

# The CEA Voice

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Columbus Education Association

December 2, 2013

## Teacher evaluation: A moving target

State legislators began this week discussing changes to the new teacher evaluation process. Senate Bill 229 is not a done deal. It still has to go to the House and then must go up for vote. But if it's adopted, it would change these significant items:

- Less weight on student growth: from 50 to 35-percent required growth
- Fewer evaluations for teachers given an "accomplished" rating: from every other year to every third year
- Fewer evaluations for "skilled" teachers: from annually to every other year

The proposed changes are meant to ease the administrative burden, especially during this period of great change that includes implementing the Common Core and fulfilling the requirements of the Third-Grade Reading Guarantee. The Ohio Education Association reports, "Providing more flexibility for school districts in determining the frequency of evaluations for highly rated teachers will help schools focus the limited time and resources of evaluators of teachers who are new to the profession and teachers who need to raise their evaluation ratings."

We will keep you posted.

## The Mayor is still with us

Mayor Michael Coleman remains committed to education in Columbus, even though voters turned down the district's levy request in November. Coleman has proposed committing \$7.5 million from the \$796 million city budget to education and creating a cabinet-level position to help improve education.

"We have 33,000 children living in the Columbus City School District attending "D-rated" or "F-rated" schools. This entire community must continue to fight for these kids," he told the news media. The "education fund," as he called it, will be targeted at schools' most critical needs.

Another aim is to attract more money from the private sector, state and federal governments, foundations and the school district. The Mayor's budget now goes to City Council for approval or changes.

Coleman has been a champion of our cause, leading the charge to enhance services for our families. He is an advocate for adding quality preschools to our community, reigning in unregulated growth of failing charter schools, more effectively monitoring CCS expenses and uniting leaders from all sectors of the community to create pathways to success for more of our city's young people. His Columbus Education Commission spent hours discussing these issues and developing a plan to improve the landscape for our kids.

## It's just Facebook! Or is it?

It's fun to share pictures of your dinner out with friends and to comment on your family's antics on social media. But educators are held to a different standard when they post inappropriate material on Facebook or other social media sites. You could be subject to disciplinary action, lose your teaching license or even find yourself in court.



Here are a few tips to help minimize the possibility of negative consequences:

- ❖ Do not post, comment or write anything on a social media network that you would not want to see on the front page of the local newspaper or would not say or do in front of students, parents or the board of education.
- ❖ Do not post material to your account(s), someone else's account or in a Facebook group that could be considered inappropriate or unprofessional, including photographs, graphics and links. Additionally, you should monitor the content of your account and immediately remove anything inappropriate or questionable that someone else has posted.
- ❖ Never post any information that would identify a student.
- ❖ Refrain from posting critical comments about students, parents and school officials. School employees do not have the same free speech rights as the general public. The content and impact of some speech and images may subject members to discipline, up to and including termination.
- ❖ Mark all social networking accounts private. All requests for connections should be approved personally by you.

If your administrator threatens you with discipline because of your use of a social networking site, contact CEA at 253-4731 immediately.

## A member's perspective

Last night, I had a nightmare. I was one of three teachers at my school to be riffed (RIF means reduction in force, layoffs). And though I know that this nightmare might become a reality, I am comforted by the transparency with which Dr. Good presented to the faculty representatives last Thursday.

The levy failed, and we have to make budget cuts. It is hard to imagine how to do any more with any less, but Dr. Good outlined a thoughtful, inclusive process that looks first at programs and things to cut before looking at people to layoff.

There is a misconception in the public that the district has a budget surplus. We do not. We made a commitment



to the taxpayers to trim \$200 million over the next four years. If we do not cut \$50 million this year, those cuts are compounded next year. The sequestration has made our budget woes even worse, and we have to present a balanced budget plan to the state for next school year.

By now you have seen the Pro-Forma Program Analysis steps that the school board will take to ensure that we are spending money on programs that increase student learning. Any program that exceeds state minimums has to be looked at for its sustainable effectiveness on student learning. While there is value in many programs, we have to look at how it supports the district's five goals:

- Early Childhood Education
- Reading Achievement
- Mathematics Achievement
- College and Career Pathways
- Leadership Development

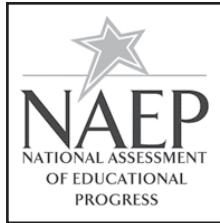
As a union member, I couldn't be more appreciative to Dr. Good that our local is included in this process.

It cannot be overstated how unfortunate it is that extreme cuts to schools at the state and federal levels, combined with a failed levy, result in devastating choices for the working families in our classrooms. We should all remember that come election time.

