

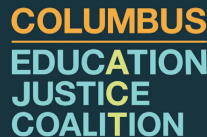
**RENEW our commitment to  
Columbus' future.**

**REINVEST in our students  
on November 7.**

**Educators and Our Community  
are Voting 'YES' on the  
Columbus City Schools Levy**



**OUR STUDENTS  
OUR SCHOOLS  
OUR COMMUNITY  
OUR FUTURE**



## Why We March

When we came back to school, instead of wondering if students and staff in my unit would be "graced" with an emergency day due to the heat index topping over 100 degrees around our brick building, I found contractors working to install new HVAC units in our classrooms with \*working\* thermostats for each teacher to set. Three days of sweating last summer on the picket line had helped turn around years of sweating inside the classrooms at Mifflin Middle.

My usual case of jitters before the first day of school intensified with the anger I felt at CCS. I had spent 10 years watching sweat drip from my face onto the tables and papers of my students. A giant fan I purchased with my own money had been the best I could do (long before Dr. Dixon ever thought to send spare box fans our way in 2021). A revolving door of superintendents went through consultants and five-year plans and promises of new schools. But the hurt I felt changed to pride when I realized I could tell my students this Labor Day that protest and organizing had won again. We had air conditioning in my room for the first time ever because our members held the line and our students' families backed us.

Even though the year started off on a positive note for me, I know that education is often two steps forward and one step back. We have members and students across the district facing a number of challenges: transportation, staffing, safety, and more. Solidarity means that we always look to the needs of our brother and sisters. Nobody knows better than us how badly our schools need funded. Nobody knows better than us how hard educators work to hold our district accountable for funds.

So why did our union march last fall? We protested not just for one classroom or for one building in Northeast Columbus.

We marched for the dignity of all educators and students to get the tools we need for ourselves and our students. The primary tool to defend ourselves and our students is the contract. In 2023, to implement everything we've bargained for in that contract means we must reach out to voters in Columbus and ask them to support this fall's school levy.

Voting for the levy is the next step in getting the schools Columbus students deserve. It is not a blank check to our Board of Education. It is not forgive-and-forget for past missteps by CCS leadership. It is a necessity to protect what we have built with our union. As a Columbus educator and homeowner, I'm willing to canvas for it. Willing to phonebank for it. Willing to vote and to pay for it. Please step up as a proud member of the Columbus Education Association and support this levy.

In Solidarity,  
Joe Decker, Teacher, Mifflin Middle School  
CEA District 3 Governor

## Parent-Teacher Conference Dates

Every year, two workdays are set aside for parent-teacher conferences. These dates are always scheduled on the Wednesday before the Thanksgiving holiday and on President's Day. However, Article 1401 of the *Master Agreement* provides each school the opportunity to deviate from the established parent-teacher conference dates. A majority vote of the full-time teachers in your building and the concurrence of your building principal is required to select a different date and time for your school's conferences. Once your school's parent-teacher conference dates have been changed, all teachers must comply with the selected schedule and date(s). Note that no parent-teacher conferences should be scheduled after school on the first Thursday of any month. This is because Association business occurs chiefly on Thursdays. We have negotiated the right for CEA representatives to take care of Association business.

## CEA Fall Fling—Be There on Friday!

The Fall Fling is this Friday! Everyone needs to attend this year. Join us Friday, Sept. 15, from 4–8 p.m. at the Hilton Columbus at Easton, 3900 Chagrin Dr. Your Association just welcomed more than 400 new members this school year. Help them celebrate their new endeavor and welcome them to the CEA family. Our annual party features music, great food, and prizes. Get to know your colleagues. Meet candidates for public office and local elected officials. Admission is free. Beer and wine are just \$2.

