



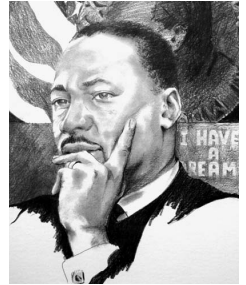
Join Us for the 45th Annual MLK Awards Dinner

CEA is pleased to announce this year's Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. award winners. We will honor them at the 45th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Awards Dinner, set for Thursday, Jan. 15, 2026, at the **Columbus Convention Center • Battelle North Ballroom • 400 North High Street.**

Kerry Charles will receive the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award. It is given for distinguished service in the community in the areas of education, social justice, or human and civil rights.

Kerry Charles is a graduate from Linden McKinley HS and a weeknight anchor for NBC4. Kerry's interest in broadcasting began as a student at Crestview MS, where he hosted a weekly radio program on WCBE 90.5 FM as well as anchoring and reporting for the Kids News Network. He later studied communication at the University of Cincinnati. Following his graduation, Kerry spent a number of years in the news in the southern United States, including Greensboro, North Carolina, Shreveport in Louisiana and Atlanta, prior to his return to Columbus.

Kerry is passionate about giving back to the community. He helps organize and execute an annual Thanksgiving dinner giveaway, which has provided meals to more than 7,100 central Ohio families. He serves as a Board of Trustee for St. Stephen's Community House, is a member of the Ft. Hayes High School Film/TV Advisory Committee and participates in service projects through memberships with Phi Beta Sigma and NABJ. Kerry is also the president of the Columbus Association of Black Journalists. During his time in North Carolina, he helped launch an ongoing initiative offering kids free haircuts, lunches, grooming lessons and access to financial literacy workshops. For his community involvement, Kerry received the 2023 Pillar of the Community Award from the UC African American Alumni Affiliate.



Kerry Charles

Benita Wright Smith will receive the Helen Jenkins Davis Award. Named after the first Black teacher hired by the Columbus City Schools, it is awarded to a Columbus teacher who has worked to promote social justice, diversity, and human rights.

Smith has been teaching for Columbus City Schools since she was hired in 1989. She has taught at Cedarwood ES, Beck ES, Clairfield ES, Northgate Center, Livingston ES, Hamilton ES, Medina MS, Eastgate ES, Easthaven ES, Stewart ES and East Columbus ES. She currently serves as a Peer Assistance and Review Consulting Teacher, however she has also been an Instructional Coach and worked with the CCS Reading Recovery Program. Smith has also served the members of CEA as a Senior Faculty Representative, Faculty Representative, NEA Delegate and Bargaining Team member for two cycles.

Benita has promoted social justice, diversity and human and civil rights throughout her time serving the students and families of Columbus. To that end, she has started and participated in the "Girls On The Run" and "Let Me Run" programs at multiple schools. Additionally, her annual canned food drive, Adopt-A-Family and Blessing Bags during the winter months have further nourished, reinforced and helped students and families during the winter months. Through her strength and enduring passion for teaching, Benita has not only educated minds but also nurtured hearts, leaving an indelible mark on her school community and the teaching profession.



Benita Wright Smith

In Memoriam: A CCS Community Vigil

3700 S. High St, Columbus, OH 43207, December 16, 2025 @ 6 p.m., Attire: All Black

On December 2, 2026, the Columbus City Schools Board of Education cast votes that will leave lasting scars on our students, families, educators, and neighborhoods by closing four more schools, cutting staff and programs, and discontinuing bussing for more than 2,000 children.

Please join us in solidarity to mourn the loss of support systems our children rely on every single day—not just buildings or budgets, but the safety, stability, creativity, and community our schools sustain.

RIP:

Broadleigh Elementary, 1952–2026 • Buckeye Middle School, 1964–202?
Como Elementary, 1956–2027 • Fairwood Alternative Elementary, 1924–2026
Moler Elementary, 1963–2026

Displaced & Unhoused:

Columbus Alternative High School, 1978–? • Columbus Gifted Academy, 2015–?
Duxberry Park Arts Elementary, 1959–? • West Broad Elementary, 1910–?

On December 16th, we gather to honor what we've lost and to show that our fight for equitable, fully resourced public schools is far from over. Let's embody the collective power we hold when we rise together.

We come to remember. We come to resist. We come to demand better for Columbus.

Show up in black. Show up in solidarity. Show up for our students and our city.

These are our communities, our schools, and our children's and neighborhoods' futures.

