



OASNP

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

OASNP.org

OASNP Article in OEA Ohio Schools

Great news! Julie Newhall, Editor of Ohio Schools Magazine will be doing an article on OASNP and our recent Special Education Conference.

In addition, she is interested in how, in light of the coronavirus, OASNP members have responded to meet the needs of students and adults during this difficult time. Are you working from home –how is that going? Do you still have responsibilities that require you to go into work? How are you keeping yourself, your co-workers, students and consumers safe? What's working well and what are your frustrations?

Please share your stories with us by emailing your stories to oasnp@oasnp.org by May 5th.

Remember to check us out on the website,
<http://oasnp.ohea.us>, and on Facebook!

Meeting Schedule

Since the OEA Representative Assembly is cancelled, there will not be a May OASNP meeting during the RA.

The next meeting will (**hopefully!**) be July 25th,
site to be announced.

Watch the website for further information.

OASNP ANNUAL CONFERENCE – IT WAS GOOD!

By: Jené Wilson, OASNP Past President
Cuyahoga County

The OASNP Annual Conference was held February 28-29, 2020, at Mohican State Park Lodge and Resort. As usual, the agenda included several speakers, a Friends of Children and Public Education (FCPE) drive, a Friend of OASNP Award presentation, a beautiful location, good food, and a fun happy hour.



Scott DiMauro, OEA President, greeted members Friday night and talked about how he has seen OASNP evolve over the years while maintaining the goal of ensuring that people with disabilities have what they need to succeed. He also discussed an OEA initiative, Ed Rising, which is trying to encourage more students to enter the profession and to ensure that staff reflect the diversity of students. Scott shared several examples of work being done around the state in many districts to achieve this goal.

There are challenges to be met, as well. Members have expressed concerns to OEA about school safety and the breakdown of discipline policies. Funding is also an ongoing issue, and the Ed Choice voucher program is greatly impacting it. Get more information at ohea.org and contact your state legislators.

Ellen Adornetto, OEA Education Policy and Practice, reviewed the changes to the Code of Conduct, which impacts teachers, paraprofessionals, coaches and administrators. The expectation is that you are always on duty so your behavior is being scrutinized in many contexts, including outside work hours. Ellen reported that the biggest number of complaints to the Ohio

Department of Education (ODE) involves staff being too close to students. She also reported that some districts are adopting random drug tests and acceptable use policies around technology for both staff and students. Despite Ellen presenting on Friday night, after people had worked all day and driven to the venue, and she was between them and happy hour, those in attendance paid rapt attention and had lots of questions for her.

On Saturday, Kathy McKinley did her usual good job of explaining what is new legally in the world of Special Education. One topic was Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS), which the state annual report indicates is working, but it is difficult to



see what criteria they are using. Additionally, before using it, there is supposed to be 80% buy-in from staff, but many in attendance reported that did not happen in their local. You can ask to see the district report on PBIS; and talk to your local and to administration for issues around PBIS in your district. Kathy reminded us to have a behavior plan, written as a team, for any student who is struggling. This is good not only for the student, but acts as an affirmative defense for staff, if a problem should arise. Along these same lines, when using a crisis intervention program and plan, it must be done exactly as stated or you are not protected.

Matt Dotson, OEA Lobbyist, discussed the latest on the legislative front in education. He indicated that after the census, the make-up of the state legislature will change to better reflect the preferences of voters. It was encouraging to hear that the current Speaker of the House is good about sharing power across party lines. There will be a change to how money for education is allocated to being a line item that legislators can engage on from the current system of it going directly to ODE. He also emphasized the importance of developing relationships with your legislators before elections so that they are with us when needed. Currently four out of five Republican House leaders are OEA endorsed.

April Walsh, from the Columbus Education Association, filled in for Izetta Thomas, who was unable to attend at the last minute, to talk about behavior plans and tactics. She did a great job, as she didn't know until that morning that she would be doing the presentation!



The Friend of OASNP Award was presented to Bob Matkowski, OEA Organizer and long-time OASNP advisor. Bob has been with the organization for years, guiding us through transitions and helping make the best decisions possible for the membership. He took the time to learn what the issues are for members working with people with disabilities and has listened patiently to so many debates among us, helping us reach consensus. Bob has been the driving force behind our successful FCPE drives each year, which this year

netted \$908. Bob is leaving this year, taking a much-deserved retirement. We will miss him dearly.

