



2026 CCS Insurance Premiums

CCS has a self-funded insurance plan. In this type of plan, claims are paid from the money collected for members' insurance benefits. Claims are only paid out when they occur. If claims are consistently lower than expected, money collected from members' insurance premiums remain in reserve. Higher than expected claims result in a quicker depletion of the self-funded plan reserve and cause future premium costs to increase.

Our bargaining unit members' usage of the self-funded insurance plan in 2025 was higher than in 2024 and had higher than expected claims. Due to inflation, increased utilization, and rising medical prices, our insurance brokers advised us that without any changes to the structure of the insurance plan, individuals under the certificated plan would face nearly a 15% increase in premiums.

According to the *CEA Master Agreement*, when overall medical cost increases exceed 8%, the Joint Insurance Committee (JIC) meets to determine any changes necessary to ensure costs remain under 8% annually. In the past few years, cost increases below 8% meant the certificated plans did not need to make any plan design changes.

To fill in the funding gaps for the certificated plan and lower the premium increase, it was necessary to make structural changes to the benefit plan. Our insurance brokers provided us several options, and none of them were acceptable to your Union.

Working with OEA we were able to come up with a plan to make the structural changes necessary to lower the premium increase from nearly 15% to 7.8%. The changes to the plan include increased deductibles, adjustments to copayments, the addition of coinsurance, and modifications to prescription drug coverage.

As a result of these changes, plan participants may experience higher out-of-pocket costs, so it is important to review the updated benefits closely to understand how they may impact individual and family medical expenses going forward.

Your Union and the district are partnering to offer several Zoom meetings to fully explain these changes to our insurance. The meetings will be held on Wednesday, Sept. 17, (<http://bit.ly/46vQPQm>) and Wednesday, Sept. 24 (<http://bit.ly/4nkRedT>); both begin at 4:30 p.m. and pre-registration is not required. Additionally, the district will send an informative email and a detailed video regarding the changes on Tuesday, Sept. 16.

Learning Walks

Your Union has received many phone calls, emails and text messages regarding the district's "Learning Walks" with concerns about whether they are evaluative as well as how they are being conducted. In August, CEA members approved a Conceptual Agreement that contains the following new language regarding non-evaluative classroom visits:

Section **211.09 A. Nonevaluative Classroom Visits** refer to classroom visits by board employees for the purpose of improving instructional practices, curriculum implementation, and student learning. Any written nonevaluative feedback generated from the visit shall not become part of any teacher's personnel file or evaluation.

Joe Hernan, Director of Math, Innovation and Technology provided this email to summarize how he has described the purpose of "Learning Walks" to administrators:

"Learning Walks are short, non-evaluative classroom visits that give us a clear picture around curriculum implementation and instructional practices. The tool helps us collect consistent data, provide teachers with supportive feedback, and spot trends across classrooms and schools. That information guides the kind of professional learning and instructional support we offer."

"They're not about evaluating teachers—they're about making sure our curriculum is implemented with fidelity and using what we see to strengthen teaching and learning across the district."

If your administrator is doing something different, call CEA.

Attend the Candidate Forum on Sept. 22

The Columbus Education Justice Coalition, in partnership with our friends at the League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus, and our partners at Pint Size Protesters, invites you to participate in a candidate forum, Monday, Sept. 22, 6–8pm at Northland HS, located at 1919 Northcliff Dr. We will have a meet & greet with refreshments at 5:30 p.m.

After a historic primary election for Columbus City Schools Board of Education seats, six school board hopefuls look to fill three open seats. We aim to give the community an opportunity to be heard and to hear from the candidates. Our goal is to prioritize the voices of our CCS students and youth. We encourage you to complete the forum survey to submit your questions and to have your students include their questions, as well.

This is a nonpartisan event designed to ensure the community is informed and engaged in the decision-making process. Candidates will respond to questions submitted by the public. Safety and security will be on site.

This event is free and open to all. At this time, the event is in person only. We will work to make the information available to the public, as soon as possible.

Questionnaire: <https://tinyurl.com/CEJCFallForumQuestions>

Mobilize Link: <https://tinyurl.com/CEJCFallForum>



See You at the CEA Fall Fling!

The Fling is right around the corner! Join us for the CEA Fall Fling this year. Mark your calendar for **Friday, Oct. 3**, from **4–8 p.m.** at the **Hilton Columbus at Easton**, 3900 Chagrin Dr. Your Association just welcomed more than 200 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 \$5.

Retiring? Avoid OTES

Bargaining unit members who are planning on retiring during the 2025–2026 school year can be exempted from the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System. To take advantage of this, submit your notice of retirement to Human Resources by Friday, Oct. 31. You must continue to complete the evaluation process until your retirement has been approved by the Board of Education. To download retirement information or access the Google form to submit notification of retirement, go to <https://www.ccssoh.us/Page/2340>. If you have questions, contact Teri Mullins, CEA Staff Consultant at (614) 253-4731.

