

CEA Wins Project Connect Grievance

In a major victory for Columbus students and educators, Arbitrator Cynthia Stanley has sustained CEA's grievance regarding nine positions in the District's Project Connect program. Project Connect employees work primarily to support vulnerable and unhoused youth within the District. In July 2022, Columbus City Schools unilaterally removed these positions from the Union's bargaining unit, implementing cuts to pay and benefits for some employees and stripping them of contractual protections.



In a decision issued December 30, Arbitrator Stanley ordered the District to immediately restore these nine positions to the bargaining unit, to make whole with interest each employee who suffered loss of pay and benefits, and to remit to CEA back dues with interest for each unilaterally removed bargaining unit position.

Project Connect CEA Members previously appeared before the Columbus City Schools Board of Education to protest the decision and its impact on CCS students, wrote an open letter to the Board, and even took their appeal public on WOSU's "All Sides with Ann Fisher." The District refused to reconsider its decision, and as a result the Union was forced to file a Grievance, as well as an Unfair Labor Practice charge with the State Employment Relations Board.

Though CEA made every attempt to resolve this grievance informally, we are satisfied that the arbitrator agreed that the *CEA-CCS Master Agreement* was violated. We are also pleased that due to our Union's strong enforcement of our hard-won *Master Agreement*, the District's most vulnerable students will continue to be served by CEA professionals.

semester hours of 300 level coursework or above in the area of licensure or in an area related to the teaching field since the initial issuance of such certificate or license is required.

- If you believe that you will be completing the requirements making you eligible for a continuing teacher contract for the 2023–2024 school year, you must complete the online application and provide original transcripts. Only digital transcripts will be accepted and should be sent to transcripts@columbus.k12.oh.us. The electronic form and original transcripts must be received no later than Mar. 3, 2023.

Questions regarding this information should be directed to Teacher Certification & Licensure at (614) 365-6680 or license@columbus.k12.oh.us. All applicants will receive an electronic confirmation. Applicants must check their email (spam or clutter folders) to ensure they receive the confirmation as additional information may be requested. Approvals, denials, or delay notices for the Continuing Contract applications will be sent via email by Mar. 31, 2023.

Transplant Needed

Benita Smith, a PAR Consultant, is in need of a kidney donation from a living donor.

Such donations are typically very successful and ideal when made by living donors. Eligible donors have matching blood types and are free of diseases including high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, kidney and heart disease. Donors recover completely and are able to lead normal lives. Anyone interested in being tested for a possible match for donation can call Michelle Crouse at the CEA office for more information.



Benita Smith

To find out how to participate in becoming a donor, go to: <https://wexnermedical.osu.edu/transplant/living-kidney-donation>.

Do You Have Your Continuing Contract?

It is that time of year where you can apply for a Continuing Contract. This year, bargaining unit members submit their Continuing Contract application using Google Forms only. Bargaining unit members will have to be logged into their CCS email account to utilize the online form. To utilize the online application process, go to <http://bit.ly/3vDJU4q>.

You must meet all the eligibility requirements on the application to be considered. In accordance with CEA Contract Article 401.16, to be eligible to receive a continuing contract, you **MUST** have the following:

- A five-year professional license or a permanent certificate shall be on file in Human Resources. The certificate/license should be received in Human Resources on or before Mar. 3, 2023.
- At the conclusion of this school year, you must have completed three years of successful Columbus teaching experience within the last five years or if you previously had a continuing contract in Columbus or another Ohio district, you must have completed two successful years of Columbus experience. Under the new licensing standards, you must also meet the following coursework requirement:
 - If you hold a master's degree at the time of initially receiving a teacher's certificate/license, six (6) semester hours of graduate coursework in the area of licensure or in an area related to the teaching field since the initial issuance of such certificate or license is required.
 - If you do not hold a master's degree at the time of initially receiving a teacher's certificate/license, thirty (30)

Super Severance: Good Attendance Pays Off for Retirees

If you want enhanced (or super severance) pay, our contract requires members to notify the district of retirement intentions by Feb. 1 of their retirement year. You will receive pay for 50 percent of your personal leave days, regardless of when you notify CCS, but notifying the district by Feb. 1 also means you receive more for your unused sick leave. Article 810 of the *CEA Master Agreement* defines how severance pay is granted. To estimate the amount of your severance pay, access Employee Self Service and use the severance pay estimator. You will need your latest pay stub to obtain the necessary information.