Members in attendance also heard reports about the Ohio's New Educators (ONE) group from Rachel Grabowski; and about the OEA Special Education Work Group from Hank Haynes.

The weekend ended with a membership meeting. Members voted to amend the Constitution to change the make-up of the OASNP Executive Committee to better reflect the current membership and allow six at-large representatives instead of the current three. Elections were then held for all officers (see accompanying article.)

The conference, though very busy, is always a huge hit with those who attend, with 94% rating it as “excellent” and giving many positive comments. Check the OASNP website, <http://oasnp.ohea.us> for more photos from the conference. Plan to be there next year so you don't miss out!

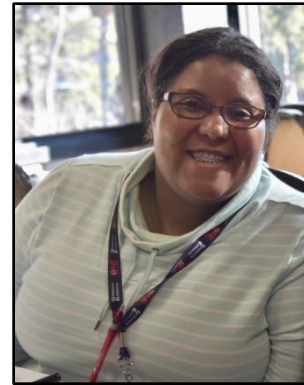
Meet your OASNP At-Large Representatives!

By: Christina West, OASNP Chairperson
Portage County Board of DD

At the recent Annual OASNP Conference, six At-Large Representatives were elected to represent members. It's exciting to have such a great group step up to do the work of OASNP! We need people like them and to let members within OEA know what we stand for and what we are doing on their behalf. We appreciate them and know they will provide much of the manpower needed to make this organization work.

Jonetta Reed is a Moderate/Intensive Intervention Specialist who teaches in the Euclid City Schools. She has been an MH teacher for over seven years and an OASNP member for three. Jonetta says that she “was attracted to OASNP because it's a work group just for teachers and staff that specializes in working with students with more severe needs at all levels. Our concerns are unique and OASNP is our voice.”

How is she getting through the stay-at-home?
“Quarantine/Stay at home has been a challenge but I have been working, sewing, and cooking gourmet meals to keep myself sane.”



Rachel Grabowski is a 5th year inclusion, high school Intervention Specialist at Crestwood Local Schools. She is the Crestwood Education Association Secretary and fundraising Chair as well as one of Ohio's New Educators (ONE) Member Ambassador. “I discovered OASNP as I began getting more involved in OEA through Ohio's New Educators. Special Education can be so stressful and ever-changing, I knew I needed support from others. OASNP has been that support and has also provided me the opportunity to join others in advocating for the needs of special educators and our students”.

During our social distancing practices, she has enjoyed being able to make a list of her vinyl records while working from home and working out every day - even if it's a walk with the kids!

Leslie Frank is retired from Weaver Workshop Support Association (WWSA) in Summit County, where she was a Program Specialist for almost 21 years. Leslie says that she became interested because “Many years ago at one of our annual dinner meetings, Bob Matkowski was a speaker. He invited anyone to come to a meeting – at the time we were known as the OAPMRDD. I did and



was hooked! So, thanks again to Bob! Even though I'm retired, I look forward to remaining active in OASNP!"

Leslie says the stay-at home hasn't affected her too much, as she was already retired but she does find herself playing Mahjong and doing crossword puzzles more!

Victoria Freday works at the Stark County Board of DD as a follow-along aide and is in her second year doing that. Prior to this, she worked in the Stark County workshops for over 20 years before they closed. She has been an OEA member for 20 years and became interested in OADDP/OASNP because her Labor Relations Consultant (LRC), Bob Matkowski, is the OEA Consultant who advises the organization.

Victoria is keeping busy with work during the stay-at-home, working her second job at a private day habilitation program where she goes into clients' homes to assist them. When she is not working, she is catching up on some sleep!



Shawn Ramsey is also joining us as an At-Large Representative. Shawn is from the Switzerland of Ohio Education Association and has been a member of the OEA for two years. She is an Intervention Specialist and career-based interventionist for grades 9-12 at River High School. Shawn says she "came across the OASNP table at the fall RA and was excited to find a group that advocates for my needs as an Intervention Specialist and advocates for the needs of my students. Our voice needs to be heard and considered at the local, state, and national levels since we are so often the voice for our students".

