



## May Day 2026: Workers Over Billionaires!

May Day (May 1), the traditional workers' holiday, is coming up quickly. CEA is a proud member of the May Day Strong coalition ([maydaystrong.org](http://maydaystrong.org)), a coalition of hundreds of unions and other organizations coming together with a common purpose: standing together against the billionaires waging a war on working people. For CEA members, there is no greater imminent threat than the billionaire who is running for Governor of Ohio on a platform of defunding, privatizing, and voucherizing public education, and destroying teachers unions.

Here is the ask for all CEA members:

- On Friday, May 1, wear your **CEA shirt** and/or **#RedForEd**.
- Meet outside before school, take a photo of your CEA unit in your building, and send it to [tellcea@ceaohio.org](mailto:tellcea@ceaohio.org)
- Walk in together to demonstrate our unity

Reserve the afternoon on your calendar (4–6:30 p.m.) to attend a special event after school, details to be announced soon!

This May Day, we'll join actions across the country to defend public education and put workers over billionaires!



## MAT Needs You!

Every member of our union needs to be concerned about the work of the Member Action Team (MAT). The MAT consists of one or more members in each unit who can do the work of the Association by helping Faculty Representatives (FRs) organize unit members for civic actions outside of the building or unit.

Previous examples have included mobilizing your colleagues to testify against school closures at a Board of Education Meeting, supporting community events like Pride, the Black Men's Wellness Day, or ComFest, canvassing neighborhoods for candidates who support public education, and more. None of that happens without our members stepping up for our MAT. It is NOT the responsibility of MAT members to enforce the contract, take on ABC meetings, meet with administrators, attend building-level discipline hearings, run elections—those are the responsibilities of your unit's elected FRs. MAT members are able to bring together the members of a unit and drive participation when we need to use our organizing muscle in the community. Commitments are flexible, and ideally shared among colleagues.

We are a diverse union of more than 4,000 individuals. Our lives encompass childcare, eldercare, community work, second jobs, and a first job that can be one of the most demanding in the U.S. Each of our values and commitments lead us toward how to make unionism fit in our lives. Other examples of how we express solidarity for our union siblings beyond the contract include Teachers for Better Schools, the Columbus Education Justice Coalition, Columbus Early Career Educators, the Special Education Caucs and the Black Affinity Group.

Is it the professional responsibility of a member to join a committee? No. However, if you're feeling burned out, voiceless, or overwhelmed by the current crisis in education, MAT can be a productive outlet that gives you back your agency. Some of our members will shy away from what gets labeled as "politics." The fact is, we are government workers. We stand at the end of a movement to ensure equal education and equal opportunity for all children. It is no exaggeration to say that goal is under attack.

Our city keeps trying to close our schools. Our state has slashed our budget by 10% while sending more than a billion dollars in vouchers to private schools. Our nation is shuttering the Department of Education while attacking our most vulnerable community members. Public education is under attack. Are you ready to stand up and fight back?

For more information about MAT, or to join, please contact MAT co-chairs Joe Decker ([seppdecker@gmail.com](mailto:seppdecker@gmail.com)) or Izetta Thomas ([thomasi@ceaohio.org](mailto:thomasi@ceaohio.org)).

## Arbitrator: CEA Is Right, That's What The Contract Means

In a major victory for Columbus students and educators, Arbitrator Howard D. Silver ruled in favor of CEA in a decision on a grievance heard in arbitration in February. Silver also ordered remedies for the affected bargaining unit members.

The District was ruled to have violated the Master Agreement by assigning middle school teachers at Starling K–8 half-hour lunches without a vote of the staff or utilizing the Reform Panel during the 2025–2026 school year. Arbitrator Silver ruled that the contract language is clear and unambiguous, and that "the change effected by the Employer unilaterally on September 9, 2025, violated Article 302, Section 302.01, and violated one aspect of Article 204, Section 204.05 in effecting the change without a secret ballot vote. For the above-cited reasons, the grievance is sustained in its entirety." He further ordered the district to cease and desist from scheduling lunch periods among the grievants of less than forty-nine minutes per work day.