Wellness will be partnering with Lifecare

Alliance to host a staff flu shot clinic at the CEA Fall Fling on Friday, October 3 from 4–8 p.m. located at Columbus Hilton Easton, 3900 Chagrin Drive. Flu shots are available at no cost to you. If you have insurance, it will be submitted as a claim.

No appointment is needed, just bring your ID and insurance card with you. Family members are welcome to attend, and no one will be turned away without insurance.

Available Vaccines: **Trivalent** (all ages, egg-free, no preservative) and **High-Dose Trivalent** (ages 65+, egg-free, no preservative)

Staff who receive their flu shot will be able to earn a \$25 gift card. To learn how to receive your gift card, visit the Wellness website ccsoh.us/wellness and click on the FLU SHOT INFORMATION tab.

Fight Flu and Earn a Gift Card from Wellness

Staff who receive a flu shot before Dec. 31 will earn a \$25 gift card from the CCS Staff Wellness Initiative. After you receive your flu shot, visit the Flu Shot Information tab on the Wellness website, ccsoh.us/wellness, and fill out the flu shot form. You do not need

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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 <https://www.ccaohio.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Grievance-250915-05.pdf>.

Building/Unit Admin.	Statement of Grievance	Relief Requested	Disposition
CCS Administration	The Columbus City Schools Board of Education and/or it's agents violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied provisions of the 2022...	Grievant shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: The Board shall immediately remove all references to the Letter of...	Placed in abeyance pending settlement.
CCS Administration	The CEA/Board Agreement was violated, misinterpreted and/or misapplied when the Board/Administration failed to provide...	The grievants shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: That the Board/ Administration provide School Social...	Awaiting settlement.
CCS Administration	The Board and/or it's agents violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied provisions of the 2022-2025 CEA/CCS Master...	Affected bargaining unit members shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: sick leave accrual shall be recalculated and...	Placed in abeyance pending settlement.
Marion-Franklin HS Tanita Fleming	The CEA/Board Agreement was violated, misinterpreted and/or misapplied when the the principal at Marion Franklin HS, Tanita...	The grievants shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: Principal Fleming shall immediately follow the proper...	Step 2 denied. Advanced to arbitration.
CCS Administration	The Columbus City Schools Board of Education and/or its agents violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied provisions of the...	Grievant shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: The Board shall immediately remove all references to the Written...	Settlement pending.
CCS Administration	The Board violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied provisions of the 2022-2025 CEA-CCS Master Agreement when it failed...	The Board shall immediately cease and desist from violating, misinterpreting, and/or misapplying provisions of the Master Agreement including but not...	Advanced to arbitration.
Health Services Supervisor	Health Services Supervisor Melinda Diaz, acting in her capacity as agent of the Board, violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied...	Grievants shall be made whole in every way including but not limited to the following: The Board shall immediately rescind the directive that School...	Grievance denied as Step 2. Union to respond.
CCS Administration	The Board and/or it's agents violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied provisions of the 2022-2025 CCS-CEA Master...	Grievant(s) shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: Affected grievant(s) shall be reinstated to their bargaining...	Advanced to arbitration.
CCS Administration	The Board and/or it's agents violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied provisions of the 2022-2025 CEA/CCS Master...	Grievant shall be made whol in every way, including but not limited to the following: The Board shall cease and desist from violating, misinterpreting,...	Advanced to arbitration.
CCS Administration	Columbus City Schools Board of Education and/or it's agents violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied provision of the...	The grievant shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following, reducing the overpayment deductions to an agreeable amount...	Filed at Step 1.
CCS Administration	The Board an/or it's agents violated, misinterpreted, and/or misap-plied provisions of the November 1, 2023, Letter of Agreement...	The bargaining unit member previously assigned to the existing central enroll-ment School Nurse positioin shall immediately be reassigned to her prior...	Advanced to arbitration.
Linden-McKinley STEM Acad. Dr. Michael McCrory	The Columbus City Schools Board of Education violated, misin-terpreted, and/or misapplied provisions of the 2025-2028...	The grievants shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the folowing: The Board shall cease and desist from violating,...	Filed at Step 1.
Ft. Hayes Career Cntrter Erica Dodson	Fort Hayes Principal Erica Dodson, acting in her capacity as agent of the Board, violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied...	The Board shall immediately rescind the directive issued on or about August 28, 2025. The Board shall cease and desist from violating, misinterpreting,...	Filed at Step 1.
Ft. Hayes Career Cntrter Erica Dodson	Fort Hayes Principal Erica Dodson, acting in her capacity as agent of the Board, violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied...	The Board shall immediately rescind the directive issued on or about August 28, 2025. The Board shall cease and desist from violating, misinterpreting,...	Filed at Step 1.
Starling K-8 Courtney Wilson	Starling K-8 Principal Courtney Wilson, in her capacity as agent of the Board of Education of Columbus City schools, violated...	The grievant will be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: The District shall immediately revert the teacher lunch schedule...	Filed at Step 1
CCS Administration	Columbus City Schools Board of Education and/or it's agents violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied provision of the...	Grievant shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: The Board shall immediately remove all references to the Letter...	Filed at Step 1
CCS Administration	Columbus City Schools Board of Education and/or it's agents violated, misinterpreted, and/or misapplied provision of the...	Grievant shall be made whole in every way, including but not limited to the following: The Board shall immediately remove all references to the Letter of...	Filed at Step 1

