



OASNP

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

<http://oasnp.ohea.us/>

Message from the Chairperson Christina West



Immediately following the OEA Summer Leadership conference on Friday, June 17th, members from across the state gathered to have conversation about the needs of our special educators. “Teamwork Makes the Dream Work” was our starting point to explore more of what our members need to feel supported in their roles as teachers, support professionals, therapists, transportation providers, and all the other roles our members fill to serve students.

As we enter another school year with even more challenges, we want to share with you that you are not alone!

OASNP members who stayed for the mini session after the OEA conference participated in an exchange about needs, how their district may be addressing them, and what they think needs to improve in the world of special education.

Some of the key points that OASNP brought home was a need for a better understanding of the world of special education from those not directly involved, better contract language to support those in special education programming, a better understanding of the resources available in our own communities, and ways to improve parental involvement.

A conversation about our concerns isn’t enough; we need to find ways to support each other so that we can best support those around us in our professions. OASNP wants to help bridge some of these gaps in our locals across the state. Please take some time to check out the notes from our meeting in the article below and on our website and let us know what we are missing. We are working to see what type of professional development can be helpful to our members in the upcoming years.

We are thankful to have so many members across the state with so many different experiences and resources! We are hopeful we can find ways to share and work better together. We also want to grow and better represent all of those in OEA that support both youth and adults with special needs. Information about OASNP is now available on OEA’s website and it’s so easy to sign up. Please share with your peers so that we can include their experience and resources as we move forward.

Finally, we had a great experience at OEA’s Summer Leadership Program and can’t wait to go back. In addition, we do plan on returning to our regular in-person conference at Mohican State Park this year and are excited to see all of you February 24th and 25th for networking, sharing resources, professional development, and a time to unwind.

Members at OEA Leadership Academy had LOTS to say!

The annual OASNP Membership Conference at Mohican State Park Conference Center, scheduled for February 25-26, was postponed due to COVID concerns. Plans to conduct the conference over Zoom for the second year also did not materialize.

Fortunately OASNP was able to plan an in person Member Forum at the end of the OEA Leadership Academy in June 2022.

Working with the theme “Teamwork Makes the Dream Work,” members in attendance brainstormed concerns and ideas that either hinder or could improve their effectiveness in working with students with special needs.



What Members Said...

The concerns broke generally into three categories: working across job descriptions; utilizing community resources; and encouraging parent involvement.

The first category generated the most chatter. Issues around teaming really stood out, with participants citing the fact that districts do not build in time for teaming; that paraprofessionals are not included; and that IEP information is often not available to them after the meeting. Members in attendance thought that instituting special education department meetings that include all staff working with students with special needs would be extremely helpful in improving this situation. Members also felt that building relationships among staff through the local association would be beneficial.

In addition, there was concern that some staff are sometimes resistant to accommodating students and do not understand student privacy issues. On the other hand, sharing about behavior challenges and appropriate responses among the wider school community was seen as a solution to helping students succeed at school.

Members also saw a need for bargaining issues specific to special education. They want to see professional development for all staff, including paraprofessionals, clear position descriptions, and items around procedures, communication, assaults, and leaves.

Suggestions for community resources included school social workers, district communications directors, churches, county boards of DD and ESCs, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, and other community partners.

Members related how involvement of parents can be encouraged by frequent communication, using multiple modes of communication. Parents can feel valued by asking for their input and making positive phone calls on a regular basis. Including paras in the communication can help as often they have a close relationship with the parents.

To see the Flipcharts and Notes from the Member Forum, visit the OASNP website at www.OASNP.org or download here: [OASNP Conference Notes](#); [Flipchart Sheets](#).

What to do, what to do...



For several months, OASNP has been exploring ways to address members' concerns. By partnering with OEA and its [Ohio's New Educators \(ONE\)](#), many online professional development opportunities are already available.

Additionally, OASNP leadership is encouraging locals to band together to develop regional trainings that meet their needs. Contact OASNP if your local is interested in conducting a professional development workshop.

OASNP will be working with OEA to develop a bargaining language tool-kit to help locals succeed in supporting members through the contract. If your local has solved some of the issues identified in the forum, please contact OASNP so we can start building the tool-kit.

Why OASNP?