In addition to the remedies ordered to make CEA bargaining unit members whole, the District will be responsible for all costs associated with the arbitration hearing, totaling \$4,500.

Though CEA made every attempt to resolve these grievances informally, we are satisfied that the arbitrator agreed that the *CEA-CCS Master Agreement* was violated. This is the seventh win at arbitration by your Union in the past ten years, leaving the administration with a 0–7 record.

We are also pleased that due to our Union's continued enforcement of our hard-won *Master Agreement*, middle school teach-

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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. Go to: <https://www.ceahio.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Grievance-260420-32.pdf>

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ers at Starling will receive their contractually guaranteed lunch each day, and this travesty will not befall any other bargaining unit member ever again.

The *CEA Master Agreement* is a living document that has been bargained in good faith by your Union. Its words represent the blood, sweat, and tears of the thousands of members who came before us. It is the responsibility of every member of the Union to follow the provisions of the contract; it is the solemn duty of your Union to ensure that the district does the same.

## Know Your Contract: Instructional Materials and Equipment

In the 2019–2022 *Master Agreement*, your Union negotiated significant additions to the provision for what members are required to have in their classroom for instruction. Section 206.02 reads as follows:

**206.02** Each classroom shall have sufficient chalkboard/whiteboard and bulletin board space and, effective January 2020, a telephone. Each classroom will have a computer and projection capability. In addition, students shall have equitable access to district technology. The Board shall continue to provide instructional materials and equipment, within budgetary constraints, to implement the District's educational goals and objectives and to meet students' needs pursuant to Board policy 2520.

Recently, the CEA Office has been getting numerous calls regarding outstanding toner orders. Due to an increase in orders, the current district purchase order has been exceeded. The administration is currently putting together another purchase order. Building administrators will be kept in the loop regarding progress on this issue.

If your administrator is in violation of this part of the *Master Agreement*, please contact your Senior Faculty Representative for next steps or call the CEA Office at 614-253-4731.

## DEADLINE EXTENSION: Teachers' Dream Grant

This grant will provide individual opportunities ranging from \$500 to \$5,000 to Columbus City Schools for teachers to assist in improving teaching and learning in CCS. This is an excellent opportunity for interested teachers to acquire resources to support a unique, creative, innovative project to increase student achievement, improve social climate and/or promote social justice. The funder does not fund package programs, equipment/furniture needed for classrooms.

**The deadline for submitting an application in CCSDAS has been extended to April 30, 2026, by 4 p.m.**

This is a district-sponsored grant. Applicants will not need to submit a Grant Endorsement Form to apply but will need their principal's or supervisor's approval. A CCS email account is required to submit an application.

Click the link below and use your CCS login credentials to submit your application.

<https://applications.columbus.k12.oh.us/ccsdas/dreamGrantRequest/create>

## Recess? When? How Many?

Don't forget to determine your school's recess policy. This must occur following spring break and before the last teacher workday of the year. CEA fought hard to preserve and clarify elementary recesses in the contract. Each school can decide whether to have one or two 15-minute student recesses per day. There cannot be a vote for zero recesses.

The *CEA Master Agreement* requires that recesses take place mid-morning and/or mid-afternoon, not adjacent to the beginning of the school day, lunch time or end of the school day, unless the school elects to do so. The lunch period for students is 60 minutes. Teachers must have at least a 30-minute uninterrupted lunch period daily. A change requires a secret ballot vote of the staff conducted by the FR. If you do not take a vote, the status quo from last year remains. CEA urges you not to give up your rights in the contract or give up your school's recesses—our students need them. For full information, refer to Section 302.05 of the *CEA Master Agreement*.



## Fall 2026 Fee Waivers

The application period opens Apr. 13 and closes Apr. 30 at 11:59 p.m. Access the online application from home or work using your CCS email username and password. Have your college ID number available when applying. You will automatically be sent a confirmation email once your application is submitted. Log in at [bit.ly/4jhgJM3](https://bit.ly/4jhgJM3) to complete the online application. If you have Priority I or Priority II status, upload the proper documentation with your online application. Documentation is required with each fee waiver process. Your priority status will change without the proper documentation.

