

Convert up to two personal days at 85% of the BA Minimum.

The form is available in ESS. Enrollment Period Ends May 1. The payment date is Aug 30. To participate, log into ESS at <https://columbus.munisselfservice.com/>.

John Coneglio
President

www.ceaohio.org

No Summer Sale On Our Labor

Have you been offered a wonderful opportunity to facilitate or attend PD this summer, or to complete other work outside of your contract hours or days? Know your worth (and our contract)! Article 903 of our *Master Agreement* states: "Except as provided elsewhere in this Agreement for specific supplemental services... the rate of pay for Board authorized supplemental services shall be \$38.59 per hour." Next school year this supplemental hourly rate goes up to \$40.14 per hour.



If you are offered the opportunity to participate in work for the Board in exchange for a "stipend," a "daily rate," or "prizes" and the administrator cannot verify that the rate appears elsewhere in the *Master Agreement*, politely respond by informing the administrator making the offer that the rate is set by Article 903 of the *Master Agreement* and promptly contact the CEA office. Even if well-intentioned, administration may be violating state law by directly dealing with bargaining unit members over a topic (like pay) that must be negotiated with the Union.

We fought hard for our current *Master Agreement*, and the salary increases we won are reflected in annual 4% increases to our supplemental hourly rate, in addition to our salary schedule. Let's not give administration any summer sale on our labor!

OEA Recommends Sandy Smith Fischer for STRS Board

The OEA Board of Directors has recommended **Sandy Smith Fischer** for election to the STRS Board. She is running for an open seat representing active teachers on the eleven-member board.

Smith Fischer is an Intervention Specialist in the Streetsboro City Schools. She has twice served as President of her local association and is currently a building representative in her local in addition to serving as Secretary of her Leadership Council.



Sandy Smith Fischer

She strongly believes in standing up for others, especially her fellow educators. She sees serving on the STRS Board as a way to continue advocating for the education profession. "We as teachers need to stick together and prepare for the future. I will bring people together and make sure decisions will be made with our best interests in mind."

Smith Fischer recognizes that running for the STRS Board will be a challenge but adds, "I believe that if I want to see change, I have to stand up and make a difference. Everyone deserves a retirement they cannot outlive."

As a member of the STRS Board, Sandy will work to:

- Maintain a stable and reliable pension for current and future educators and maintain access to affordable retiree health care coverage.
- Restore benefits by lowering retirement eligibility and providing a COLA to retirees to the greatest extent possible.
- Manage risks associated with investments, market volatility, demographic changes, and legislative developments

to protect the stability of the retirement system.

Members can vote by mail, phone, or internet. Votes must be received by May 6 at 4:30 p.m. If you have not received or lose your ballot, email STRSOHHelp@electionservicescorp.com or call 866-276-1506.

Sick Leave: Follow the Rules

Sick leave is available for you when you or a family member becomes ill. It is important to know how sick leave works so that you do not put yourself at risk for disciplinary action or termination. Follow the rules as outlined in Article 701 of our contract. CEA will represent you if your sick leave has been questioned. In cases where abuse or misuse is substantiated, members will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Here are the rule highlights:

- Full-time bargaining unit members earn 15 days of sick leave per year, accruing them at the rate of 1.5 days each month from September through June.
- New employees are allowed to go "into the hole" up to five sick days.
- Sick leave is for personal illness, absence due to illness in the immediate family or for death in the immediate family. See the contract for the parameters.
- If you are absent for one full school day or more, you must report your absence to the Substitute Employee Management System at least 1.5 hours before your scheduled start time and notify your administrator. CEA recommends utilizing CCS email to notify your supervisor of your absence instead of text messages or a messaging app.
- Absences longer than 10 continuous school days require an "Application for Leave" submitted on the tenth day. Before you return, you must have a doctor's statement and district pre-approval.
- Absences of more than three consecutive school days to care for a family member also require a doctor's statement.
- If you believe your absence will be longer than three consecutive school days or you have been absent from school for three consecutive school days you must notify your administrator in writing of the estimated duration of the need for sick leave.

