

# The CEA Voice

Tracey D. Johnson, President

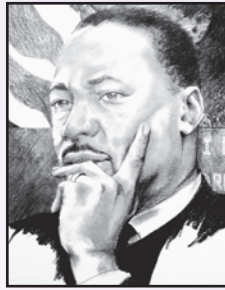
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## MLK: Why We Celebrate

On Aug. 25, 1963, one man challenged millions to unite and work together for the common cause of creating a better world for future generations. We remember that challenge and the sacrifices that followed each year at our Annual CEA Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Awards Dinner.



This year's celebration is Jan. 15 at the Hyatt Regency. The King Dinner is always well attended, so make sure you purchase your tickets today. Tickets are \$30 each with tables of eight at \$240. Call CEA to make your reservation.

At the dinner, we honor community members who honor the spirit of Dr. King's work. This year, we honor Dr. C. Dexter Wise III, Pastor of Faith Ministries Interdenominational Church, and Cora Miller, CCS retired educator.

Dr. King's legacy has inspired civil rights activists for the past 40 years, and will continue to do so as long as there is injustice in the world. Until his death, King was steadfast in his commitment to the transforming of American society through nonviolent activism. King's main legacy was to secure progress on U.S. civil rights. Just days after his assassination, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1968 which, among other things, prohibited discrimination in housing and housing-related transactions on the basis of race, religion or national origin.

Organizations like the NAACP have carried on his work on behalf of all people of color. We can always look to Dr. King's actions—and, especially, his words—to remind us that his work is not yet done. Some of his most well-known words are among his closing remarks at the NAACP Emancipation Day Rally in 1957:

I close by saying there is nothing greater in all the world than freedom. It's worth going to jail for. It's worth losing a job for. It's worth dying for. My friends go out this evening determined to achieve this freedom which God wants for all of His children.

## Records Day—Your Day!

CEA members have never had a district-wide records day in the middle of the school year—until now. The leadership team of CEA, in collaboration with the other employee unions and associations, took your concerns about a lack of time to complete the many additional tasks to the administration. The administration heard these concerns and wanted to know more.

The CEA Survey with more than 1,500 member responses made it clear how mandated state and district-level data entry and collection has held our profession hostage. This is yet another example of how powerful we are when

we speak together with ONE voice. As a direct result of your advocacy, at the Dec. 16 CCS Board of Education meeting, the BOE voted unanimously to designate Wed., Jan. 14, as a district-wide Records Day and a day of non-attendance for students.

On this day, there will be no PD pull-outs, no forced TBTs, no suggested meetings by supervisors or administrators; they also get and need this time. This is your day to spend working in your building on whatever professional items you need to do such as grade cards, progress reports, IEPs, RIMPs, lesson planning etc.

Remember, it is a work day. All members are expected to report to work at their regular start time and work the full day. Let's show everyone how valuable this day is to us by taking full advantage of the time we have to get those things done that take valuable time away from our ability to provide additional support for our students.

## Ohio Achievement Assessment—Third Grade

There are multiple opportunities for third-grade students to be assessed in grade-level reading skills for the 2014–15 school year. The Ohio Achievement Assessment (OAA) Third Grade Reading Test has two test windows: Fall 2014 for all third-grade students and spring 2015 for third-grade students who score below the Ohio Department of Education's designated promotion cut score of 394 on their fall test. Students who score 394 or higher on the fall OAA will take the PARCC Reading assessment in the spring of 2015. All third graders will take the PARCC math assessment in the spring of 2015.

There is pending legislation that may change the testing procedure for students with a score on the fall OAA Reading Assessment between 394 and 399. This legislation calls for these students to take the Reading OAA in the spring of 2015, so that they will have an opportunity to reach the proficient (400) level or higher. Remember, the Third Grade Reading OAA is supposed to be an end-of-the-year test, not a beginning-of-the-year test. Remember, too, that each of these student's scores effects the Performance Indicator (PI) of each of their schools and our district. This legislation has passed the House and is now in the Senate. Stay tuned for upcoming information.

All Columbus City School students with a score of 393 or lower (without a retention exemption) took the NWEA/MAP as an alternative assessment during the testing window of Nov. 24–Dec. 12, 2014. Students who scored a 184 or higher on this reading alternative assessment were eligible for promotion to the fourth grade; however, they still must take the Reading OAA again in the spring of 2015.

All Columbus City School third-grade students with a score of 399 or below on the fall Reading OAA must have a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan (RIMP). This



is regardless of whether or not a student had a reading diagnostic result of “on track.” A RIMP for any student scoring 399 or below is necessary because the details of the K–3 Literacy Measure state that schools and districts will receive a per student demotion for every student who does not pass the Reading OAA by the end of the third grade and was not on a RIMP. All RIMPs were to be completed by Friday, Dec. 5, 2014.

If you have any questions, feel free to call or email Dr. Keith Harris (365-5786) or Dr. Machel Kline (365-6471).

