

## Know Your Rights: Protecting Our Grievance Process

Recently, CEA filed two Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charges against the District to protect our contractual grievance process; one for a pattern of failure to timely process grievances, and one for Mifflin Principal Tracey Colson's inappropriate written attack on a CEA District Governor for filing a grievance, which represented a flagrant violation of state law. On Monday, Nov. 15, CEA and CCS engaged in a full day of mediation conducted by the State Employment Relations Board and were able to reach negotiated settlement agreements on both charges.

The District agreed to follow contractual grievance timelines, provide monthly reports of grievance status to CEA through the 2024–2025 school year, and that grievance status would be a standing agenda item at monthly Labor-Management meetings. At Mifflin MS, the District agreed to withdraw and reissue the grievance response in question without the offensive content. It also agreed to issue the enclosed cover letter, acknowledging Principal Colson's response was inappropriate, assuring she was provided expectations for future responses, and reaffirming our legal right to participate in Union activity and the grievance process.

The successful conclusion of CEA's ULP filings represent a continuation of our Union's commitment to vigorously defend and uphold CEA members' individual and collective rights. It should also serve as a reminder to all administrators that misconstruing our grievance process (which we utilize to resolve disputes at the lowest possible level) as some sort of personal attack and responding accordingly will not be tolerated.

Columbus  
Education  
Association

cea

Master  
Agreement  
2019–2022



COLUMBUS  
CITY SCHOOLS

### Labor Management and Employee Relations Division

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*Mission: Each student is highly educated, prepared for leadership and service, and empowered for success as a citizen in a global community*

November 19, 2021

John Coneglio, President  
Columbus Education Association  
929 East Broad Street  
Columbus, OH 43205

Dear President Coneglio,

On October 5, 2021, Principal Tracey Colson of Mifflin Middle School issued a Step 1 response to a grievance filed on behalf of Joseph Decker. Understandably, you raised concern with the final paragraph of her response - a concern shared by Columbus City Schools as it could be perceived to deter employee involvement in the grievance process. I recognize that the paragraph at issue was inappropriate for the grievance response. To address this situation, an employee of this office met with Ms. Colson to explain the concern and clarify expectations for future response.

Columbus City Schools affirms the right of all employees to exercise their rights under Ohio Revised Code Section 4117, including the right to engage in concerted protected activity and the right to participate in employee organizations (including participation for the purpose of adjustment of grievances). Columbus City Schools also affirms the right of CEA bargaining unit members to participate in the grievance process as outlined in the Master Agreement without retaliation or reprisal.

The Step 1 response will be revised to delete the final paragraph. A copy of the revised response is attached. For purposes of the the grievance file, this revised Step 1 response will be the Step 1 response of record.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

John M. Dean  
Director, Labor Management and Employee Relations

*Human Resources Supporting Vision: Maximizing Human Capital for Student Success*

The Columbus City School District does not discriminate based upon sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, ancestry familial status or military status with regard to admission, access, treatment or employment. This policy is applicable in all district programs and activities.

**The CEA Master Agreement is set to expire in fewer than 259 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. To review the text of each grievance in its entirety, go to <https://bit.ly/3pbB4Y0>.

Building/Unit Administrator	Statement of Grievance	Relief Requested	Disposition
Whetstone HS Janet Routzong	Principal Janet Routzong and/or other Administrators at Whetstone High School acting in their capacity as agents of the BOARD violated, misinterpreted, and/or...	The Association requests that the grievant(s) be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: The BOARD shall cease and desist from violating, misinterpreting, and/or misapplying the...	Step 2 hearing held. Requested relief denied. Pending vote of the Board of Governors to send to arbitration.
CCS Administration	The CCS/CEA Master Agreement was misapplied, misinterpreted or violated by the Administration when the Board/Administration directed principals to reassign...	The grievants shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: The Board shall immediately follow the proper procedure for classroom reassignment of students from elementary...	The CEA Board of Governors voted to advance this grievance to arbitration.
CCS Administration	On or about October 5, 2021 and ongoing, the Board of Education of Columbus City Schools and/or its agents violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied provisions of ...	CEA bargaining unit members shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to: the Board of Education shall immediately terminate the Waterford Memorandum with notice as provided for by...	Step 2 hearing held. At the time this edition of the Voice went to print, CEA was awaiting the Administration's response.
Beechcroft HS Dr. Samuel Johnson	Beechcroft principal Dr. Samuel Johnson, in his capacity as agent of the Board of Education of Columbus City Schools, violated the Columbus Education...	The grievant will be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: The district shall immediately withdraw the Summary of Conference issued on or about October 19, 2021 from the grievant's...	Step 1 hearing held. Requested relief denied. Step 2 hearing pending.

Go to <https://bit.ly/3pbB4Y0> to review the grievances in their entirety.

## CEA Mini Grants

In the past two years, more than 100 CEA Members have been

granted CEA Foundation Mini Grants. "The purpose of the grants is to empower CEA member, in good standing, to design and implement innovative opportunities that will ultimately lead to higher achievement for all students," said LaVonne King, a teacher at Moler ES. She was one of the recipients and used the grant to create an identifying Feelings/Feeling Safe Project for her Kindergartners.