Notifications of retirement are being accepted in electronic format only. To submit your notice of retirement, go to <https://forms.gle/qpv9t4EQAZSnTY56>. The example in the Jan. 2 issue of the *Voice* referred to a retiring teacher with a yearly salary of \$104,241 (Master's at Step 31) with a daily rate of \$534.57, 410 sick leave days and 30 personal leave days*.

You would receive **\$28,064.93 more** when notifying the District of your intent to retire by Feb. 1.

**The example is for illustration purposes only and is not intended for use as an official calculation.*

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 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/3GmqwxX>.

Building/Unit Administrator	Statement of Grievance	Relief Requested	Disposition
South HS 7-12 Christy Nickerson	The CEA/Board Agreement was violated, misinterpreted and/or misapplied when the principal of South 7-12, Christy Nickerson, failed to provide appropriate administrative...	That the grievants shall be made whole in every way, including, but not limited to the following: that principal provide appropriate administrative support to the affected bargaining unit members and that NO REPRISALS be taken against the grievants...	Step 2 hearing held. Awaiting response.
CCS Administration	The Columbus City Schools Board of Education and/or its agents violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied provisions of the CCS 2019-2022 Master Agreement by uni...	Grievants shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: Professional Learning and Licensure Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) positions will be immediately restored to the CEA bargaining unit. The Board shall...	Arbitration hearing held Nov. 9, 2022. Awaiting Arbitrator's decision.
CCS Administration	The Columbus City Schools Board of Education and/or its agents violated, misinterpreted, or misapplied provisions of the 2022-2025 CEA/CCS Master Agree...	The grievant shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: Grievant shall receive back pay with interest for the duration of the unpaid suspension. Board shall remove all references to the discipline from all...	Denied at Step 2. To be placed in abeyance pending outcome of Project Connect arbitration.
CCS Administration	The Columbus City Schools Board of Education and/or its agents violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied provisions of the 2022-2025 CEA/CCS Master Agree...	The grievant shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: The Board shall immediately remove all references to the letter issued on or about October 6, 2022 from all employee personnel records, other than...	Denied at Step 2. To be placed in abeyance pending outcome of Project Connect arbitration.
Ridgeview MS Natalie James	The CEA/Board Agreement was violated, misinterpreted and/or misapplied when the principal of Ridgeview MS, Natalie James, failed and/or refused to adjust the...	That the grievant be made whole in every way, including but not limited to adjusting the grievant's class load for the second semester of the 22-23 school year, and that NO REPRISALS be taken against the grievant or any other bargaining...	Step 2 Hearing held. Decision pending.
East Columbus ES Jamie Spreen	The CEA/Board Agreement was violated, misinterpreted and/or misapplied when the principal of East Columbus ES, Jamie Spreen, failed to provide appropriate...	That the grievants shall be made whole in every way, including, but not limited to the following: that principal provide appropriate administrative support to the affected bargaining unit members and that NO REPRISALS be taken...	Step 1 Grievance hearing pending.
CCS Administration (a)	The Columbus City Schools Board of Education and/or its agents violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied provisions of CEA-CCS Master Agreement, including...	The Association requests that the grievant be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: The Board shall comply with Article 404, specifically 404.02. The issued discipline shall be removed from the member's...	Grievance filed at Step 2. District is holding in abeyance.
CCS Administration (b)	The Columbus City Schools Board of Education and/or its agents violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied provisions of CEA-CCS Master Agreement, including...	The Association requests that the grievant be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: The Board shall comply with Article 404, specifically 404.02. The issued discipline shall be removed from the member's...	Grievance filed at Step 2. District is holding in abeyance.
Linden-McKinley STEM 7-12 Dr. Michael McCrory	Dr. Michael McCrory, acting in his capacity as agent of the Board, failed to provide appropriate support to teachers with respect to student discipline in violation,...	Grievants shall be made whole in every way, including not limited to the following: 1) The Board and its agents shall cease and desist from violating, misinterpreting, and or the Master Agreement including but not limited to Article 208.01. The ...	Step 1 Grievance hearing pending.

