

The CEA Voice

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OEA RA Recap

More than 80 CEA members represented you as delegates at the Ohio Education Association Representative Assembly (RA) on Saturday, Dec. 6. The OEA RA is the top governing body of our state association and is comprised of more than one thousand delegates elected by local associations.

Delegates were addressed by NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia, who spoke about the unchecked growth of the Global Education Reform Movement (GERM). While GERM was a tongue-in-cheek reference to the tidal forces of changes in education, President Eskelsen Garcia's message, though national in nature, resonated with the RA delegates.

"We know some of the world's best schools are public schools that have enough resources," said Eskelsen Garcia. "We aren't factory workers, churning out students like cogs. Take the right lessons from Finland," she continued. "They've done away with standardized tests and all educators are unionized. They have no merit pay, no pay by test score. They've committed to preparing the best teachers to make sure all students get a quality public education, making it harder to get into their colleges of education. There is no 'Teach For Finland.'"

RA delegates soundly voted to endorse Tai Hayden (Moler ES) for the active teacher seat on the State Teacher Retirement System board. Hayden has served on the STRS board since 2006.

RA delegates also approved the following new business items, including:

- Endorsing the NEA High Standards-Fair Testing campaign and encouraging local boards of education to adopt the "Time2Teach/Time2Learn" resolution. It can be downloaded at <http://bit.ly/time2teach>
- Addressing the issues of the Resident Educator Program performance assessment with ODE and key state officials
- Inviting local boards of education, local superintendents, administrators and supportive parent groups to an OEA lobby day in the spring

Additionally, RA delegates and management staff contributed more than \$26,000 to the OEA Fund for Children and Public Education. The Capital District/CEA contributed nearly \$2,000 to the fund.

"5 of 8 Rule"

On December 8 and 9, the State Board of Education met to decide the fate of the "5 of 8" staffing requirement in the Ohio Operating Standards. The Standards are a collection of minimum requirements that school districts and nonpublic schools must follow when managing their schools and educating their students.

On Monday, Dec. 8, the Board heard testimony from many individuals opposing the elimination of the "5 of 8 rule." Included among them were two CEA members—Dyann Taylor, an ES/MS Field Librarian, and District 10 Governor Ann Aeschbury, an elementary art teacher at Winterset ES and Indian Springs ES.

"The reasoning that you have suggested for rescinding this rule," said Taylor, "is that it would give district boards of education more flexibility in providing services for the students in

their district. I would argue that you are correct—it would give districts more flexibility to cut all of the programs included in [the standards]."

"My colleagues who are classroom teachers," said Aeschbury, "had one three-hour course in either visual art or music in college. That's it. It is not their area of expertise. They have spent years perfecting their teaching methods in language arts, math, social studies and science; and, they are rock stars when teaching those subjects."

On Dec. 9 the Board voted to eliminate the "5 of 8" staffing requirement. Despite three hours of debate among board members, the 14–5 vote removes the minimum staffing standard from the Ohio Administrative Code.

The State Board of Education did amend the rule to require the Accountability Committee to develop a method for reporting the number of school nurses, counselors, librarians, social workers and teachers of fine arts, music and physical education on local school district report cards.

The amendment also requires school personnel assigned to elementary fine arts, music and physical education to hold the special teaching certificate or multi-age license in the subject to which they are assigned.

CEA will continue to keep you informed of additional developments as a result of this action by the State Board of Education. Keep reading *The CEA Voice* for additional updates.

How I Got to College:

*A Student Success Story by Brian Fraley,
Marion-Franklin Graduate 2010*



Reflecting upon his years in Columbus City Schools, Marion-Franklin alumnus and current Ohio State University engineering student, Brian Fraley expresses heartfelt gratitude. When asked how his teachers and counselors helped him prepare for college, Brian did not hesitate in his response. "I had the opportunity to be mentored by many wonderful teachers and counselors," Fraley replied. Brian credits his teachers and counselors with instilling in him the importance of learning and understanding material. He says, "Knowing how to easily and quickly digest completely foreign information is especially important in engineering."

With Brian's teachers guiding the way academically and his counselors making certain that he was prepared to enroll in college, I Know I Can stepped in to ensure that finances would not inhibit his pursuit of a college degree. "I Know I Can has seen me through all of the struggles that come with being a first-generation college student." Many of those struggles include financial, cultural and procedural barriers, as well as taken-for-granted knowledge among students who have a family history of higher education participation.

Brian is on track to graduate from The Ohio State University in two semesters with a degree in Mechanical Engineering.

Inspired? You can help. IKIC's Annual Campaign has just kicked off. Pledge cards will arrive in your school mailboxes this week. We appreciate your support. Every dollar counts in our efforts to help motivated students like Brian enroll in college and obtain a degree.

MLK Dinner: Don't get left out

On Jan. 15 CEA will honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and recognize community members who have carried his spirit through their work. This year's celebration is at the Hyatt Regency. The King dinner is always well attended, so make sure you purchase your tickets early. Tickets are \$30 each with tables of eight at \$240. Call CEA to make your reservation.

This year we honor Dr. C. Dexter Wise III with the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award. Dr. Wise is the Pastor of Faith Ministries Interdenominational Church. The Helen Jenkins Davis Award goes to Cora Miller, a retired CCS educator and librarian who now serves as a CEA administrative assistant.

