

Affiliated with NEA and KEA

ACTION

J E F F E R S O N C O U N T Y T E A C H E R S A S S O C I A T I O N

1941 Bishop Lane, Louisville, KY 40218 ♦ 454-3400 ♦ 452-2794 (fax) ♦ www.jcta.org ♦ **October 2, 2013**

WHAT'S HAPPENING

All meetings are at the JCTA office unless otherwise specified.

WED, OCT 2:

- ⇒ PR Training; 3:15 p.m.
- ⇒ Special Called JCTA Board of Directors Meeting; 4:30 p.m.

THURS, OCT 10:

- ⇒ Early Childhood Caucus Meeting; 5:00 p.m.

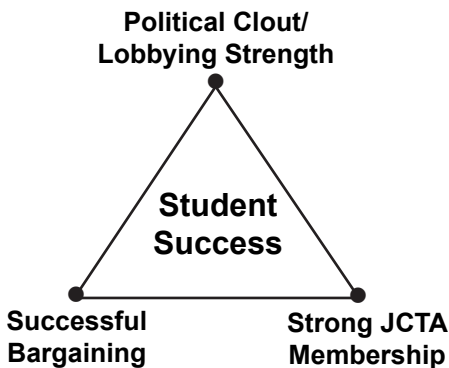
WED, OCT 16:

- ⇒ NEA Member Benefits Workshop: Student Loan and Debt; 4:30 p.m.

HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS COMMITTEE TEA

JCTA's Human and Civil Rights Committee cordially invites you to attend our Calendar Tea on Saturday, October 26, 2013, from noon to 2:00 p.m. Please RSVP with, Candace Foster at candace.foster@jefferson.kyschools.us.

WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT



IMPORTANT NOTE:

By state law, certain provisions of our labor agreement may not apply in state-designated Priority Schools. As a result, some articles in *ACTION* may not apply to you if your school is a Priority School. Please contact JCTA for more details if you have questions.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

There are significant changes to our health insurance system this year. Open enrollment is MANDATORY for every teacher and state employee. Because there will be some significant changes, we wanted to give you information regarding the most frequently asked questions. More information can be found under the members-only portion of our website, www.jcta.org.

Kentucky Employees' Health Plan (KEHP) is the non-profit, self-funded system that was created in 2004. KEHP is the health insurance option for all school employees, state employees and legislators throughout Kentucky. All the money to pay claims comes from premiums paid by the employer and the employees; no outside insurance company is involved, this keeps costs down for everyone. I serve as one of your representatives on the Kentucky Group Health Insurance Board, an advisory board created as part of the changes in 2004. The advisory board's role is limited to providing input to the Kentucky Personnel Cabinet, which designs and administers the plans. The Advisory Board does not design the plans or set the premiums. Because KEHP has implemented the wellness options and consumer driven plan options for 2014, there are no direct correlations between our current plans and the plans for 2014.

KEHP is self-funded, meaning the only money available to pay claims is the money it collects from employers and employees. For school employees, the "employer" who pays that portion of the premium is the state legislature, NOT the local school boards. Every two years, the state legislature passes its own budget, deciding then how much money will be spent on health care for state workers. The 2012 budget only provided a 2% increase in employer contributions each year even though the legislature knew that costs would actually increase at least 7-9% each year. That lack of funding means employee contributions must increase, wellness must improve, and/or benefits must be reduced. Last year, Kentucky received significant federal insurance grants, allowing the Personnel Cabinet to keep premiums low. But those funds are nearly exhausted so the Cabinet had to increase some employee premiums in order to cover the lack of budgeted funds.

Two of the plans for 2014 are designated "Living Well" plans. These plans have better benefits than their standard counterparts. Because the Living Well plans are new, there is some confusion and concern regarding these plans. Employees choosing the Living Well plans must pledge to do two things: 1. Take an online health assessment and 2. Maintain current contact information with KEHP. THAT'S IT. The results of the health assessment may suggest weight loss or smoking cessation as steps to a healthier life, but you are NOT making a pledge to take those steps, only to take the assessment and keep your contact information current. Other states have found that simply by implementing such an annual survey that provides personalized feedback to plan members, they have been able to improve their group's overall wellness and reduce costs. Since we are a self-funded plan, it is in all our interests to promote wellness because this reduces claims for the entire group and allows us to keep better benefits for less cost. Implementing this survey will help us do this.

Lastly, I want to leave you with the information that the next biennial budget session will begin in January 2014. It is imperative that you contact your legislators NOW and encourage them to fully fund the KEHP. Let your legislators know that your health insurance benefits are important to you and that you are being squeezed too much already.

