



OASNP

Ohio Association of Special Needs Professionals
An affiliated department of the Ohio Education Association

OASNP Newsline - Fall 2019

In this issue:

- Can we save some postage and get an email for you?
 - New Beginnings - Christina West, OASNP Chairperson
 - Local Focus - Nicole Nadasky, SSA, Portage County Board of DD
 - State of the Profession - Serena McCoy, Teacher, Fredericktown EA
 - Call for Help at District RAs - Help staff an information table
 - OEA Special Education Work Group - Crystal Boyd, OT, Hudson EA
 - OASNP Meeting Schedule - 2019-1020
 - Annual Conference: Another Success Story - Jené Wilson, OASNP Past President, Cuyahoga County
 - Free Money for your Local!
-

Can we save some postage and use your email?

Unfortunately, we don't have an email on file for you. That is why we need to use part of your dues for printing and postage. If you are just finding this on the website, you may not be on our membership list. As a member of OASNP, your \$9 annual dues goes primarily to fund the two-day **OASNP Annual Special Education Conference** at Mohican State Park Lodge and Resort. Mark your calendar, the next conference will be February 28-29, 2020.

Help us advocate for OEA's special needs educators and support staff. Please use our Contact Us webpage to drop us a note with your email. You will only receive about a dozen emails for newsletters, conference and meeting dates, etc.

<http://oasnp.ohea.us/contact-us/> or just go to OASNP.org

Thank you.

New Beginnings

Christina West

OASNP Chairperson

Portage Co Bd of DD



It's the beginning of a new school year. Even for those of us whose work schedules do not follow the school calendar, it still feels like a beginning of sorts. We are presented with new challenges and new opportunities to grow as professionals. As we also grow as an organization, we are experiencing diversity in membership and expansion in the issues that concern us all. It is exciting to see and welcome so many new members who are committed to the vision of improving education for all students and adults with special needs.

With all the changes that continue to occur in education and in working with adults with special needs, it's important to have a voice for members, and OASNP is that voice for special educators in the OEA. OASNP appoints members to all OEA standing committees and represents the concerns of special educators at district and the state representative assemblies. The OEA Special Education work group was established specifically to address the needs of Ohio special educators at every level. OASNP also has a voice by working with OEA and those that lobby for us and for public education and habilitation.

I have a challenge to the members of OASNP - **get a colleague to sign up**. You know how much we want to support special educators and those professionals that give so much to students and adults with disabilities. The more members we have, the more support we can garner from OEA and the more support we can offer to each other.

We want to hear from you. We want to hear what works in your locals and what doesn't. We want to know how we can work together to better serve people with disabilities.

We are looking forward to another year and can't wait to hear from you!

Local Focus

Nicole Nadasky, SSA

Portage County Board of DD



Just wanted to take a minute to share some positive goals we are accomplishing at the Portage County Board of DD. Remote Monitoring has been in a lot of board discussions lately as an option for people to live more independent lives with limited supports. We now have 12 people receiving remote services with positive results. Services include video/IPAD communication with staff who monitor those services and give support and guidance when asked. Also, in case of an emergency, there is a backup provider on call.

Our Service and Support Administrators (SSA) group banded together and provided help to someone in need at their home. We did many outside jobs: mowing, cleaning up the yard, washing the home, fixing stairs, replacing window screens, and planting flowers. It was a truly amazing experience to see the joy on the person's face when we were done working. And the satisfaction among the staff for a need job well done. Priceless!

State of the Profession

Serena McCoy, Teacher

Fredericktown Education Association



Teaching students with special needs is one of the most rewarding, yet challenging, careers. The most fulfilling task for teachers and support staff alike is the process of working directly with students. However, there are many challenges including increasing workloads, sifting through mountains of paperwork, and navigating around insufficient funding issues. These obstacles could be contributing to a current special education shortage of teachers in Ohio.

Ohio has been experiencing a special education teacher shortage for the past ten to fifteen years. According to News 5 Cleveland, half of all schools in Ohio have a tough time finding qualified special education teachers. As much as 90% of high poverty schools have an even greater challenge finding qualified special education teachers. Correspondingly, The Ohio Coalition for the Education of Students with Disabilities states in their Special Education Profile report dated April 9, 2019 that "Since 2010, and as

recently as 2018, the U.S. Department of Education in the Teacher Shortage Areas report has indicated that a teacher shortage area for Ohio is special education." This shortage also includes a lack of qualified special education support staff.