Registration: <https://bit.ly/1216CCSVigil>



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. Go to: <https://www.ceahio.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Grievance-251215b.pdf>.

OEA Representative Assembly

The following members of the CEA contributed their time by attending the OEA Representative Assembly on Saturday, Dec. 6: Roxanne Adams, Benjamin Alexander, Jamel Ammons, Traci Arway, Lori Barton, Tabetha Baumann, Bethany Bell, Dana Boos, Larry Carey, Courtney Coman, John Coneglio, Rebecca Coyne, Cassandra Daniels, Clarence Daniels, Trenice Davidson, Carla Davis, Joseph Decker, Chaka Diop, Carol Dixon, Angela Dyer Sanchez, Keith Emrick, Victoria Evans, Megan Flanagan, Marty Flood, Janaya Foster, Regina Fuentes, Amy Glowark-Mondillo, Kelsey Gray, Ashley Green, Jada Harper, Jennifer Harvey, Philip Hayes, Jacquia Hearn, Tracie Helmbrecht, Megan Hinz, Bronda Jackson, Lolita Johnson, Traci Johnson, Christopher Kopp, Jennifer Kuhns, Jason Lewis, Annalese Lynch, Rebecca Mcgrath-Hinkle, Majeed Rahman, Christina Reed, Tyree Rivers, Teresa Rollins, Brittany Saunders, Cynthia Smithers, Ryan Swartz, Annelise Taggart, Kari Yates, Ardelia Young, Angela Zalenski, Dwayne Zimmerman, and Jennifer Zutterling.

Special Education Job Bid Process Soon

Please see the email below from the Special Education Department regarding the Special Education Bid Process:

In accordance with the CEA Collective Bargaining Agreement, we will utilize the SPED "Bid process" (i.e. SPED Job Fair) that affords current CEA members (with a current SPED license) the opportunity to bid into a vacant position for the 26–27 SY. This process also affords our HR team the opportunity to recruit and hire SPED teachers throughout the remainder of the school year.

Any staff member with a current special education license can participate in the Job Fair, scheduled for Thursday, December 18, 2025, at 4 p.m., via Zoom (Link to be sent later).

Additional information is linked below, including the 26/27 Intent Form and Guaranteed Classroom and Vacancy List. Please note, you ONLY need to complete the SPED Intent Form (bit.ly/4oQ9RH9) if you want to participate in the Job Fair. Guaranteed Special Education classroom vacancies for 2026–2027: <https://bit.ly/4q1yYHV>.

LA Attendance

One of the many duties of Faculty Representatives is to attend the CEA Legislative Assembly (LA). Held on the first Thursday of nearly every month of the school year, the LA is the policy-making body of your Association. Your elected Faculty Representatives receive vital updates from CEA Officers and Staff and vote on important issues affecting your Association. Any CEA member is welcome to attend the LA. The next meeting will be held Thursday, Feb. 5, 2026. The following is a list of buildings/units that were represented at the Dec. 4 Legislative Assembly:

Alpine ES, Arts Impact MS, Attendance Specialists, Beatty Park ES, Beechcroft HS, Berwick Alternative ES, Binns ES, Briggs HS, Broadleigh ES, Building Substitutes, Burroughs ES, CAHS, Cassady ES, CEA Office, Cedarwood ES, Centennial HS, Champion MS, Clinton ES, Colerain ES, Columbus Africentric EC ES, Columbus Africentric EC SS, Columbus City Prep. School for Girls, Columbus Downtown HS, Columbus Gifted Academy, Columbus Global Academy, Columbus International HS, Como ES, Devonshire ES, Dominion MS, East Columbus ES, East HS, East Linden ES, Easthaven ES, Eastmoor Academy HS, ECE @ Central Enrollment, École Kenwood, Elementary Art, Elementary Music, Elementary Phys. Ed., Fairmoor ES, Fairwood ES, Forest Park ES, Ft. Hayes Arts & Academic HS, Ft. Hayes CC, Gables ES, Gifted & Talented, Highland ES, Hilltonia MS, Hubbard ES, Huy ES/A.G. Bell Program, Independence HS, Indian Springs ES, Indianola Informal K–8, Innis ES, Johnson Park MS, Liberty ES, Lincoln Park ES, Lindbergh ES, Linden STEM Academy, Linden-McKinley STEM Academy, Livingston ES, Maize ES, Marion-Franklin HS, Medina MS, Mifflin MS, North Linden ES, Northgate Intermediate ES, Northland HS, Northtowne ES, Nurses, Oakmont ES, Olde Orchard ES, OT/PT, Ridgeview MS, School Counselors, Scottwood ES, Shady Lane ES, Sherwood MS, Siebert ES, Social Workers, South HS, Southwood ES, Speech & Language, Starling PreK–8, Stewart Alternative ES, Student Support Center, Sullivant ES, Trevitt ES, Valley Forge ES, Valleyview ES, Watkins ES, Wedgewood MS, Weinland Park ES, West Broad ES, West Mound ES, Westmoor MS, Whetstone HS, Windsor STEM Academy, Winterset ES, Woodward Park MS, World Language MS, and Yorktown MS.