Thank you for all you do,

Brent

Being Investigated

If someone makes allegations against you, a district investigator and/or Child Protective Services may be called in to conduct interviews and complete a report concerning the incident. JCTA members have the right to representation at any such interview. If your principal informs you that you will be investigated, please follow these steps:

1. Call your JCTA UniServ Director immediately.
2. Put your version of events into writing and have your UniServ Director review it before giving it to anyone else, including your principal.
3. Find out the time and date for the investigation so your UniServ Director can be there.

Investigation reports are only placed in your personnel file if they are made a matter of record through formal discipline, but all allegations are sent to the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) for their review and possible action. Even though an allegation may seem trivial, it is always better to be safe than sorry, especially when dealing with the EPSB. One of the many benefits of membership is the counsel and advocacy provided by your UniServ Director, and this is certainly an instance when you should take advantage of it!

Flexible PD days, Gold Days and Parent/ Teacher Conference Days

Friday, October 4 is a flexible professional development day and you must have completed 6 hours of professional development in order to take off that day. Teachers should be notified as to whether they have completed the required hours or not. If you do not have the required hours, you must attend that day or use a leave day. If you use a leave day, that time does not count toward the 24 state-required PD hours. Monday, October 7 is a gold day. Gold days are mandatory work days. You must use a personal or sick leave day in order to miss work on a gold day. Tuesday, October 8 is a parent/teacher conference day. These are contractually guaranteed extended employment days. You may work this day for your per diem pay or you may choose not to work this day and not receive the extra pay. However, you do not need to utilize a personal or sick leave day in order to be absent this day.

Health Insurance Open Enrollment

The Kentucky Department of Employee Insurance has released details for the Kentucky Employees Health Insurance Program 2014 plan year. Details are available on their website at <http://KEHP.ky.gov>.

Open enrollment is October 1-31, 2013. **Enrollment this year is MANDATORY.** If an employee does not actively enroll or waive coverage, he/she will be defaulted to the standard consumer driven health plan. The biggest change this year is the LivingWell plan options. If you choose a LivingWell plan you will have an opportunity to learn more about your health risks, access richer plan benefits, and use KEHP programs to achieve overall well-being. If you're already on the road to good health, the LivingWell plans are a gateway to rewards for all your hard work. If you choose a LivingWell plan and do not follow through, the LivingWell plans will not be available to you at the next enrollment period. The Louisville benefits fair will be held on Monday, October 7 between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. in the Kentucky Fair and Expo Center, West Hall Meeting Rooms 1 & 2.

Nominations for Delegates to KEA Assembly Now Sought

The KEA Delegate Assembly will be held Wednesday, April 2 through Friday, April 4, 2014 at the Marriott Downtown in Louisville. The deadline for filing nominations is Wednesday, October 9 at 5:00 p.m. Candidates may include a resume (50 word limit), which is also due by 5:00 p.m. on October 9. The nomination form may be found online at www.jcta.org through the member login on the home page. Candidates must complete the form and return electronically as an attachment to elana.crane@jcta.org. Resumes will be sent to buildings and will be viewable in the members-only section of our website on October 28. Electronic voting will begin at 5:00 a.m. on Wednesday, October 30, 2013 and end on Wednesday, November 6, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. JCTA elects over 100 delegates to represent us at the KEA DA, so we encourage all interested members to complete a nomination form. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact UniServ Director Elana Crane (elana.crane@jcta.org) at the JCTA office.

Instructions for electronic voting will be provided in *ACTION* and on our website.

DonorsChoose.Org Provides Funding for Classroom Projects

DonorsChoose.org is a nonprofit that connects public school teachers with people who want to support classroom learning.

HOW IT WORKS: (1) Projects may be submitted by full-time, front line JCPS employees such as teachers, librarians, counselors, school nurses and FRYSC staff. (2) Generous donors from across the country browse these project requests every day and fund the ones they want to support. (3) When a request is funded, DonorsChoose.org orders the materials and ships them directly to the classroom. (4) You and your students send along your thanks. It's that easy!

DOUBLE THE IMPACT: Every dollar raised through DonorsChoose.org for a classroom in Jefferson County will be doubled by the Community Foundation of Louisville up to \$50,000! So, if a project costs \$400 and people give \$200, the Foundation will donate the remaining \$200.

As an NEA member, when you post your request for up to \$500 for classroom materials on DonorsChoose.org, the NEA Foundation will match the public donations you receive. Last year, NEA helped fund close to 1,500 NEA member project requests. As a result, more than 120,000 public school students benefited.

NEW FUNDING FOR MUSIC PROJECTS: Thanks to the Community Foundation of Louisville's Robert & Clarita Whitney Fund, there's an additional \$10,000 to match gifts made specifically for music-related projects.

HOW TO GET STARTED:

- Visit www.DonorsChoose.org/teachers
- Click on "Get Started!"
- Follow the directions to create a free account and submit a project request.

You can follow DonorsChoose.org on Facebook and Twitter, and be sure to post your projects for your friends and followers to support!