

Be In the Room Tuesday, Oct. 6

Dear CEA Member:

The Board's story to the public that it worked "closely" with us on 2027 health benefits was a lie. We were handed two equally horrible options and told to pick one. You and your families were functionally held hostage for the Board's failures.

The Board's own review found that:

- the vendor hired to monitor our health claims was negligent and ignored basic industry standards.
- the district's HR director failed to keep required records and signed contracts without the authority to do so.

Those were the Board's failures, and the shortfall of more than \$22 million in our health insurance plan was the result.

What has the Board actually done?

First, the Board fired the vendor, then fired their own HR director several months later while simultaneously admitting no wrongdoing. The Board then blamed this crisis on "healthcare costs going up across the nation and in Columbus" all while placing the responsibility for solving their mistake on the people who had nothing to do with it: you and your families.

The Board has betrayed what little trust we had left in them. They knew what was happening for six months and did not tell us until it was too late.

If we do nothing, the Board will do it again. The Board will remember this when it comes time for our next contract. If we are silent, it weakens our position at the table. A full room strengthens it.

CEA demands that the Board:

1. Explain why no action has been taken to recover the misspent funds from its vendors.
2. Commit to independent oversight of any future health plan administration.
3. Publicly acknowledge its role in this crisis and outline detailed steps to repair its relationship with staff, students, and taxpayers.

I am calling on every CEA member to show up at 5 p.m. at 3700 S. High St. on Tuesday, Oct. 6. We will have a brief press conference before the meeting, be present for public comment and then leave at the conclusion of the public comment. *RSVP* at bit.ly/47yigsk.

Bring a colleague. Bring your family. Wear **RED**. The Board needs to see, in person, how many of us are watching and how much we demand from them.

In solidarity,



John

United Way Kickoff

The CEA Legislative Assembly, along with CCS Superintendent Dr. Angela Chapman, kicked off this year's United Way campaign at Columbus Downtown HS. The United Way is extremely important to our families and our students. Look across your classroom. There are probably students sitting there who don't have enough to eat, whose parents have lost their jobs, who don't have access to a dentist, or whose neighborhoods are not safe. You can do something to help. You can give to United Way of Central Ohio. When you authorize a payroll deduction to support United Way, you are helping your students, their families, and many people across our communities. Go to <https://uwco.upicsolutions.org/uwco/CCS> to make a donation. The campaign ends Friday, Oct. 30. If you have questions, contact your Faculty Representative or CEA Vice President Phil Hayes at (614) 253-4731.



Open Enrollment October 5–23 — It's Passive This Year!

1. If you want to make changes to your benefit elections and/or you want to elect an FSA, then you must complete Open Enrollment as usual.
2. If not, your current benefit elections will roll over for 2027.

Make sure you can log on to ESS PRIOR to the start of Open Enrollment. Benefit choices made during Open Enrollment will be effective Jan. 1, 2027.

This year's Open Enrollment is completely virtual. To participate in Open Enrollment, benefits-eligible bargaining unit members can:

Continued on Page 2

The CEA Master Agreement is set to expire in fewer than 685 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. Go to: <https://www.ceaohio.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/10/Grievance-261005-08.pdf>