**Contact Teri Mullins at [tmullins@ceaohio.org](mailto:tmullins@ceaohio.org) if you would like to volunteer.**



## Flu Shots will be available at the Fling! It's your best 'shot' at staying safe.

While you're enjoying your evening of festivities at the Fling, take a moment to protect yourself by getting your free flu shot. By getting your flu vaccination, you are not only protecting yourself but those in the community that are more vulnerable. This also means fewer days affected and a quicker recovery.

Sign up ahead of time by getting your documentation completed so we will know how many of you to expect.  
Go to: <http://waitwhile.com/welcome/columbuscityschools->

# Grievance Update

CEA works 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 grievances we are working to resolve. To view each grievance in its entirety, go to <http://bit.ly/3sHcvaO>.

Building/Unit Administrator	Statement of Grievance	Relief Requested	Disposition
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 grievant's class load.	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...	Arbitration requested, pending arbitrator selection and hearing dates.
Cassady ES Amber Hall	The CEA/Board Agreement was violated, misinterpreted and/or misapplied when the principal of Cassady ES, Amber Hall, subjected the grievant to repeated and/or extreme verbal abuse in...	That the principal apologize in writing to the grievant, that the principal does not subject the grievant to repeated and/or extreme verbal abuse in the future; that the administration work with the principal to control...	Awaiting Step 2 response.
CCS Administration	The Columbus City Schools Board of Education and/or its agents violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied provisions of the Master Agreement by unilaterally modifying the online application...	All CEA bargaining unit members who applied and were denied continuing contract status during the 2022-2023 school year on the basis of not having received "accomplished" or "skilled" overall ratings, but who have...	Grievance filed at Step 2. Awaiting response.
PAR Administrator Rhonda Rice (Correction)	The Columbus City Schools Board of Education and/or its Agents violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied negotiated provisions of the 2022-2025 CEA-CCS Master Agreement...	Grievant shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: Grievant shall immediately be paid in full for supplemental wages owed based upon her 2022-2023 Peer Assistance and Review...	Step 2 hearing pending.
Columbus Africentric 9-12 Sherri Williams	The CEA/Board Agreement was violated, misinterpreted and/or misapplied when the principal of Africentric 9-12, Sherri Williams, subjected the grievant to extreme verbal abuse at an after school meeting.	That the principal apologize in writing to the grievant; that the principal does not subject the grievants to repeated and/or extreme verbal abuse in the future; that the administration work with the principal to...	Step 1 hearing pending.
CCS Administration	CCS Hearing Officer Dianne McLinn, in her capacity as agent of the Board of Education of Columbus City Schools, violated the Columbus Education Association-Columbus City Schools...	The grievant will be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: The district shall immediately withdraw the Written Reprimand issued on or about June 7, 2022 from the grievant's...	Step 2 hearing pending.
Career & Technical Education Department Jennifer Meade	The CCS Board of Education and/or its agents violated, misinterpreted, or misapplied provisions of the 2022-2025 CEA/CCS Master agreement when the Director of Career and Technical...	The grievant shall be made whole by ceasing the direct, verbal criticism in front of other staff members; immediately ceasing the extreme and/or repeated verbal abuse; the grievant be provided the appropriate admin...	At the Step 1 meeting on June 1, 2023, the member she was subjected to extreme verbal abuse and...

## Join the Sick Leave Bank

The *CEA Master Agreement* provides a very important benefit:

our Sick Leave Bank. Every year, some of us experience devastating illnesses and injuries requiring long recovery periods; or, we simply haven't accumulated enough sick leave to cover extreme situations. You can help by donating **two sick days** to the **Sick Leave Bank**. It's easy. The donation form is available on the **CCS Intranet** under "**Human Resources**" or the **CEA website** under "**Forms**." **The deadline for donations is Friday, Sept. 29.** Any bargaining unit member who exhausts their sick leave may apply to borrow up to 10 days from the bank. They will be required to pay back the borrowed days as additional days are earned. **When you retire or resign, the two days you deposited to join will be returned to you.** If you **joined the Sick Leave Bank in the past, you do not need to rejoin, nor do you need to make an additional donation.** In order to withdraw days from the sick leave bank, bargaining unit members must complete a **Sick Leave Bank Withdrawal Form**, located on the **CEA website**.