Many of the reasons for this shortage include low pay, limited support and resources, and difficult working conditions. The shortage also causes higher caseloads, as well as a higher student-teacher ratio. With the emphasis on providing individualized, specially-designed instruction for each student, it is becoming increasingly difficult for special education professionals to teach and actually enjoy working with the students.

While the issue appears daunting, there are actions being taken to address this matter. A 2018 class action settlement (*Doe v. State of Ohio*) requires the state to increase the state's funding for special education services over the next five years. In addition, Cleveland State University has implemented a research project to determine more specific reasons for the shortage and to propose a solution. Both of these items should assist schools in finding and retaining qualified special education professionals in the coming years.

Call for help to spread the word about OASNP!!!

We are looking for volunteers to staff tables at all OEA District Representative Assemblies. If you will be attending your District RA anyway, or if you are a member who would like to be more involved within your area, look for dates and times for an RA near you. An OASNP t-shirt will be given to each volunteer. We will provide all signs, flyers, membership forms, etc. All you need is a table and a chair!

We will be reaching out to members when we have dates, times, and locations. Individuals who are willing to help please contact Nicole Nadasky at 330-718-3827 for more information!

OEA Special Education Work Group

The OEA Special Education Work Group is continuing to research Professional Development needs, Contract Language, Resolutions proposals, and suggestions around Legislation Policy. More updates to follow by early in the school year. Please direct any questions or concerns to OASNP at oasnp@oasnp.org.

Crystal Boyd, OT
Hudson Education Association
OEA Special Education Work Group member

Meeting Schedule -- 2019-1020

September 7, 2019	10:30 AM – 12:30 PM	Reed Memorial Library Carlin Room 167 E. Main St. Ravenna, OH 44266
November 16, 2019	10:30 AM – 12:30 PM	Reed Memorial Library Carlin Room 167 E. Main St. Ravenna, OH 44266
December 7, 2019	Lunch Break	OEA Representative Assembly , Cardinal Room, 2nd Floor
January 11, 2020	10:30 AM – 12:30 PM	Reed Memorial Library Carlin Room 167 E. Main St. Ravenna, OH 44266
February 28-29, 2020	Two-Day Conference Annual Meeting	Mohican State Park Conference Center
May 8, 2020	Lunch Break	OEA Representative Assembly Location TBA
July 25, 2020	11:30 AM – 2:30 PM	OEA Office 425 Niles Cortland Rd SE, Suite 101 Howland, OH 44484

Annual Conference: Another Success Story

Jené Wilson

OASNP Past President

Cuyahoga County



ADVOCACY

The OASNP Annual Conference was held March 1-2, 2019, at Mohican State Park Lodge and Resort. It was a very busy 24 hours, featuring seven speakers, an FCPE drive, a Friend of OASNP Award presentation, and an enjoyable networking and happy hour.

Melissa Clark, OEA Lobbyist, had a lot to share about her dealings with the state around special education and other topics of interest to OASNP members. She had a positive meeting with Governor DeWine, who indicated a willingness to listen to OEA members' ideas and concerns. Additionally, there is a good working relationship between OEA and both the state House and Senate Education Committees chair people, as well as with

Speaker of the House, Larry Householder. Melissa reported that the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS) years of service credit issue has been resolved in all but one local and that the school funding work group is looking at a proposal to directly fund charter schools instead of taking money from public schools.

The OEA Secretary-Treasurer, Mark Hill, gave a membership update, reporting that while OEA lost 3000 members due to the Supreme Court ruling in the Janus case, it also gained 4,666 new members, 78 of whom were former fee payers, as well as 68 retired members. Education Support Professionals locals grew the most. From talking to other state affiliates around the country, it seems that the second year after losing Fair Share Fee Payer rights is the most challenging, and Mark indicated that OEA is trying to be proactive in preparing for this.

Attendees at the conference heard from Scott DiMauro, who was running for OEA President, and two of the three candidates for Vice-President, Adrienne Bowden and Jeff Wensing. OASNP endorsed Scott and Jeff, who did win in their respective races.

