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From East Cleveland Education Association

For Immediate Release:

The Grinch Keeps on Grinching in East Cleveland

East Cleveland, OH: “The Grinch Who Stole Christmas,” the title character can be heard saying “Those Whos are hard to frazzle, Max. But we did our worst, and that’s all that matters.” Indeed, East Cleveland’s CEO, Henry Pettiegrew, seems to be doing his worst. One of his recent decisions was to not pay coaches. Team sports are an essential educational experience for students in East Cleveland Schools and teacher coaches worked diligently throughout the year to give students the opportunity to participate and grow. Unfortunately, the CEO unilaterally determined that the coaches did not deserve their contractual pay for their work. The Collective Bargaining Agreement between the East Cleveland Education Association and the School Board outlines salary for the district’s coaches.

Pettiegrew’s decision to withhold the payments to coaches is yet another direct violation of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Although the parties are currently negotiating a successor Agreement, per Ohio law the terms and conditions of the existing Agreement MUST remain in full force and effect until a new Agreement is ratified. Irene Spraggins, spokesperson for the ECEA stated, “Our coaches are professionals and will continue to do what is right for the students of East Cleveland, although the CEO refuses to pay them”. The East Cleveland Education Association’s only recourse for the CEO’s unilateral decision to violate the contract and withhold pay the coaches have already earned, is to institute the dispute provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. This is a time-consuming process and a resolution will likely not be in place in time to provide the pay to coaches before the winter break. The continued actions by the appointed CEO to undermine the Agreement and de-value educators is among the many examples of Ohio’s House Bill 70 law being ineffective and hurtful to our school districts, students, and communities. The members of ECEA are not certain what is motivating Pettiegrew’s animosity, but we strongly suspect the Whos of Whoville nailed it when they said of the Grinch “.....that the most likely reason of all may have been that his heart was two sizes too small.”

The ECEA is an affiliate of the Ohio Education Association and the National Education Association. The ECEA represents approximately 170 full time and part time educators in the East Cleveland City School District.

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