*Courtney Johnson, Ft. Hayes HS Teacher*

## Progress, progress...sort of

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is a nationally-administered test that is given every two years. Known as the "Nation's Report Card," the latest results show that our students are doing better nationally in reading and math than they have in past years. But gaps remain. National reports tell us the following:



- ✧ This year's results, compared to results in 2011, show average incremental gains of about one or two points on a 500-point scale in math and reading in both grades.
- ✧ Eighth-graders gained three points in reading—the largest gain in recent years.

A sampling of the nation's fourth- and eighth-graders has been taking the exams since the early 1990s, and students of all backgrounds have shown improvement over the years.

This is good news. However, we know where the problems lie. There remains a 26-point gap, for example, between how white and African American fourth-graders performed in math and a 21-point gap between eighth-graders from these segments in reading.

U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan responded by saying, "If America's students are to remain competitive in a knowledge-based economy, our public schools must greatly accelerate the rate of progress of the last four years and do more to narrow America's large achievement gaps. It is an urgent moral and economic imperative that our schools do a better job of preparing students for today's globally-competitive world."

## United Way: 90 years of support

Our campaign to support United Way of Central Ohio ends today. Be proud! Your work benefits our families in so many important ways. We thank the following buildings/units that have



completed their campaigns: Alpine ES, Avondale ES, Beechcroft HS, Briggs HS, Broadleigh ES, Brookhaven HS, CEA Office, Cassidy ES, Centennial HS, Champion MS, Columbus City Prep. School for Girls, Columbus Global Academy, Como ES, Dominion MS, Duxberry Park ES, East Columbus ES, East HS, East Linden ES, Georgian Heights ES, Highland ES, Johnson Park MS, Leawood ES, Liberty ES, Linden-McKinley STEM 7-12, Livingston K-6, Maize ES, Marion-Franklin HS, Mifflin HS, North Linden ES, Northgate Center, Oakmont ES, PAR, Psychologists, Salem ES, Scottwood ES, Shady Lane ES, Southwood ES, Starling K-8, Sullivant ES, Valley Forge ES, Walnut Ridge HS, West Broad ES, Westmoor MS, Woodcrest ES and Woodward Park MS.

## Retired? We have a group for you

Just because you're retired doesn't mean you can't see your cherished former colleagues and share good times together. That's what CEA-R is for. Join them and you can travel locally and abroad, take classes and participate in clubs and help CEA with some of its office activities.

Here are some of the goings-on CEA-R offers you:

- The Book of the Month Club meets the second Tuesday of each month at 1 p.m. at the Griswold Senior Center, 777 N. High St. at Route 161 in Worthington. For information, call Doris Eichensler-Gordon at (616) 882-9308.
- Enhance your computer skills with Web-Wise Boomers & Seniors. Visit [www.WebWiseBoomersSeniors.com](http://www.WebWiseBoomersSeniors.com) or call Barbara at 937-2124.
- "Deck the Halls of the White House," a musical concert and lunch will take place from 11 a.m.–2 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 18, at The Boat House, 679 W. Spring Street. Dan Delk, a Columbus resident and local architect, will talk about the decoration selection process at the White House and share details of the reception he attended with the First Lady.

Visit [www.cea-retired.com](http://www.cea-retired.com) for additional information, or call CEA at 253-4731.

## Elect your leaders

Get ready. The 2014 CEA Spring Elections are coming, with voting taking place Feb. 18–Mar. 3. You will vote to fill the following positions: President and Vice President; Governors in Districts 1, 4, 5 and 10; OEA Delegates and NEA Delegates. Declaration of candidacy is Dec. 2, 2013–Jan. 27, 2014. Campaigning begins Jan. 28 and will end Mar. 3. We will count the votes on Mar. 4. If we need a runoff election, we will hold it from Mar. 18–31.

Consider running for a CEA office. It's a great way to get involved and to work for the good of the profession right here in your home district. Candidate forms are available from CEA.

## Job-Sharing Request • 2014–2015

If you are looking for a job share partner, fill out the form below and return it to the CEA office, **Attention: Ezetta Murray**. A list of prospective participants will be compiled and sent to each person submitting this form to assist in finding a job share partner. Even if you participated last year, **fill out a new form this year**. Return the form by **Friday, Dec. 6** through school mail to CEA, Rt #1.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Grade Level/Subject Area: \_\_\_\_\_

Current School: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Certification Area(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Next year's preference: (what, where, with who?) \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_