The ever-popular Kathy McKinley, former OEA member and currently part of OEA Legal Services, ran through a gamut of cautions for members. She reported that Special Education teachers are the largest category reported to Children's Services, often for disproportionate or inappropriate use of discipline measures. She reminded members that they should always have approval for any behavioral interventions that are to be implemented and to be sure to ask for training if restraint strategies are being considered. OEA vigorously defends all members who end up in this situation, but Kathy cautioned that members should not meet with Ohio Department of Education (ODE) officials without representation. Another problem that is getting people reported to ODE is Medicaid documentation, as mistakes are being prosecuted as "fraud." Be very careful when filling out forms and data.

Kathy reported that public schools are struggling with behavior issues. ODE and the federal education department want to see a plan for every behavior and they want Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA) for each. To be compliant, these need to be regularly updated. Under the law, staff have a right to ask for training in managing behavior challenges.

Representatives from People First of Ohio discussed their work in teaching people with disabilities to be self-advocates. They have resources for all ages of students that can be used in classrooms. They will also help start self-advocacy groups and they have resources to assist with Pre-Employment Transition Services.



Daria DeNoia, OEA Education Policy and Practice Consultant, updated members on special education changes. The Operating Standards for the Education of Children with Disabilities is currently under review and public comment is invited and encouraged. Read the standards on the ODE website and make comments there, as well. This process will not happen again for five years, so it is important to take advantage of the review period. Daria also reported on proposed ways the state is considering for addressing the shortages in OT, PT and Speech staff, including monetary incentives. Alternative assessments are capped at 1% of the student population at the state and federal level, but districts can request a waiver to exceed that level. Ohio does not currently meet the standards for kids in special education graduating under regular ed standards. Daria also reported that the ODE Strategic Plan is available for review online.



The 2019 Friend of OASNP Award was presented to Becky Higgins, outgoing OEA President, for her longstanding support of OEA's special education staff members. When Becky was running for president, she sought out OASNP leadership to find out what issues were of concern and what OEA could do to assist. She continued this outreach throughout her six years in office, and green-lighted the establishment of the Special Education Work Group. A contribution was made in Becky's name to the OEA Foundation.

Bob Matkowski, OEA Organizer, spoke to the attendees about the importance of contributing to the Fund for Children and Public Education (FCPE) and with his encouragement, the group raised an impressive \$829 in just 24 hours!



The two-day conference wrapped up with a membership meeting, at which Chairperson Christina West reported on OASNP outreach efforts, a review of the year's activities, and a preview of the 2019-20 activities that are planned. Check the OASNP website, <http://oasnp.ohea.us> for dates and times of upcoming meetings and other important information.

Whew! It was a jam-packed 24 hours! Plan to be there next year on February 28-29, so you don't miss a thing.

Free Money for your Local!



An advantage of belonging to OASNP is the PR Grant program to support projects that enhance the image of your local in the community, reinforce the professional image of members, as well as the positive image of people with special needs. The amount of the grant depends on the project, but can be up to \$500.

Grants have been used for a variety of staff recognition programs; camperships for consumers; helping with Special Olympics expenses; assisting with expenses to publish regular communications to members; participating in community events such as sports booster clubs, Halloween costume contests, and Hunger Task Force fundraisers; purchasing switches for adapted toys for consumers; community "Take your Child to Work" Days; and hosting community members in the classroom.

Find the requirements for being awarded a grant, as well as more ideas for projects to get you thinking about what would be helpful in your local, on the

website, <http://oasnp.ohea.us>. You can submit your grant online or by contacting Christina West, Chairperson at oasnp@oasndp.org.

The Mission of the OASNP is to advance the growth of the education and habilitation of individuals with special needs and to provide a collective voice for the professional, paraprofessional, and support staff working with persons with special needs. OASNP Strategic Goals promote high standards for staff, provider organizations, and services provided while assuring the viability of County Boards of DD as a service option.

OASNP is a Department of the Ohio Education Association. OASNP was formerly OADDP. We have expanded our scope to advocate for the needs of Pre-K-12 Special Educators and Support Staff as they provide services for students with special needs in our local schools. You are receiving this email because you provided an email on your OASNP or OEA membership.

Copyright © 2019 Ohio Association of Special Needs Professionals, All rights reserved.

You are receiving this email because you provided an email on your OASNP or OEA membership. OASNP (formerly OADDP) is a Department of OEA.

Our mailing address is:

Ohio Association of Special Needs Professionals
6001 Landerhaven Drive
Suite D
Mayfield Hts, Ohio 44124-4190

[Add us to your address book](#)

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