This year's dinner features keynote speaker Roland Martin, who is a nationally syndicated columnist, radio host and author noted for his coverage of voter suppression and other issues during the 2012 general election.

Are You Retiring?

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. It is tempting to wait, but we advise that you notify CCS as soon as you have made a decision. It is important that you make the best financial decision for yourself. However, early notice helps the district plan more effectively. Advance notice may prevent a colleague from being laid off. It may help the district decide where the greatest classroom needs exist.

If you are retiring, you must provide a letter to the CCS Human Resources Department with your employee ID number and your last day of service. You should hand deliver the letter and take a copy to be time-stamped for your records.

License Renewal and Fingerprinting

If your license expires in 2015, you should have already received an email from Human Resources. Your teaching license is your most important credential. Read the email carefully. Failure to comply with renewal regulations could result in non-renewal from the district.

If your certificate/or license from the Ohio Department of Education is expiring June 30, 2015, you must complete the required coursework or CEUs necessary for renewal before June 30, 2015, to be certified by the State of Ohio for the 2015–2016 school year.

Go online and complete the renewal application and pay your renewal fee. You must submit official transcript(s) showing completed coursework at the time of your application renewal to Jennifer Meade, LPDC, 6th Street Annex by Mar. 10, 2015, to avoid non-renewal in May. Expiration of your certificate/license may result in suspension of pay and initiation of termination/ non-renewal proceedings.

If you have lived continuously in the State of Ohio for the previous five years, and have a BCI background check on file with ODE, you will need to complete only an FBI background check once every five years, as long as there is no break in service with Columbus City Schools.

If you have not lived continuously in the State of Ohio for the past five years, you will need to complete both a BCI and FBI background check, if the reports on file with ODE are more than five years old.

All fingerprint results must be completed electronically through WebCheck, which allows the prints to be sent immediately to BCI. The Human Resources Department oversees this process and is located at 270 E. State Street. The fingerprint office is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m. The fee is \$40. Accepted forms of payment are credit/debit card, or money order made payable to Columbus City Schools.

If you have any questions about coursework requirements, the date of your last background check, or do not plan to renew your certificate/license, contact Nancy Young, Human Resources, Teacher Certification/Licensure, 365-5658. Any questions concerning CEU credits should be directed to Jennifer Meade with the LPDC, 6th Street Annex, at 365-5039.

IEP Anywhere/Infinite Campus Integration

IEP Anywhere and Infinite Campus are being integrated. There will be two training sessions that Special Education teachers can attend, Wednesday Dec. 17, from 4:30–6:30 p.m. and Tuesday, Jan. 13, from 4:30–6:30 p.m. Both sessions will be held at the Hudson Distribution Center. These training sessions will go over the integration process and screen shots of the new look to IEP Anywhere.

Look for a PowerPoint to be posted to Blackboard soon. The tentative date for the integration to go live is Jan. 5. You will still need to send your IEPs to your Special Education secretaries at Hudson. You will only send sections 13, 14, Invitations, Attempts and PR01s to your assigned secretaries. Call your coordinator or special education supervisor if you have further questions.

Tough times? LifeScope is here for you

We all have problems from time to time, whether it's trouble making ends meet, difficulty finding childcare or challenges in our family relationships. CEA has negotiated an assistance program, a benefit to assist you in coping with life's challenges. It's a way to get help, and it's confidential. Our program is run by LifeScope, which provides supportive resources via phone and on its website. When you call 800-227-2195, you can get a referral for matters related to work, family, health and other areas of your life. The following services are available:

- Confidential, 24/7 phone access to licensed counselors
- Free short-term counseling to help address life stressors
- Articles and tip sheets on living a stress-free lifestyle
- A Skill Builder training module on stress reduction
- Self-assessments to gauge your stress level
- Information on meditation, yoga and other stress-management techniques

The website at www.LifeScopeEAP.com features articles, assessments, webinars, financial calculators, searchable databases, skill builders and more. Log on with username "columbuscityschools" and password "guest" to learn more.

Don't wait until stress builds to a health-threatening level. Get help. It's your right.

Become a Master Teacher Candidate

Are you a leader in your building? Do you go above and beyond for your students? Do you enjoy collaborating with others to benefit your students? Do you empower your students? If so, you should apply to become an Ohio Master Teacher. CCS is once again encouraging teachers to apply for the Master Teacher program. The Master Teacher program allows teachers to demonstrate their practice based on the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession. Now that it is a recognized path for an advanced-level educator license in Ohio, it provides even stronger motivation for teachers to complete the program.

To be eligible for the Master Teacher designation, *educators must at least:

- ✧ Hold a valid professional teaching license or certificate;
- ✧ Have taught a minimum of seven years (currently eighth year of teaching);
- ✧ Work a minimum of 120 days during the current school year;
- ✧ Work under a teaching contract/employed as a teacher.

*Teachers and other instructional personnel working outside of traditional classroom roles and core academic areas are eligible to apply.

Teachers who successfully complete the program will receive three CEUs.

Go to: <http://www.ccsob.us/MasterTeacher.aspx> for more information. This year's deadline for both initial and renewal applications is Friday, Mar. 27, 2015. If you have any questions, contact Karmen McCaslin (CCS email or 365-5039).

Special Note

- ❑ CEA wants to thank Easthaven ES and Gifted & Talented who recently completed their United Way Campaign.