Do your colleagues have concerns about how your district serves students with special needs?

Does your district's special education department support or hinder your work with students?

- If support, tell us how it works so we can help others.
- If hinder, tell us about the help you need, we may have some solutions.

OADDP is rebuilding its network to serve any OEA members involved in special education. Help us build that network, talk to your colleagues about supporting OASNP.

Since its beginning in 1983, OASNP was primarily an organization focused on the needs of OEA members working in the two dozen or so OEA locals at County Boards of Developmental Disabilities. In the last five years, as County DD programs continued to be phased out and privatized, students with DD have joined their peers with special needs in the local school districts. OASNP is here to help OEA members serving those students.

OASNP Membership Processing Enters the Modern Age!

No More Paper Forms! – Your friends and colleagues can now just click and complete the [online form](#).

OASNP and OEA Membership have crafted an online solution that allows any OEA member to easily add OASNP to their OEA Membership. To find it and us, we've added a new landing page on the OEA website and online enrollment page.

If you get lost on the OEA site – Pull down the "Member Center" tab; click on "OEA Divisions, Affiliated Departments and Associate Organizations"; then "Departments"; and finally OASNP.

Try it now; share with your friends and colleagues

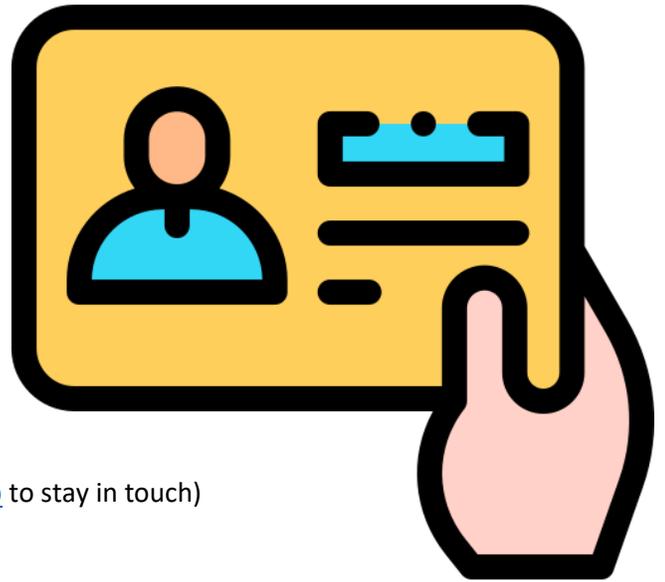
- NEW – [OASNP Landing Page](#) on OEA website
- NEW – [OASNP Online Enrollment Page](#)

Have you dropped off the official OASNP membership List?

Some of you receiving this newsletter are current members of OASNP. Your local has collected your \$10 annual dues and sent it to OEA to send to OASNP. You may have checked the box on an old multi-part paper membership form when you joined OEA. You may be in a County Board of DD local that included OASNP as part of your local dues. Either way, thank you for your generous support over the years.

Some of you have dropped off the official list for any number of reasons:

- Joined using an old paper one-year membership authorization that expired
- Not on continuous payroll deduction or billing authorization with your local
- Retired (we have a [\\$35 Lifetime Retired OASNP Membership](#) to stay in touch)
- Layoff or Resignation
- No longer an OEA member



If you are still interested in supporting OASNP and an OEA member, please update your membership by completing our online form at <https://www.ohea.org/oasnp-membership-application/>. It is important to use the online form so that your Local, OASNP, and OEA have your current information.

- The form authorizes your local to begin having the OASNP annual dues (currently \$10.00) added to your membership beginning with the next membership year and continuing thereafter until canceled by you. You will immediately be considered a member of OASNP and will continue to receive newsletters and emails.
- Don't worry if your local is unable to put you on continuous payroll deduction, some locals can include OASNP in your annual OEA membership billing. Using the online form will update that procedure.
- However, some local associations are unable to add an associate organization like OASNP directly to their membership or enjoy payroll deduction. You can still support OASNP by using the online form to update your information and then arranging for annual payment through PayPal.
 - Use the Join Online link to provide your contact information <https://www.ohea.org/oasnp-membership-application/>
 - Then [Click here to go to PayPal](#) and set up OASNP continuing membership. Your credit card or PayPal account will be charged \$10 each year.