Want to Get Out of Your Three-Year Commitment?

Your Union knows that, from time-to-time, issues arise at your current assignment, especially during your three-year commitment. Sometimes bargaining unit members experience strong philosophical differences with the program(s) within their current assignment. Other times, they experience health and/or safety issues within their current assignment.

Bargaining unit members that believe their skills would be best utilized in another assignment within the district have the opportunity to request a voluntary staff reduction from Human Resources. Two reasons can be cited to request a voluntary staff reduction: philosophical differences or health and safety concerns. Individuals who are interested in requesting a voluntary staff reduction must submit their request in writing to HR.

Any full-time contract bargaining unit member can request a voluntary staff reduction. You are not required to inform your administrator, or to ask their permission, to seek a voluntary staff reduction. Additionally, administrators should not ask bargaining unit members if they are seeking a voluntary staff reduction, nor will written requests be shared with administrators. Keep in mind that requesting a voluntary staff reduction is just that—a request. Ultimately it is the decision of HR whether or not to grant each bargaining unit member's voluntary staff reduction request.

The deadline for teachers to submit their request for a voluntary staff reduction based on philosophical differences or health and safety is **Friday, Jan. 20, 5 p.m.** Individuals requesting a voluntary staff reduction must provide specific reasons for making the request. Requests can only be submitted at <https://bit.ly/3FkILDg>. 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 or early February.

Is Your License Expiring?

If your license from ODE is expiring June 30, 2023, and you have a limited employment contract, you must complete the required coursework or CEUs necessary for renewal and apply before Mar. 15 to be licensed by ODE for the 2023–2024 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 fingerprinting must be completed electronically through Webcheck. A permanent certificate still requires fingerprinting every five years. The Human Resources Department, located at 3700 S. High St., 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. Go

to <https://bit.ly/3LCxYZ9> to schedule a date and time to complete your fingerprints. If you have questions about the date of your last background check, or if you don't plan to renew your license, contact Leslie Butler, Human Resources, Teacher Licensure, at license@columbus.k12.oh.us. Questions concerning CEUs or the license renewal process should be directed to Leslie Butler at license@columbus.k12.oh.us.

Looking for a Job Share?

Job sharing provides a way for teachers who wish to continue their employment with Columbus City Schools in less than a full-time capacity. Most job shares are a 50/50 split, but other arrangements can take place.

If you would like to job share with another bargaining-unit member, each partner must complete their own job-share packet. 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). To download the job-share packet for the 2023–2024 school year, go to the CCS Intranet or download it at <http://bit.ly/3V196YI>.

Each partner's completed job-share packet is due to CCS Human Resources, no later than **Friday, Jan. 20, 5 p.m.** If you have further questions about job sharing, contact Cindy Love at (614) 253-4731. If you are planning to job share and to carry insurance through CCS, the rate you will pay will be significantly higher than what you would pay as a full-time teacher. Contact CCS Human Resources Benefits Department to determine your cost.

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: **Kim Ogilbee, Starling K-8, Michelle Cappetta, Columbus City Prep. School for Girls, and Erin Ottobre, World Language MS.** 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 to whom you are donating the sick days.
- ☐ **CEA Spring 2023 Elections:** The following elected positions will be filled in the 2022–2023 election cycle: **NEA Local Delegates; NEA State-at-Large Delegates*; 2023–24 OEA Delegates, Governors for Districts 1, 4, 5, 6, and 10.** The declaration period began on **Wednesday, Jan. 4.** Declaration forms will be available for download on the CEA website or may be obtained by contacting Michelle Crouse (crousem@ceaohio.org). **Declaration forms must be received in the CEA office by Friday, Feb. 3, 4:30 p.m. Ballots will be sent to buildings by Feb. 17. The voting window begins Tuesday, Feb. 21, and ends Thursday, Mar. 9.** Members of the Elections Committee will **collect ballots for tally Friday, Mar. 10.** Call Elections Chair Brittany Pierce at (440) 225-2631 with any questions.

* NEA State-at-Large Declaration Forms must be submitted to William Baird at OEA by January 31, 2023.