King added, "The goal of this project was to help shift the climate and culture of our building. Last year, students learned Zones of Regulation to help foster self-regulation. Students learned to identify feelings of COVID-19 and having to stay home, wearing masks, more hand washing, use of hand sanitizer, social distancing, and having to go to school online. We then explored and identified feelings of returning to school in person. Returning to school will look very different than years before and safety will be more important than before. Students learned what whole body listening is and how it can be used to keep everyone health and safe on the bus, in the classroom, in the building, at home, and in their community. It also ties into our PBIS motto: 3B's—Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Safe. Thank you, CEA, for the mini grant to help me help our students."

## Is Your License Expiring?

If your Five-Year Professional License expires in 2022, you were sent an email from Human Resources in November with comprehensive instructions for renewing your license. If you have a Resident Educator License that expires in 2022, you will be receiving an email from Greg Mild in Professional Learning & Licensure. Your teaching license is your most important credential. Please read the email carefully. That detailed email contains specific instructions about the renewal process for this year, including how to complete the online application process through the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) website. Failure to comply with renewal regulations could result in non-renewal from the District.

If your license from ODE is expiring June 30, 2022, and you have a limited employment contract, you must complete the required coursework or CEUs necessary for renewal and apply before Feb. 1 to be licensed by the ODE for the 2022–2023 school year. If you have a continuing contract, you have through June to complete your coursework and submit your application. Failure to renew your license may result in suspension of pay and initiation of termination/non-renewal proceedings.

In addition to the online application, you will need to complete a background check. All fingerprint results must be completed electronically through Web Check. A permanent certificate still requires fingerprinting every five years. The Human Resources Department, located at 3700 S. High, oversees this process. The CCS Fingerprint Office is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.–4 p.m. It is important to note that face-to-face operations are on an **appointment-only** basis to protect current and future staff by adhering to health and safety guidelines for COVID-19. Use this link to schedule a date/time to complete your fingerprints: <https://bit.ly/3ICxYZ9>. If you have any questions about the date of your last background check, or if you do not plan to renew your license, contact Leslie Butler, Human Resources, Teacher Licensure, at [license@columbus.k12.oh.us](mailto:license@columbus.k12.oh.us). Any questions concerning CEUs or the license renewal process should be directed to Greg Mild at [gmild@columbus.k12.oh.us](mailto:gmild@columbus.k12.oh.us).

## How To Request Remote Work

If you are subject to quarantine or required to self isolate and you wish to apply for remote work, use the following form to communicate your request: <https://bit.ly/39aHbnS>. It is important that you enter your absence as sick leave. Any sick days used during this time will be refunded back to the date of the district's receipt of your application. Note that requests for remote work cannot be approved for bargaining unit members who must remain at home to take care of family members who are subject to an isolation or quarantine order.

## Grants for New Teachers

The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International promotes professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education. Each year, Gamma Chapter, one of the local chapters in the central Ohio area, provides grants to new teachers to buy materials and supplies for their classrooms. These grants are given in the form of gift certificates to the recipients.

Go to <https://bit.ly/dsgfirstyear21> to download the application form. Grant applications can be emailed to Judy Valentine, Grant-in-Aid Chairperson at [jvalentine59@aol.com](mailto:jvalentine59@aol.com) or sent via USPS to 69 Iron Ore Court, Columbus, OH 43213. Completed grant applications **must be received by Dec. 17, 2021**. Grant recipients will be notified by Jan. 28, 2022.

## PAR/CEU Classes

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 CEUs. Course materials will be provided.



**Dec. 7 CCS Resources Fair: Do You Know What's Available?**  
(4:30–6:30 p.m. via Zoom)

**Dec. 8 Surviving and Thriving in the MD Classroom**  
(4–5 p.m. via Zoom)

Register today on PD Planner for any or all of these sessions. Call the PAR Office at (614) 365-5110 for more information or ask your PAR CT if you have questions.

## Special Notes

- Make a Donation to the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank:** The following members have been approved for Catastrophic Leave and are in need of donated days: **Amy Brown**, Oakland Park ES; **Kevin Jennison**, CAHS; **Florence Ray**, Beatty Park ES; and **Kimberly Saunders**, Social Worker. 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 to sign the form. Indicate to whom you are making the donation.
- Spring 2022 Elections:** The following elected positions will be filled in the 2021–2022 election cycle: **President, Vice President, District 2 Governor, District 7 Governor, District 8 Governor, District 9 Governor** and **High School Governor At-Large**; **NEA Local Delegates**; **NEA State At-Large Delegates\***; and **2022–2023 OEA Delegates**. The declaration period begins on Monday, Jan. 3. Declaration forms will be available for download on the CEA website or you may contact Michelle Crouse at CEA to request that a hard copy be sent by mail. Declaration forms must be received in the CEA office no later than 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 4. Ballots will be sent to the building during the week of Feb. 28, with voting to begin on Tuesday, Mar. 1 and end on Tuesday, Mar. 15. Members of the Elections Committee will collect ballots for tally on Wednesday, Mar. 26. Call or text Elections Chair Brittany Herb at (440) 225-2631 with any questions.  
\* Note that NEA State At-Large Declaration Forms are separate; you may find a copy at the CEA website, but you must submit it to William Baird at OEA by Jan. 30, 2022.