Sick Leave Abuse

If your supervisor believes you are abusing sick leave, they have tools available for them, negotiated in the *Master Agreement* to curb sick leave abuse. You may be suspected of abusing sick leave when:

- a. There is a pattern of use such as workdays before or after a holiday or vacation period, on Mondays or Fridays, or a certain time of year; *or*
- b. There is reasonable suspicion of sick leave abuse; *or*
- c. The teacher has been absent using sick leave for three consecutive workdays; *or*
- d. The teacher has been absent using sick leave for more than 7 days total during the same school year; *or*
- e. The teacher is on an extended absence and the Superintendent has reasonable grounds to question the continued absence, once every 30 calendar days.

Your supervisor may take one of the following two actions if they suspect you are abusing sick leave:

- 1) Your supervisor could request a conference with you. The conference must take place within two school days of your Supervisor's request and you are required to be

Columbus Education Association



Master Agreement
2022-2025

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The CEA Master Agreement is set to expire in fewer than 476 days.

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 bit.ly/4ddPfdV.

Building/Unit Administrator	Statement of Grievance	Relief Requested	Disposition
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 such behavior in...	Awaiting Step 2 hearing.
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 Agreement when the grievant was...	The grievant shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: The Board shall remove all references to the Written Reprimand written on February 26, 2024, from an employee records, other than those...	Awaiting Step 2 Grievance Hearing.
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 Agreement when grievant was issued a...	Grievant shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: The Board shall remove all references to the Written Reprimand written on February 26, 2024, from an employee records, other than those...	Board of Governors voted to approve moving the issue to arbitration.
Eastgate ES Mary J. Pettigrew	The CEA/Board Agreement was violated, misinterpreted and/or misapplied when the principal of Eastgate ES, Mary J. Pettigrew, failed to provide appropriate administrative support...	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, process 190s within 72...	Step 1 hearing held. Awaiting decision.
Westmoor MS Wendy Gittens & Leslie Hejduk	Westmoor MS Principal Wendy Gittens and AP Leslie Hejduk, acting in their capacity as agents of the Board, failed to provide appropriate support to teachers with respect to student discipline...	Grievants shall be made whole in every way, including not limited to the following: The Board and its agents shall cease and desist from violating, misinterpreting, and or the Master Agreement including but not limited to...	Grievance filed at Step 1. Response pending.
Ohio Ave. ES Anthony Williams	The CEA/Board Agreement was violated, misinterpreted and/or misapplied when the principal of Ohio Avenue ES, Anthony Williams failed to provide music once a week for forty-five (45)...	That the grievants shall be made whole in every way, including, but not limited to the following: that the principal cease and desist from allowing students to be pulled from Music, provide appropriate administrative...	Grievance filed at Step 1. Response pending.
Walnut Ridge HS Michael Spellis	The CEA/Board Agreement was violated, misinterpreted and/or misapplied when the principal of Walnut Ridge HS, Michael Spellis, failed to award the grievant the WRHS Head Football...	That the grievants shall be made whole in every way, including, but not limited to the following: that the principal award the WRHS Head Football Coach Supplemental be awarded to the grievant and that NO...	Grievance filed at Step 1. Response pending.
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 Agreement when grievant...	Grievant shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: The Written Reprimand issued on April 18, 2024 shall be withdrawn. The Board shall immediately remove all references to the...	Requested to be forwarded to Step 2.

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represented by either your Senior Faculty Representative at that building or Association designee. In such a meeting, your supervisor cannot ask the reasons for your absence or request medical documentation substantiating your sick leave usage.

- Your supervisor could contact Human Resources to request that a central office administrator obtain written certification from your physician to justify your use of sick leave. If your supervisor makes such a request, any supporting documentation that you provide would be sent to that central office administrator, not your supervisor. Your supervisor would not know the reason for your sick leave usage, simply whether or not it was justified.