Continued from Page 1

1. Log into ESS to make your FSA elections or benefit changes for core benefits (Medical, Dental, Vision, FSA and Life), you do not need a counselor.
2. If you do need support with making your elections through ESS, meet online with a Benefits Counselor in a co-browsing session for both core and voluntary benefits. Visit <https://columbuscityschools.annualenrollment.net> to schedule your call center enrollment meeting ahead of time, or call 614-401-5172 between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. EST. At your scheduled appointment time, you will receive a call from the iBTR Enrollment Representative. If you are meeting with an Enrollment Counselor, you must have your ESS Username and Password, a telephone, and a computer or smart phone on which to complete your enrollment.
3. CCS must report health care coverage information for its employees and their dependents to the federal government. Verify that the Social Security numbers entered into ESS for you and your dependents are correct. Note that if you are enrolling a new dependent, you will need to verify their eligibility. Be on the lookout for communication from Dependents Audit, the District's dependent verification administrator.
4. Remember that if you enroll in core benefits through ESS but also want to make changes to your voluntary benefits, you can make those changes yourself on the bswift platform by visiting columbuscityschools.bswift.com. You can watch a video to learn to use bswift by copying and pasting this link in your browser: <https://youtu.be/IM1ZYwVsygA>. If you need assistance with your voluntary benefits, you can reach out to iBTR by calling (614) 401-5172. Voluntary benefits include: Short-Term Disability, Long-Term Disability, Critical Illness Insurance, Accident Insurance, Hospital Insurance, Pet Insurance, Identity Theft Protection, Whole Life, and Term Life Insurance.

If you have questions regarding the Open Enrollment Process, contact CCS Benefits Department at (614) 365-6475 or benefitquestions@columbus.k12.oh.us

Class Size Matters

The CCS administration has to make a concerted effort to complete initial class size adjustments within the first 19 student attendance days of the school year. Oct. 1 was the deadline to reorganize classrooms that exceed the class size guidelines prescribed in Article 301 of our *Master Agreement*.

Here are the size limits:

- K-5: No more than 27 students each
- EL classrooms: K-5 No more than 15 students per EL class time; 6-12 maximum of 100 EL students
- Middle school: No more than 33 students per class and 150 students per day.
- High school: No more than 34 students per class and 150 students per day.
- High school or middle school non-academic classes (computer, physical education and music) must not exceed the number of pupil stations. For instance, assigning 35 students to a computer class with 30 computers would be a violation of the contract.

If at any time class sizes exceed contractual limits, a reorganization must take place. If you have any questions about class size, call the CEA Office at (614) 253-4731.

2026 Mini Grant Application Window is Open!

The application window will close at 4:30 p.m. on Oct. 19, 2026, to align with the first Records Day of the year. To apply for this year's CEA Foundation Mini Grants, make sure to sign in to your personal Google Drive and go to 2026 Mini Grant Application (bit.ly/46TRDhq).

There have been significant changes to the Mini Grants:

- There will be only two categories this year, both with grants eligible up to \$500. One of the grant categories will continue to be for new educators only, the other will be for everyone else, encompassing all categories. It works best to complete the application on a Chromebook, laptop, or desktop.
- ALL Mini Grant winners will be asked to fill out a W-9 form.

Retiring? Avoid OTES

Bargaining unit members who are planning on retiring during the 2026-2027 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. 30. You must continue to complete the evaluation process until your retirement has been approved by the Board of Education.

Go to bit.ly/4z1VZyW to download retirement information or access the Google form to submit notification of retirement. If you have questions, contact Teri Mullins, CEA Staff Consultant at (614) 253-4731.

Know Your Contract: Extended Time Pay Process Now Digital

In August of 2025, CEA members voted to ratify the 2025-2028 CEA Master Agreement with a number of new provisions. One of them was the District's intent to roll out a fully digitized process for CEA members to submit and track payments for extended time for the 2026-2027 school year. Your Union is pleased to announce that beginning October 1, the District will officially transition to this system.

The extended time form has officially transitioned to a fully digital workflow in SCView.

Link <https://auth.myscview.com/Identity/Account/Login>

This solution eliminates paper forms, simplifies submissions, and allows CEA members to follow the form through the various approval processes.

Go to: <https://www.ceahio.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/SOP-Extended-Time-Employee-3.pdf> to access the Standard Operating Procedure Instructions for SCView.

To view a video of how to use SCView, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M8joLe2-jXc>.

If you have any questions or need assistance submitting a form, please reach out by emailing scview@columbus.k12.oh.us

Join the New Black Affinity Group!