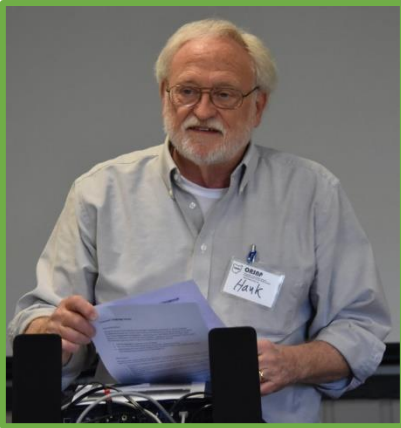
She is spending quality time with her husband, son, and daughter during the stay-at home.

Marchell Josie is the final At-Large representative that is joining us. She has been an East Cleveland Education Association Building Representative, an NEOEA/OEA Board of Directors member, and is on the NEOEA Leader Development Committee, NEOEA Day Committee, and the OEA Constitution and By-Laws Committee. We are excited to have her as an important role of OASNP.



OEA Special Education Workgroup Report

By: Hank Haynes, OASNP Business Manager
Cuyahoga County



The OEA Special Education Workgroup has been meeting and making recommendations to the OEA President and the OEA Board of Directors since 2018. The members of the Special Education Workgroup divided into three subgroups: Professional Development, Contract Language, and Resolutions and Legislative policies. This report outlines some of the issues under consideration by the workgroup. If OEA members have questions, concerns, or recommendations please forward them to OASNP@oasnp.org or to any member of the workgroup:

- Traci Arway, Columbus EA - Special Education Coordinator - Chair
- Kathy Abrahamson, Newton Falls - ESP
- Jane Barnes, Springfield EA - Intervention Specialist
- Crystal Boyd, Hudson EA - Occupational Therapist
- Amber Clark, Southwestern EA - Intervention Specialist
- Stacy Gibbs, Prebble-Shawnee Local EA - Intervention Specialists
- Terri Alai, Brecksville-Broadview Heights EA - Intervention Specialists
- Jessica James, Mayfield EA - Speech and Language Pathologist
- Jennifer Krause, Fairfield CTA - Intervention Specialists
- Wendy Shubrowsky, Medina City TA - Intervention Specialist
- April Walsh, Columbus EA - Transition Coordinator
- Becky Higgins, OEA Past President
- Hank Haynes, Ohio Association of Special Needs Professionals - Business Manager
- Daria Denoia, OEA Policy and Practice Consultant
- Bob Matkowski, OEA Organizer

Professional Development Issues

Professional Development should be inclusive and differentiated to general education teachers, special education teachers, related services and support staff and be advertised as such.

- Co-teaching for general education and special education - Roles and responsibilities, workload approach application
- Data collection - Shared resources from other OEA members
- Special education law/ORC - Updates on law and legislation specific to special education process and topics
- Overview of special education process and mandated components - Professional rights regarding Individual Education Programs

- Workload/Caseload and how to calculate - Provide above topic lists to districts for inclusion of special education topics at existing conferences and professional development opportunities (OEA District programs e.g. NEOEA Megaconference, etc.)
- Special Education link on the OEA website
 - Links to organizations that provide professional development and support special education (e.g., OASNP, OCALI, etc.)
 - Links to existing special education professional development (e.g., Assistive Technology Internet)
 - Advertisement in OEA publications with information on where to find special education resources on OEA website
- ODE trained staff to provide compliance/paperwork professional development for special education teachers
 - Increase support and membership in OASNP
 - Distribute applications
 - Advertisement in OEA publications with information on where to find special education resources on OEA website
 - Add link to OASNP through OEA
 - Add representation to OASNP
 - Send local member(s) to OASNP annual conference
 - Encourage representation of special education professionals in leadership roles and on committees or other opportunities for representation within their local association.

Contract Language Issues

Caseload/Workload:

- All special education and related service providers including but not limited to: speech-language, occupational therapist, etc. in Ohio Public Schools must have access to sample language to be used in their locals during periods of negotiations.
- Special educators and related service providers need guidance in relationship with caseload versus workload.
- Legislatures and management need to realize the time and resources it takes to meet the individual needs of the students.
- Safety Support: All students with special needs in the state of Ohio must be afforded access to their IEP rights in order to meet their daily needs and safety.
- All educators must have the support to safely perform their duties.