**DEADLINE:**  
**Friday,**  
**September 29**

## PAR/CEU Classes

The Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program facilitates professional development sessions which are open to all CCS educators. Session descriptions can be found in the CCS PD System (PDS) #57848. Call the PAR Office at (614) 365-5110 for more information. Upcoming sessions include:



Sept. 19	<b>Classroom Management - Routines and Procedures: Building your toolkit of strategies</b> (4:30-6:30 p.m. at Hudson)
Sept. 21	<b>New Garden Leader Orientation</b> (4:30-6:30 p.m. Kunz-Brundige Franklin County Extension Building, 2548 Carmack Rd)
Sept. 21	<b>Goal Setting for Counselors</b> (4:30-6:30 p.m. at Hudson)
Sept. 26	<b>Beginning Canvas for MS/HS Math Teachers</b> (3:30-5:30 p.m. at Hudson)

## This Year 53 Weeks and 27 Pays

Due to this year being a 53-week year, there would have been a three-week pay gap from the final pay in August until the first pay in September. Your Union negotiated an MOU with the District to include a 27th pay day. September is a three-pay month; in that month the third pay will be reduced by half. March is also a three-pay month; the second pay of March 2024 will be reduced by half. On each of those pay days, deductions will also be reduced by half. If you have questions, call the CEA Office at (614) 253-4731. To download the MOU, go to <https://bit.ly/3OUJr91>.

## 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: **Jimmie Beall, Lincoln Park ES;** and **Buffy Burroughs, Avondale ES.** To donate, enter your name at the top of the **CCS Report of Employee Absence form**. In the "**Other**" section, select "**SL Donation**." Just below that, indicate the members' name.

**Attention Faculty Representatives:** The first **CEA Legislative Assembly** will be held at **Villa Milano** (1630 Schrock Road) on **Sept. 14 at 4:30 p.m.**

**Professional Leave:** There is \$200,000 available to bargaining unit members each year to pursue professional development opportunities outside the school district. These include taking a course or attending a conference or workshop. Forms to apply for professional leave are available in the "**Forms**" section of the CEA website or the CCS Intranet, along with the full leave guidelines. Act as soon as you know the date of your conference because funds are exhausted quickly.

**Membership is Critical to Our Success!** Now more than ever, membership in CEA is critical to our continued success. If you know someone new to your building or unit, approach the person and ask them to become a member of CEA. We have made joining CEA simple and quick. **Step 1:** Click "JOIN" on the homepage at [www.ceahio.org](http://www.ceahio.org); **Step 2:** Download the CEA Membership form to your device and complete it. (It is a fillable pdf for your convenience); **Step 3:** Email the completed form to CEA Membership Coordinator Kathy Wilkes at [wilkesk@ceahio.org](mailto:wilkesk@ceahio.org). Call CEA at (614) 253-4731 with questions.

**Education First Credit Union** exists solely to serve our member-owners. You'll benefit from fewer and lower fees, lower loan rates, and higher deposit rates. Open your account today! Go to <https://www.educu.org/join-today/>.

**Correction:** In the Grievance section of *The CEA Voice* for Sept. 5, 2023, Rhonda Welch's name was incorrectly listed as the administrator. We apologize for the error.

**CEA Needs Your Personal Contact Info:** We need your **personal (non-CCS) email address** and your **cell phone number** so we can communicate important information to you. CEA needs to communicate critical information to you quickly, and that is not always the *CEA Voice*. If you are not receiving messages from CEA, send an email with your contact information to Kathy Wilkes at [wilkesk@ceahio.org](mailto:wilkesk@ceahio.org).

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.

**CEA Pre-Paid Legal Services Plan**  
**OEA/NEA Attorney Referral Program**



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