Is Your License Expiring?

If your license from ODE is expiring June 30, 2026, and you have a limited employment contract, you must complete the required coursework or CEUs necessary for renewal and apply before May 11 to be licensed by ODE for the 2026–2027 school year. If you have a continuing contract, you have through June to complete your coursework and submit your application. Failure to renew your license may result in suspension of pay and initiation of termination/non-renewal proceedings.



In addition to the online application, you will need to complete a background check if it has been 5 years. If you have questions about the date of your last background check, or you don't plan to renew your license, contact Leslie Butler, Human Resources, Teacher Licensure, at license@columbus.k12.oh.us. Contact Leslie about questions concerning CEUs or the license renewal process at LPDC@columbus.k12.oh.us.

Want to Get Out of Your Three-Year Commitment and Be Somewhere Different Next School Year?

Your Union knows that from time-to-time issues arise at your current assignment, especially during your three-year commitment. Sometimes bargaining unit members experience strong philosophical differences with the program(s) within their current assignment. Other times, they experience health and/or safety issues within their current assignment. Bargaining unit members that believe their skills would be best utilized in another assignment



within the district have the opportunity to request a voluntary staff reduction from Human Resources. Two reasons can be cited to request a voluntary staff reduction: philosophical differences or health and safety concerns. Individuals who are interested in requesting a voluntary staff reduction must submit their request in writing to HR.

Any full-time contract bargaining unit member can request a voluntary staff reduction. You are not required to inform your administrator, or to ask their permission, to seek a voluntary staff reduction. Additionally, administrators should not ask bargaining unit members if they are seeking a voluntary staff reduction, nor will written requests be shared with administrators. Keep in mind that requesting a voluntary staff reduction is just that—a request. Ultimately it is the decision of HR whether or not to grant each bargaining unit member’s voluntary staff reduction request. The deadline for teachers to submit their request for a voluntary staff reduction is Monday, Jan. 12.

To apply for a Voluntary Staff Reduction, go to <https://bit.ly/48u3hjj>. Individuals requesting a voluntary staff reduction must provide specific reasons for making the request; simply writing that you want a voluntary staff reduction is not enough. Additionally, you are not required to provide your administrator with a copy of your staff reduction request, nor are you required to notify them of your request. Members who submit a request for a voluntary staff reduction will be notified of their outcome by HR in late January or early February.

Looking for a Job Share?

Job sharing provides a way for teachers who wish to continue their employment with Columbus City Schools in less than a full-time capacity. Most job shares are a 50/50 split, but other arrangements can take place.

If you would like to job share with another bargaining-unit member, each partner must complete their own job-share packet. The documents must be signed by both job-share partners, as well as the principal or supervisor where the job share is to occur. Once the job-sharing request is approved, the job share cannot be dissolved unless all parties agree (teachers, principals or supervisors, and HR). To download the job-share packet for the 2026–2027 school year, go to: <https://bit.ly/3LRkdbW>.

CEA will compile a list of bargaining-unit members who are looking for job-share partners. To add your name to the list, go to <https://bit.ly/jobshare2627> and fill out the online form. Even if you submitted your name last year, complete the online form again this year. Submit the completed form no later than 11:59 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 19. On Friday, Dec. 20, a list of potential job-share partners will be emailed to each applicant completing the online form to assist in finding a job-share partner. Each partner’s completed job-share packet is due to CCS Human Resources, no later than Monday, Jan. 12, 5 p.m. If you have further questions about job sharing, contact Cindy Love at (614) 253-4731. If you are planning to job share and to carry insurance through CCS, the rate you will pay will be significantly higher than what you would pay as a full-time teacher. Contact CCS Human Resources Benefits Department to determine your cost.