Go to <https://www.ccssoh.us/Page/4815> for assistance with frequently asked questions, links to each of the universities, priority status, and documentation guidelines. Call (614) 365-5039 or email [feewaivers@columbus.k12.oh.us](mailto:feewaivers@columbus.k12.oh.us) if you need assistance.

## Grant Opportunities for Educators

The Columbus City Schools Office of State and Federal Funding has recently come across several funding opportunities that may benefit our teachers and classrooms. Below is a list of opportunities currently available, along with their respective deadlines and award amounts. We encourage interested teachers to review these opportunities and consider applying.

To apply for any of the opportunities listed below, contact the Grants Office at [grants@columbus.k12.oh.us](mailto:grants@columbus.k12.oh.us) so we can assist you with the application process and ensure all requirements are met.

**Important:** Applications submitted without the involvement of the Grants Office will be considered invalid and will not be approved for submission.

**Current Opportunities:**



- **Kars for Kids Small Grant** .....Deadline: **Rolling**.....Award Amount: **\$5,000**
- **Martha Holden Jennings Foundation, Open Grants** ... .Deadline: **May 1, 2026** .....Award Amount: **\$15,000**

If you have questions or want to pursue any of these opportunities, contact the Grants Office at [grants@columbus.k12.oh.us](mailto:grants@columbus.k12.oh.us) as soon as possible so we can begin the application process together.

Thank you, and we look forward to supporting your proposals.

## Capital District RA and Elections

The **Capital District Spring Representative Assembly (RA)** will be held on Wednesday, Apr. 22, 2026, at **The Boat House**, 679 W. Long Street, Columbus, OH 43215. Registration begins at 4:30 p.m. and the RA starts at 5:30 p.m. Alternates are welcome to attend the RA. A key focal point of the Capital RA will be the **Spring Elections for Capital District President and Vice President**. Voting will take place during the Capital RA on Apr. 22, 2026.



## CEA Awards & Retirement Banquet

CEA is holding its 50th Annual Awards & Retirement Banquet on Friday, May 15. It will, again, be at the Hilton Columbus at Easton. If you are retiring this year, contact CEA today so you can attend. As a retiree, your evening will be provided at no charge. Guests will be charged \$50 per person.

## Special Notes

**Please consider making an Organ Donation! A transplant needed for CEA Member Robyn Chernack**, Intervention Specialist at **Cedarwood ES**. She 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](http://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 status and receive healthcare benefits. The following members have been approved for Catastrophic Leave and are in need of donated days: **Shelley Kale**, (School Nurse) Colerain ES; **Dawn Berenzweig**, Westgate ES; and **Jennifer Burley**, Valleyview 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](mailto:leavesofabsence@columbus.k12.oh.us).

## Using the Arts As A Platform to Teach Social Justice and Social Change

**Thursday, May 7, 2026 at 4–6 p.m.**

**Seventeenth Ave. Service Center at 889 E. 17th Street; Conference Room 2**

**Register on the CCS PD Portal – Course #84466**



**CEA Members & Families—Bank where you belong!** All CEA members and their families can become members of Education First Credit Union! Enjoy exclusive financial benefits, low-rate loans, high-yield savings, and personalize service. Join today at [www.educu.org](http://www.educu.org).




Join The

# SPECIAL EDUCATION CAUCUS

OUR PURPOSE

1. Advocate for the needs, rights, & working conditions of special education professionals within CEA.
2. Provide a forum for members to share resources, concerns, & strategies related to special education.
3. Support & advise CEA leadership on issues impacting special education.
4. Build community, professional development, & solidarity among members.

ALL active CEA members welcome!!



SCAN ME

Share your voice!

# DESIGNING THE CLASSROOMS OF TOMORROW!



Superintendent/CEO Dr. Angela Chapman and the Board of Education invite parents, teachers and friends of CCS to participate in one of three workshops to weigh-in on future design concepts for district classrooms. Input will help guide our work with the State of Ohio Facilities Construction Commission in future school planning.



**Join us at 6 p.m.**  
at a location in your  
neighborhood!

Monday, April 27  
**Centennial HS**

Tuesday, April 28  
**Columbus  
Africentric Early  
College**

Wednesday, April 29  
**West High School**