The following absences cannot be questioned or suspected of sick leave abuse: District-approved leaves of absence (leaves longer than ten days), FMLA (whether continuous or intermittent) and personal leave. If you believe these tools are being utilized in an arbitrary, capricious or harassing manner, this could subject your administrator to the grievance process. Your sick leave was negotiated for you in good faith so that it is there for you when you need it. Let's live up to our end of the deal and follow the rules.

Personal Leave

In the 1980s, CEA was able to negotiate language out of the contract that prohibited members from using personal leave for things such as: recreational purposes, moving from one home to another, purchasing an automobile or major electrical appliance, accompanying a husband or wife on a business trip, extending sick leave or attending a fraternal function. In exchange for removing those restrictions and allowing unlimited accrual of sick leave, we went from being credited three days per year to two.

At the last round of negotiations, the Board put forth a proposal that would have put severe limits on members' ability to use Personal Leave. Under the Board's proposal, any member who wished to utilize their accrued personal leave would have to make a written request to their supervisor at least two school days in advance for only one or two day increments. If something happened and a member requested personal leave less than two school days before the day of usage, the member would have to provide proof of an emergency. Additionally, the Board's proposal would allow the Superintendent or their supervisor in a department or work location to deny members' personal leave requests if, in their judgment it would jeopardize the safe or efficient operation of the district or the continuity of instruction for students.

Your Union negotiated, and the Board agreed to require members to notify their principal or supervisor in writing at least five school days in advance of their intention to take personal leave except in unusual or unforeseen circumstances. Additionally, the new contract contains language allowing members to sell up to

two personal days each year in the spring for 85 percent of the BA Minimum Salary.

For the past ten years, the Board has gone to the bargaining table seeking to limit the number of personal days our members take each year, when they take them and why they take them, and your Union has successfully fought back their efforts each and every time. Let's make sure we follow the rules of personal leave.

PAR Presents...

The Peer Assistance & 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.

Apr. 30	Overcoming Trauma - Restorative and Trauma Informed Practices Hudson Dist. Center Professional Library, 4:30-6:30 p.m.
May 7	Wellness of Staff and Students Hudson Dist. Center Professional Library, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Special Notes

Make a Donation to the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank: When someone experiences a life-threatening illness or injury, and they are out of accrued time, they can apply for catastrophic leave. When approved, sick leave days can be donated, allowing them to remain in paid status and receive healthcare benefits. The following members have been approved for Catastrophic Leave and are in need of donated days: **Timothy Myles**, Northland HS (Building Substitute); **Heidi Dooley**, Mifflin HS; **Cassie Oates**, Winterset ES (Building Substitute); **Stephanie Dillion**, Avalon ES (School Nurse); **Scott Davis**, Gables ES (Building Substitute); and **Jewelicia Reedus**, CEC (Displaced). To donate, complete the Catastrophic Sick Leave Donation Form, available on the CEA and CCS websites. Submit the completed form to leavesofabsence@columbus.k12.oh.us.

CEA Awards & Retirement Banquet: CEA is holding its **48th Annual Awards & Retirement Banquet** on **Saturday, May 11**. It will, again, be at the **Hilton Columbus at Easton**. If you are retiring this year, make sure to watch the *Voice* for timelines so you can attend. As a retiree, your evening will be provided at no charge. Guests will be charged \$40.

If your license from ODE is expiring June 30, 2024, and you have a limited employment contract, you must complete the required coursework or CEUs for renewal and **applied prior to Mar. 15 to be licensed by ODE for the 2024-2025 school year**. In addition to the online application, you will need to complete a background check. **Fingerprinting must be completed through Webcheck**. A permanent certificate requires fingerprinting every five years. The Human Resources Department, (3700 S. High St.) oversees this process. The **CCS Fingerprint Office is open Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.** Face-to-face operations are on an appointment-only basis. To schedule a time to complete your fingerprints, go to <https://bit.ly/3lCxYZ9>. Contact **Leslie Butler**, Human Resources, Teacher Licensure, at license@columbus.k12.oh.us with questions.