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to receive your flu shot at a CCS location in order to be eligible for the gift card. As a reminder, gift cards are a form of compensation and are subject to employee payroll tax.

Questions? Email wellness@columbus.k12.oh.us.

Only CEA Members’ Children Get Free College Scholarships

The CEA Member Scholarship Fund is now open for applications. **This benefit is for our members with children who are college seniors between Sept. 2025–June 2026.** The fund provides \$2,500 in tuition assistance for each senior attending a four-year college or university. Eligible students are college seniors between Sept. 2025–June 2026 with at least a 2.0 GPA. Payment will be made directly to the college or universi-ty. Parents or guardians must have taught in the Columbus City Schools for four years prior to the application date and must be continuous CEA or CEA-R members.

Download the application at <https://bit.ly/41MTvX4>. The **dead-line is Friday, Oct. 10, 4 p.m.** If you have questions, call Kathy Wilkes at (614) 253-4731.

Religious Leave

Our contract ensures that educators have the right to participate in their religious traditions. Section 702.11 of the *CEA Master Agreement* allows bargaining unit members to be absent, with pay, for a maximum of three days to observe established religious holidays throughout the school year. This leave is not deducted from any other time off. Remem-ber that a request for religious leave must be made in writing to the Hu-man Resources Department at least five school days prior to the holiday.

Special Fall CEA Election

Due to three vacancies on the CEA Board of Governors, there will be a Fall Special Election. CEA is seeking candidates for the unexpired terms of Governor for District 2 (2028), District 4 (2026) and District 7 (2028). A Declaration of Candidacy for CEA Office will be available on the CEA website or by calling CEA at (614) 253-4731. The declara-tion period begins Monday, Sept. 29 and ends Monday, Oct. 13. Decla-ration forms are due at the CEA office no later than 4:30 p.m., Monday, Oct. 13, 2025. Campaigning begins Monday, Sept. 29, through Nov. 11, 2025. Ballots will be in the buildings on Oct. 24, 2025. Voting will begin on Monday, Oct. 27, 2025, and will end Tuesday, Nov. 11, 2025. Ballots will be collected and tallied by the Election Committee on Wednesday, Nov. 12, 2025. Call Brittany Pierce, CEA Election Chair, at (440) 225-2631 with any questions.

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 accu-mulated 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 Tuesday, Sept. 30**. 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. **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.

Special Notes

Transplant Needed for CEA Member: Robyn Chernack, Intervention Specialist (**Cedarwood ES**), is in need of a kidney donation from a living donor. Such donations are typically very successful and ideal when made by living donors. Eligible donors have matching blood types and are free of diseases including high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, kidney and heart disease. Donors are able to lead normal lives. To become a donor, go to: bit.ly/40y23zN.

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 sta-tus and receive healthcare benefits. The following members have been approved for Catastrophic Leave and are in need of donated days: **Katrina Callaghan, Northland HS; and Kellie Wilburn, Eastmoor Acad.** 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.

Grow the Future: Stepping Up For Our Scholars – Step into rhythm and purpose as we raise scholarship funds for graduation seniors from Columbus City Schools with an afternoon of jazz, line dancing, and community connection. The **Ken Weaver Quartet** will perform. Let the music move you and the cause inspire you. Be there on **Sept. 21** from **3–6 p.m.** at **JP’s Barbeque Event Ctr.** (Bolton Field, 2000 Norton Rd., Columbus, OH43228). Admission: \$50 *with advance sales only*. **No ticket sales at the door.** Tickets can be purchased by check mailed to **The Lunch Bunch, P.O. Box 360941, Columbus, OH 43236** or via **Zelle**. *The Lunch Bunch is a 501(c)(3) organization.*

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