Release/Planning Time:

- Special education professionals need sufficient time to perform their professional responsibilities within their contracted work hours.

Co-Teaching:

- Special education students must be provided with support in the general education classroom setting in order to satisfy Free Appropriate Public Education in his/her least restrictive environment.

OEA Legislative Policy and Resolution Issues

Legislative Policy Section 1: Ensuring the foundation of a high quality system of public education

- B. Public dollars for public schools
- D. Modern infrastructure that meet the needs of students

Legislative Policy Section 2: Supporting student success in and out of the classroom

- D. Reasonable class size to support personalized instruction
- E. Appropriate use of assessment to support student learning
- M. Investing in Education Support Professionals

OEA Resolutions

- B-8 Inclusion
- B-12 Class size

New OEA Legislative Policies

At the December 2019 Representative Assembly several amendments related to Special Education were passed.

OEA 2019-2020 Legislative Policies for Achieving Excellence in Education

Section 2: Supporting student success in and out of the classroom

A. A well rounded curriculum: OEA Supports: PROVIDING DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE EDUCATION THAT ENSURES FREE AND APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION (FAPE) FOR THOSE STUDENTS IDENTIFIED AS HAVING DISABILITIES;

B. Expanding early childhood education opportunities): OEA Supports: A CURRICULUM CENTERED UPON DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE INSTRUCTION AND PRACTICES;

C. Support Services to enhance student learning: OEA Supports: PROVIDING STUDENTS ACCESS TO FREE BREAKFAST USING BREAKFAST IN THE CLASSROOM MODELS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY;

H. A safe school environment: OEA Supports: THE SAFETY, CARE, AND WELFARE OF ALL EDUCATORS AND SCHOOL STAFF FROM EMOTIONAL, VERBAL, AND PHYSICAL ABUSE INFLICTED BY A STUDENT, PARENT, OR OTHER;

K. High quality professional development for education professionals): OEA Supports: PROVIDE IN-SERVICE TRAINING TO STAFF REGARDING STUDENTS IN THE FOSTER, CARE SYSTEM.

M. Investing in Education Support Professionals (ESPs): OEA Supports: DISTRICT PROVIDED INSERVICE TRAINING FOR ESPS TO ENSURE THE CARE AND SAFETY OF STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS;

Local Focus...

By: Leslie Frank, OASNP At-Large Representative
Summit County

Summit County Board of Developmental Disabilities saw its final chapter as a direct service provider end last year. The last of the two workshops they owned were closed in December, 2018, shifting consumers to services with private agencies. Both buildings were opened in 2010, one in Barberton and one in Cuyahoga Falls. This left those buildings with only a handful of staff - Speech Therapists, a handful of Service and Support Administrators (SSA), and a few other ancillary staff - in them. The other board owned building houses administration, IT and financial personnel, early intervention staff, and consumer records.

Due to the age of that building, which opened in 1971 as Weaver School, as well as the limited ADA accessibility, and technology issues, Superintendent John Trunk and the Board began to look at other options. It was decided to utilize the two closed workshops and move the staff still employed through the board there. Summit DD entered into talks with the cities of Barberton and Cuyahoga Falls about repurposing each of these buildings, especially since parking for staff and visitors would be an issue.

Barberton is located across the street from the YMCA so overflow parking can be shared with their lot. Cuyahoga Falls, on the other hand, was more limited. The city has purchased several adjacent lots - a used car lot and three houses - that will be torn down to enlarge parking. Summit DD is now in the process of acquiring a construction manager and architect to move forward, adding 7,000+ square feet to the Falls Center and changing the open production areas in both buildings to office spaces. Completion for both sites is projected to be January, 2022, with 150-200 employees in each site. The Tallmadge campus, administration, workshop, and transportation buildings, will then be vacant.



Many good memories for staff and consumers were made in those buildings, so for those who spent their working years with the Board of DD, it is a sad time. The same is true for many of the consumers and their families, as well. However, at least the buildings will remain as a reminder of the good times that were had and the good work that was done.