Article 211 Training: Monday, Jan. 12, ONLY

Article 211 Training for Senior Faculty Representatives and building principals/supervisors will be held on **Monday, Jan. 12, only**. The schedule is as follows: Monday, Jan. 12, 10–11 a.m. (All Regions), Monday, Jan. 12, 1–2 p.m. (Departments). The training will be via Zoom. Building principals/supervisors and CEA Senior Faculty Representatives are required to attend the 211 training. Building principals are responsible for providing classroom coverage so that the Senior Faculty Representatives can attend. If school is canceled due to inclement weather, the affected trainings will be rescheduled.

Calendar Survey Coming

On Friday, Dec. 5, members will receive an email containing a link to an online survey that will determine our preferences for the 2026–2027 and 2027–2028 school calendars. The survey link will be sent to members’ personal email addresses. The survey will close at 11:59 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 18. If you did not receive the email with the survey link and you wish to complete the electronic version of the survey, send a message with your personal email address to tellcea@ceaohio.org. Your participation in the calendar survey is very important. Take this opportunity for your voice to be heard.

Grants for New Teachers

The **Delta Kappa Gamma Society International** promotes professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education. Each year, Gamma Chapter, one of the local chapters in the Central Ohio area, provides grants to new teachers to buy materials and supplies for their classrooms. These grants are given in the form of gift certificates to the recipients.

To complete the application form, interested teachers should go to <https://bit.ly/dkgfirstyear25>. If you have any questions, contact **Tia Tyler** at gammaohiodkg@gmail.com. **Completed grant applications must be received by Jan. 5, 2026.** Recipients will be notified by Jan. 17, 2026.

Trash the Trackers

Your Union has been made aware of a variety of electronic “forms” that our members are being strongly suggested to use. They include, but are not limited to TBT Trackers, data collection forms, and a variety of other forms.

During your TBT, you should be keeping minutes. There is no requirement to use a specific form to keep these minutes, except that the final product should be in an electronic format. There are a variety of resources available if you would like to utilize them—if you don’t want to use them then you don’t have to.

Section 108.03 of the *Master Agreement* states, “All Administrative forms provided by this Agreement shall be mutually acceptable to the Board and Association.” Section 206.01 also says “The Board recognizes that clerical responsibilities detract from the effectiveness of the classroom teachers; therefore, a continued effort shall be made, with this Agreement, to avoid substantive increases in such clerical work.” To date, the administration has not engaged in any discussions with your Union about any additional administrative forms required of our members.

If your administrator asks, requests, intimates, suggests strongly, or even begs you to use a home-grown provided form, simply send them an email from your school account. In that email, ask your administrator one simple question—Are you directing me to use this form as a term and condition of my employment? Their answer should be a simple no, that they are simply offering a resource for you to use if you choose to do so. If the answer comes back yes, contact the CEA Office.

Special Notes

Transplant Needed for CEA Member: Robyn Chernack, Intervention Specialist at **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.

CEA Spring Elections There will be an election for the following CEA offices and positions: President; Vice President; Governors for Districts 1, 4, 5, 10, and Minority-at-Large; 2026 NEA Delegates; Local Delegates; 2026 NEA State-At-Large Delegates*; and 2026–2027 OEA Delegates. **Declaration Forms will be available on Monday, Jan. 5**, and are **due at the CEA office no later than 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 6**. **Voting will begin on Tuesday, Feb. 24**, and will **end on Tuesday, Mar. 10**. Ballots will be **collected and tallied by the Elections Committee on Wednesday, Mar. 11**. Contact Brittany Pierce, CEA Elections Chair, at (440) 225-2631 with questions. * NEA State-at-Large Declaration Forms must be submitted to William Baird at OEA by January 31, 2026.

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: **Kellie Wilburn**, Eastmoor Acad. HS; **Roxanne Beard**, South HS; and **Jeanne Collins**, Woodcrest ES. 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.

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 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.

The Linden-McKinley Marching Band, also known as **TUMMP**, has been invited to perform in the vibrant Mardi Gras parades in New Orleans, LA. This is an incredible opportunity for LMHS students to showcase their talent on a national stage. Consider donating to their GoFundMe at: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-tummps-journey-to-new-orleans>

CEA Members: If you are not receiving electronic communications from CEA, email telcea@ceaochio.org with your name and non-CCS email address. This issue can usually be resolved quickly.



Get your W-2 more efficiently when you choose electronic delivery in just 4 easy steps!

1: Log into ESS

2: Click on Personal Information

3: Tax Delivery Options

4: Self Service Only

To get more information, go to: bit.ly/4hLeNLB.

Deadline to enroll in paperless for 2025 is **December 19, 2025!**

