



Cleveland Teachers Union

News & Notes

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LINKAGE

The state has extended the deadline to complete Linkage. For all teachers that teach a Value Added grade/subject – Linkage must be completed by May 18. This Teacher Roster Verification period has been extended until 11:59PM on Monday, May 18.

If you have any questions regarding linkage you can contact Mark Baumgartner or Debbie Paden to get clarification regarding Linkage.

PAUSE ON PARCC

It may seem like a long time ago that you were emailing and sending postcards to your State Senators calling for PARCC results to NOT be used to make high stakes decisions that impact teachers. This issue has not been forgotten. On Thursday, May 7 Tracy Radich was in Columbus testifying before the Senate Finance Education Sub-Committee. Tracy told the Committee “It is critical that there is a 3 year moratorium that will not allow PARCC & AIR assessments or any new assessments, to be used to make decisions regarding an educator's compensation, position for lay-off, evaluation, or final effectiveness rating. Until it is ensured that districts are prepared (as educators, students, and with technology infrastructure), that the tests are proven valid, and the tests are fair for all groups of students (urban, rural, suburban, special needs, English as a second language, etc.) these assessments and any new assessments should not be used for high stakes decisions that impact educators.” Senators Lehner and Hite each stated that this is a priority of theirs to get legislation that will put a moratorium on the stakes for teachers before the end of this legislative session.

BOARD MEETING

The next Board of Education Meeting will be on Tuesday, May 26 at Miles School (11918 Miles Avenue). The Board Meeting starts at 6:30. Wear your CTU blue.

TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS RATING

Mark Baumgartner wants to make sure that all members received information in your mailbox regarding the new calculation formula for your Teacher Effectiveness Rating.

It is the new 600-point scale that is for both observational data and student growth measures.

SEVERANCE PAY – ARE YOU RETIRING?

David wants to make sure that all members that are planning to retire are aware of the 2 ways that Severance payments (30% of unused sick leave up to \$30,000) are disbursed in accordance with the CBA.

IF YOU ARE AGE 55 (OR OLDER) OR YOU WILL ATTAIN AGE 55 IN THE CALENDAR YEAR OF RETIREMENT:

If you are age 55, over 55, or 54 but will turn 55 by Dec. 31st...this applies to you. If you fall in this category and will be receiving a severance pay from the district then it is MANDATORY for employees to enroll in a 403(b) and have the severance pay deposited into that 403(b). The only 403(b) Tax Sheltered Annuity that is used for this severance plan is VALIC. If you don't have an account with VALIC you must establish one before you can access your severance payment. Once you have your account set up, you can leave that money in your VALIC account or transfer if you have another 403(b) account with another provider. This is a great plan and your severance is not taxable until you withdraw it from your account. The transfer between different annuity providers is not a withdrawal, so you will not be taxed. Additionally, since you are over 55 or attaining age 55 in the year you retire, if you do choose to withdraw these monies, you will not be penalized for an early withdrawal (you will simply pay the taxes on the amount of money you need). As always, consult with your financial planner or annuity provider on what best meets your financial needs.

IF YOU ARE NOT 55 OR OLDER IN THE CALENDAR YEAR OF RETIREMENT:

It is not mandatory to enroll in a 403(b). Severance will be paid in a lump sum payment no later than 2 1/2 months after the effective date of retirement. This will result in a pretty significant amount of your severance being taxed. Employees may elect to have all or a portion of the severance deferred to a tax sheltered annuity. Please check with your financial planner regarding tax sheltered annuity, withdrawal of the dollars, and any penalties that might apply.

OPI PERIOD

On Wednesday, May 6 matches were made as a result of the interviews that happened at the May 2 Interview Fair

at Lincoln West or the interviews that continued in schools on Monday and Tuesday as a result of that Fair. Teachers and paraprofessionals that were selected by schools that they chose were notified on Wednesday or Thursday (5/6 & 5/7). Open Position Interview Period will close on May 15. Interviews and selections can take place up until Friday. All Selection forms from the schools signed by the Building Chair and the Principal and acceptance emails from the candidates are all due to HR by 4:30PM on May 15.

CTU END-OF-YEAR PARTY

It is hard to believe that the end of the school year is only a few weeks away. The CTU End-of-Year Party is on Wednesday, May 27 at Nautica Pavilion from 3:00-7:00. Cassandra Carter and the Social Committee hope that everyone is planning on coming to the party. It is a great chance to see old friends, meet new friends, and celebrate the beginning of summer.

TEXT MESSAGES

The Cleveland Teachers Union is trying to use many different methods to keep members up-to-date with information. Are you receiving text messages from the Cleveland Teachers Union? You can sign up right now to receive mobile text message alerts from AFT-Cleveland Teachers Union. You will receive updates, notices, and reminders. Recent text messages were sent regarding Linkage extension, link to Conditions for Teaching Survey, Open Position Job Fair, CTU End-of-the-Year Party, etc. Get your phone out right now and send a text message with the word: ctu279 (lowercase, no spaces) in your message box. Send to the phone number 69238.

AFT-CTU will never charge you for text messages, your carrier's Message & Data rates may apply.

MEMBER MOBILIZATION EMAILS

CTU sends out regular communications, like News & Notes via Member Mobilization. Please make sure that your Chapter Chair has your personal email address to send Member Mobilization emails to. These emails are sent to you through the Chapter Chair. It will be important for your Chair to have personal emails during contract negotiations. It is better to make sure that is done now, so that you do not miss any important information.

EMAILS FROM CTU

Recently, the American Federation of Teachers has switched some different type of electronic platform (I obviously really do not understand technology). This switch has enabled the CTU to send emails to all of the members that we have email addresses for. Email addresses were updated this year if there was a change that was indicated on the form that was returned after

you received your Union Card. The emails that have been sent included: Information for Board Meeting including notice of Trolley availability, Thank you from David after the Board Meeting, Information for Interviewees for the Interview Fair, etc. If you have not received these emails, please send an email to Bonnie Hedges (bhedges@ctu279.org). Bonnie will make sure that your personal email is updated in the CTU system.