students. We will work toward improving our political independence by recruiting and supporting candidates that are pro-public education regardless of political party. It is and always will be the purpose of CEA to advocate for our profession so that we

can do the job we were hired to do. We have much work to do and I wish everyone the very best 2020 has to offer.

In Solidarity,



John

Wintry Conditions

Weather conditions are difficult to predict. When a storm will hit, its length and the amounts of snowfall are variables that make the decision to close school very difficult. After the decision



to keep schools open has been made, making sure parking lots and sidewalks are clear is crucial for the safety of parents, students, and staff. Article 206.05, in the *Master Agreement* speaks to snow and ice removal in parking lots. The following information outlines the snow plowing and salting procedures for Columbus City Schools.

- Sidewalks are to be plowed and/or salted by the custodial staff of the building. Custodians will remove snow and ice and apply ice melt (salt) to all entrances, walkways, steps, and sidewalks. In addition, they will salt a single path through the staff parking lot for safe passage.
- Playgrounds will not and should not be plowed. Plowing equipment can easily damage the playground surfaces
- Snow Plowing occurs when snow accumulation in parking areas is determined to affect the continuity of operations and provided there is school the next day and enough time is available to complete the plowing before the school day begins.
- Contractors are responsible to plow snow from parking lots and the entrance and exit drives of buildings.
- Contractors are to plow snow in such a way that it does not cover or block fire hydrants, sidewalks, entryways to the parking lot, doorways to the school or service buildings, trash dumpsters, or bus drop off areas.
- Salt may be spread on packed snow and ice when safety conditions require such activity and may not involve all building sites due to possible varying conditions in different parts of the city.
- If contract plowing is not used and snow or if icy conditions occur; Buildings and Grounds will plow or salt Administrative Sites, Special Needs areas such as handicap sites, and hills at the discretion of the Director of Buildings and Grounds.

The CEA Master Agreement is set to expire in fewer than 954 days.

Grievance Update

Your Association works hard to protect your rights and maintain the integrity of the negotiated contract. While we advise bargaining unit members to work out problems at the building level first, we know this isn't always possible. We will regularly inform you of the grievances on which CEA is working.

Building/Unit/Administrator	Statement of Grievance	Relief Requested	Disposition
South HS Edmund Baker	The CEA/Board Agreement was violated, misinterpreted and/or misapplied when the principal of South HS, Edmund Baker, failed to adjust classroom numbers so that the class sizes/student load for teacher(s) at South HS meet contractual requirements..	That the principal immediately adjust numbers to make all classes and student loads for teacher(s) in the building compliant with the numbers required in the contract; and that no reprisals be taken against any member of the bargaining unit because of the filing of this grievance and that NO reprisals be taken against the grievant because of filing of this grievance.	Step II Grievance denied. Board of Governors voted to send to Arbitration.

Voluntary Staff Reduction Opportunity Deadline

The deadline for teachers to submit their request for a voluntary staff reduction from HR, based on Philosophical Differences or Health and Safety, is 5 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 16. Individuals must provide specific reasons for requesting a voluntary staff reduction. There are two ways to submit your request:

- 1) A signed, hard-copy letter should be submitted to: Terri Trigg, Human Resources, Columbus City Schools, 270 E. State St., Columbus, OH 43215. Your Association strongly suggests you hand deliver your letter and obtain a timestamped copy for your records.
- 2) Requests can be submitted via email using your CCS account to: article211@columbus.k12.oh.us. Include in the subject line "Voluntary Staff Reduction Request" followed by your first and last name and employee ID number.

Faxed letters will not be accepted. Additionally, you are not required to provide your administrator with a copy of your staff reduction request nor are you required to notify them of your request. Members who submit a request for a voluntary staff reduction will be notified by HR in late January, however a specific date has not yet been confirmed. Ultimately, it is the decision of HR whether or not to grant each bargaining unit member's voluntary staff reduction request.