The Minority Involvement Program is excited to announce the Black Affinity Group. This group was created to

- Create a safe and supportive space for BIPOC educators
- Foster authentic community, connection, and healing through shared lived experiences
- Increase engagement and leadership within local and state level association activities
- Serve as a pathway for potential members to remain active the organization

The vision is to build a powerful, connected community of Black educators within our union who are supported, valued, and empowered to lead.

The vision is to support all BIPOC educators as well. All CEA members are invited to join.

Note: “The Black Affinity Group is hosting its first event at Flavor 91 Bistro. Art Under Glass will happen on Tuesday Oct. 20 from 4:30–6 p.m. Come meet other educators of color and start making connections. Craft is free, food and drinks available for purchase. *RSVP* using link <https://form.jotform.com/262715981788172>. See the flyer for the event on Page 5.



Scan to Join!

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. 2026–June 2027. 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. 2026–June 2027 with at least a 2.0 GPA. Payment will be made directly to the college or university. 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. The deadline is 4 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 9. If you have questions, call Kathy Wilkes at (614) 253-4731. To download the application form, go to <https://bit.ly/4wNZIEp>.

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. 23, 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.

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 has been approved for Catastrophic Leave and are in need of donated days: Dawn Berenzweig, Displaced; and Jennifer Burley, 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 .
Due to vacancies on the Board of Governors and OEA Delegates for 2026–2027, there will be a Special Election . CEA is electing candidates for the unexpired term of Governor for District 7 (2028), High School Governor-at-Large (2029) and OEA Delegate (2026–2027). Declaration runs from Sept. 28 through Oct. 9 . Voting runs from Oct. 21 through Nov. 4 .
PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING AN ORGAN DONATION! A transplant is 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 .
If you know someone new to your building or unit, approach the person and ask them to become a member of CEA. We have made joining CEA simple. Step 1: Click “JOIN” on the homepage at www.ceahio.org ; Step 2: Download the CEA Membership Form to your device and complete it. (It is a fillable pdf for your convenience); Step 3: Email the completed form to membership@ceahio.org . Call CEA at (614) 253-4731 with questions.
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 .

See CEA’s Full Slate of
Endorsed Candidates
for the Nov. 3 Election
on Page 5

Columbus Teachers Endorse:

- **Governor/Lt. Governor:** . . . **Dr. Amy Acton (D)/David Pepper (D)**
- **U.S. Senate:** **Sherrod Brown (D)**
- **U.S. House 3:** **Joyce Beatty (D)**
- **Attorney General:** **John Kulewicz (D)**
- **Treasurer of State:** **Jay Edwards (R)**
- **Secretary of State:** **Allison Russo (D)**
- **Auditor of State:** **Annette Blackwell (D)**
- **Associate Justice:** **Jennifer Brunner (D)**
- **Associate Justice:** **Marilyn Zayas (D)**

- **Ohio House District 1:** **Dontavius Jarrells (D)**
- **Ohio House District 2:** **Charity Martin-King (D)**
- **Ohio House District 3:** **Ismail Mohammed (D)**
- **Ohio House District 4:** **Beryl Piccolantonio (D)**
- **Ohio House District 5:** **Meredith Lawson-Rowe (D)**
- **Ohio House District 6:** **Christine Cockley (D)**
- **Ohio House District 8:** **Anita Somani (D)**
- **Ohio House District 9:** **Munira Abdullahi (D)**
- **Ohio House District 10:** **Mark Sigrist (D)**
- **Ohio Senate District 3:** **Stacie Baker (D)**
- **Ohio Senate District 15:** **Latyna Humphrey (D)**
- **Ohio Senate District 25:** **Bill DeMora (D)**