## Know Your Governor: Carol Dixon

Carol Dixon felt the pull of union involvement early. Her father was a member of the UAW.

“I saw firsthand as a young child the issues that his union had to fight for, the aid that the union provided to its members during strikes and the lasting health and other benefits that were ultimately won for the union members,” she said.

That’s why Dixon served as a Senior Faculty Representative and then decided to deepen her service. She ran and won election to serve as District 6 Governor.

Born and raised in Bloomfield, Conn., Carol has been teaching for 25 years, 22 years of them with Columbus City Schools. Previously, she taught at a Montessori school. Carol taught English at Eastmoor HS as the school transitioned to become Eastmoor Academy HS and at Briggs HS and served as part of the federal program, “Youth Experiencing Achievement at the Career Centers.”

Dixon’s most significant experience was during the fight against Senate Bill 5. “As a Senior Faculty Rep at Briggs, I felt the responsibility to get more substantially involved, to make sure that every voice is heard and counts. Briggs’ staff rallied; we collected petition signatures; we attended the Statehouse hearings and we chanted, ‘This is what democracy looks like!’ The culmination of all of these efforts was the most exciting night of all—the live announcement that Senate Bill 5 had been defeated.”

Dixon’s most important goal is to help others feel the excitement of union involvement and to build future CEA leaders. When she isn’t busy representing you, Dixon and her husband, Michael, are spending time with their three children and two grandchildren, who all live within five miles of their Columbus home. Carol also enjoys antiques, traveling, and reading.



Carol Dixon

## Spring Elections: It’s all about you

CEA Governors are essential to the work of CEA. Governors represent CEA members in establishing association goals and priorities. They take active part in developing recommendations and voting on resolutions and other policy statements. Our delegates to the Ohio Education Association and the National Education Association also fill a vital role. They receive full updates on state and federal policy and take CEA’s position in to larger arenas to ensure our voice is heard.

You will have a chance to run for one of these positions and to vote for these representatives during CEA’s Spring Elections. Seats to be filled this year are Governors for Districts 3, 6 and two High School At-Large (three-year terms); 2015 NEA Delegates and 2015–2016 OEA Delegates.

The declaration period runs from Jan. 5 through 5 p.m. on Feb. 22. Campaigning begins Jan. 5 and ends on Mar. 30. Voting will take place from Mar. 17–30, 2015. Votes will be tabulated on Mar. 31. In the event of run-offs, voting will

take place from Apr. 21–May 4, with votes tallied on May 5. Additional information on these elections will be published in *The CEA Voice* and on the CEA website. Consider running. It’s extremely rewarding work.

## Imagine being gravely ill

Each year, a few teachers face catastrophic illnesses and need to take time to recover. They exhaust their sick leave. But you can help your colleagues by donating to the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank. The Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank was negotiated to protect income and benefits for members who may face catastrophic illnesses or injuries (Section 701.07 of the contract). This bank is different from the regular sick leave bank, which can be used for non-life-threatening illnesses. A teacher can receive up to 45 days of Catastrophic Leave, providing there are enough days in the bank and the leave request has been approved by the Catastrophic Sick Leave Committee.

To donate to the bank, 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, have signed the form.

Support our colleagues by donating. Your donation of as little as one day will make a difference.

## Know Your Contract: Classroom Visits and Parent Conferences

We know the possibilities are endless when our students’ families and caregivers visit our schools. It’s important to maximize their involvement in their children’s educations. Unfortunately, in today’s high-stakes world of education, visitors can disrupt the learning process in our classroom. The *Master Agreement* provides you rights regarding visitation to your classroom in Article 207. Your rights include:

- ⊕ Requiring all visitors to your classroom to check in at the office
- ⊕ Escorting all visitors to your classroom, unless you are expecting them (in which case you should be notified by the office of their impending arrival)
- ⊕ Rescheduling visitors when prior arrangements have not been made
- ⊕ Prohibiting the use of electronic devices to make any record of a classroom visit or conference without the consent of the teacher

For more information on visitation to your classroom, reference Article 207 of the *Master Agreement*.

## Special Note

- ❑ **Feb. 1 is the deadline for enhanced, or super, severance pay.** If you are retiring this school year, you **must notify the district of your retirement intentions by Feb. 1, 2015**, or risk losing some of your benefits. Notification letters go to the **CCS Human Resources Department**. The letter should include your **name**, your **employee ID** and your **last day of service**. You should **hand-deliver the letter and ask for a copy to be time-stamped for your records**.
- ❑ **Join Bexley Travel for an exciting trip to Ecuador. Departure is June 14 and return is June 22.** Visit such cities as Quito, Cayambe, Patate and many others. The price of the trip (**\$3,300 per person/double occupancy\***) includes round-trip airfare from Columbus, hotel (+tax), 18 meals (8 breakfasts, 6 lunches and 4 dinners), transfers to and from the airport and all touring. **Call Marty at Bexley Travel at 235-8813 to book your trip.**

\*Double occupancy cost is based on current airfare from Columbus.