Special Education Support Group

As a result of work done by your Union, the District has started holding a Special Education Support Group. The group meets the second Tuesday of each month at Hudson Distribution Center (737 E. Hudson St.) from 3:30–5:30 p.m. and is hosted by Special Education Supervisor Teresa McGurr.

The purpose of the support group is to provide support in classroom management, academics, behavior strategies, and self-care. Each meeting will have a specialist from various fields to share different strategies, interventions, transition data skills, and BIP/FBA writing.

Teachers who attend can find resources and collaborate with other CCS Special Education Teachers. It's a safe environment where they can communicate and support each other. All meetings are held at Hudson Distribution Center. Light refreshments will be provided.

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, Jan. 14. If you plan on attending, *RSVP* to Jessica Kitsmiller at (614) 365-5794 or jkitsmiller@columbus.k12.oh.us.

Check your Check

With the new year upon us, members may need to make some financial adjustments. CEA encourages all members to utilize the Employee Self Service (ESS) tool found under Staff Quick Links to view and/or print pay statements, change direct deposit information, utilize a paycheck simulator, view last year's W2, and change a W4. In addition, current year benefit elections are listed and employees can report and view life events that impact benefit deductions. Also, don't wait until payday to check your deposit amount. Employees are able to check their pay as early as the Monday of pay week on ESS. If an error is found, corrections can generally be made by pay day.

The Publication of a Contract Book

In late August, the CEA membership ratified a three-year Agreement with the Columbus City Schools. Since that time, the CEA office has been hard at work preparing for the publication of the new contract book. The typesetting for the contract is completed in house. The 2015–2017 *CEA Master Agreement* and the 2017–2019 *Addendum* must first be combined into one Master Agreement. Next the contractual items negotiated for the 2019–2022 *Master Agreement* must be added (or amended) to the existing contract. From there, the contract goes through three to four proofs at the CEA office to check corrections. With the change to a gender-neutral contract, this step took a little more time. The *Master Agreement* proof (part one of the contract) is then sent to the District for review. The CEA office and CCS Chief Negotiator work together to verify the edits are correct and ready for publication. The contract book also contains other sections of information for the membership including memoranda of agreements and school forms which must be updated as well. Once the final proof has been approved, page numbers are added, the table of contents is created, and the index must be revised. We are working on the final edit and hope to have the contract book ready to go to the printers in early January and then passed out to the membership by late January, early February.

Special Note

- ❑ **Catastrophic Leave Donation Request:** Kyle Doak (Moler ES), Kimberly Faber (Scottwood ES), and Brooke Lagrasso (Leawood ES) have been approved for Catastrophic Leave and are in need of donated days. **To donate, enter your name at the top of the CCS "Report of Employee Absence" form.** In the "Comments" section write the words, "Catastrophic Sick Leave Donation." Be sure that you and your principal or supervisor sign the form. Indicate on the form the individual to whom you would like your donation directed.
- ❑ **CEA Spring Elections**—Our Association's annual elections are fast approaching. The following positions will be filled: **CEA President, CEA Vice President, Governors for Districts 1, 4, 5, and 10, Middle School Governor-At-Large, and Delegates to NEA and OEA. Declaration Forms will be available on Monday, Jan. 6, and are due at the CEA office no later than 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 7. Voting will begin on Tuesday, Mar. 3, and will end on Tuesday, Mar. 17. Ballots will be collected and tallied by the Elections Committee on Wednesday, Mar. 18.** Call or text Neil Moore at (614) 264-2188 with any questions.
- ❑ 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. Register today on PD Planner for **Overcoming Trauma**, Hudson St., Jan. 7, 4:30 p.m.; **Culturally Responsive Teaching** (Session 3) Africentric, Jan. 14, 4:30 p.m.; **CEA 211 Process**, Hudson St., Jan. 21, 4:30 p.m. Call the PAR Office at (614) 365-5110 for more information or ask your PAR CT if you have questions.