- **Judge of the Court of Appeals 10th District:** **Terri Jamison (D)**
- **Judge of the Court of Appeals 10th District:** **Michael C. Mentel (D)**
- **Judge of the Court of Common Pleas (General Division):** **Carl Aveni (D)**
- **Judge of the Court of Common Pleas (General Division):** **Andy Miller (D)**
- **Judge of the Court of Common Pleas (General Division):** **David Young (D)**
- **Judge of the Court of Common Pleas (General Division):** **Chris Brown (D)**
- **Judge of the Court of Common Pleas (Domestic Relations Division):** **Kelly Gabrielle Boller (D)**
- **Judge of the Court of Common Pleas (Domestic Relations Division):** **Lasheyl N. Stroud (D)**
- **Judge of the Court of Common Pleas (Probate):** **Chris Junga (R)**
- **County Auditor:** **Michael Stinziano (D)**



CEA Endorsed Issues:

- #3** To require voters to present photo identification in order to vote: Oppose
- #5** Bexley City School District Proposed Bond Issue & Income Tax: Support
Delaware Area Career Center Proposed Tax Levy (Renewal & Decrease): Support
Pickerington Local School District Proposed Income Tax Increase: Support
- #6** South-Western City School District Proposed Bond Issue: Support
- #7** Upper Arlington City School District Proposed Tax Levy & Bond Issue: Support
- #8** Proposed Columbus Charter Amendment (By Petition): This proposed amendment would limit the ability to vote for candidates for Columbus City Council to only those electors living within the districts that those candidates seek to represent. (Our City Our Say)
- #9** Proposed Columbus Charter Amendment (By Council) This proposed amendment would limit the ability to vote for candidates for Columbus City Council to only those electors living within the districts that those candidates seek to represent. The amendment adds two (2) at-large council representatives to be elected in 2027, and an additional two (2) at-large council representatives to be elected in 2029. All at-large council representatives will be elected for four (4) year terms. The amendment includes provisions for transitioning from the current nine (9) member Council to an eleven (11) member Council and then subsequently to a thirteen (13) member Council, allowing for the ongoing staggering of terms.

Vote Tuesday, Nov. 3

IN-PERSON ABSENTEE VOTING, Franklin County Board of Elections
1700 Morse Road, Columbus, Ohio 43229
DATES AND HOURS (subject to change)

EARLY VOTING DATES AND HOURS		Fourth and FINAL Week of Early Voting - Extended Weekday Hours & Weekend	
November 3, 2026 - General Election		Monday, October 26 7:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.	
October 6–9 (Weekdays Only Tuesday–Friday) 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.		Tuesday, October 27 (Last Day to Request Absentee Ballots) 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.	
October 12–16 (Weekdays Only - Monday–Friday) 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.		Wednesday, Oct. 28–Friday, Oct. 30 7:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.	
Weekday Voting and Saturday Voting		Saturday, October 31 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.	
October 19–23 (Weekdays Only - Monday–Friday) 8 a.m.–5 p.m.		Sunday, November 1 - Final Day of Early Voting 1 – 5 p.m.	
Saturday, October 24 8 a.m.–4 p.m.		<i>Ohio law now requires all absentee ballots be received by 7:30 p.m. on Election Day. Your absentee ballot MUST be received no later than 7:30 p.m. on Election Day.</i>	

Black Affinity Group Meet-up Art Under Glass

Come and meet other educators of color and
join us for a fun craft

October 20, 2026

4:30-6:00pm

Flavor 91 Bistro

5186 E Main St. Whitehall, OH

43213



Looking forward to meeting everyone!

Drop in anytime.
Food and drinks
available for purchase
at venue



**Cloppert Latanick
Sauter & Washburn**

(614) 461-4455

www.cloppertlaw.com

We have dedicated ourselves to teachers in and out of the classroom. Our experienced personal injury, divorce, dissolution, criminal, probate, and real estate attorneys are available to you at moderate rates which are lower than we normally charge our private clients.

**CEA Pre-Paid Legal Services Plan
OEA/NEA Attorney Referral Program**

Contact us today and allow our experience to work for you.