We would love to have you back to support the work of OASNP. We will be cleaning up our contact list in a few months. If you have not signed up using the online form, unfortunately you will be dropped from our contact list and no longer receive emails or mailings. Our website is always open to the public and you may check in at any time.

By the way, if you have retired, in addition of continuing to support OASNP with a Retired membership please consider joining OEA-NEA-Retired as well. You will continue to be eligible for all of the OEA and NEA Member Benefits you enjoyed as an active member. You will stay up to date with the news and issues affecting public education and have the opportunity to add your voice to legislative action alerts.

- Visit the OEA-Retired website - <http://oea-r.ohea.us/> and
- Click on "How to Join" – <http://oea-r.ohea.us/join/how-to-join/>.

OASNP 2022-24 Officers Elected at Annual Conference



The election of OASNP Officers and At-Large Representatives was held at the Annual General Membership Meeting during the Annual Conference on June 17, 2022 at Sheraton Columbus Hotel at Capitol Square following the OEA Leadership Academy.

Congratulations to the following who were elected by acclamation for a two-year term 2022-2024:

- Chairperson: **Christina West**, PCEMR-SSA (Portage CBDD)
- Vice Chair: **Nikki Nadasky**, PCEMR-SSA (Portage CBDD)
- Secretary: **Kathy Abrahamson**, Newton Falls ACE
- Treasurer: **Sandy Smith Fischer**, Streetsboro EA
- At-Large #1: **Marchell Josie**, East Cleveland EA
- At-Large #2: **Debbie VanGorder**, Ashtabula ACSE
- At-Large #3: **Kendall Newell**, West Carrollton EA
- At-Large #4: **Jovita Wade**, Fairborn EA
- At-Large #5: **Cindy Negulescu**, Reynoldsburg SSA
- At-Large #6: **Vacancy**

2022-2023 Calendar/Meeting Schedule

Date	Time	Location/Zoom
November 19, 2022	10:00 AM	Zoom
December 3, 2022	Lunch Break or Immediately After	OEA Representative Assembly
January 7, 2023	10:00 AM	Zoom
February 24-25, 2023	OASNP Special Education Conference & General Meeting	Mohican State Park Conf. Ctr.
May 12-13, 2023	Lunch Break Saturday	OEA Representative Assembly
June 14-16, 2023	OASNP Member Forum & General Meeting	OEA Leadership Academy, Columbus

Local Focus...

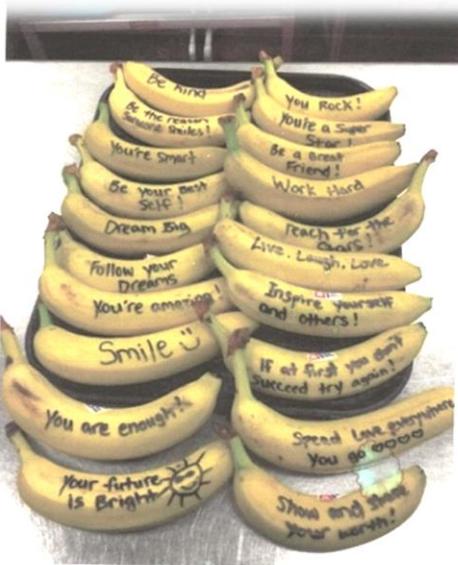
By Kathy Abrahamson, Newton Falls ACE

Newton Falls “ACEs” Banana Notes with Help of NEOEA Grant

The members of the Newton Falls Association of Classified Employees (ACE) worked with the teachers in their building, who are members of the American Federation of Teachers Union, for a common cause - the students.

At the beginning of the school year, members of our Association saw that our kids were having a hard time coming back to school in person. Talking with our teachers, they were seeing the same thing.

Several members were talking about this and wanted to do something positive to help all our kids. An idea from Pinterest sparked our project. On that website, a mom was writing positive notes on bananas and putting them in her kid’s lunch boxes. ACE members decided to do this project on a school wide basis.



Luckily, that week, the NEOEA Presidents Pack came out and in it was the grant paperwork. ACE leadership talked with the cafeteria manager and the school principal to see if they would approve this project. We found out the cost of the bananas and markers and applied for the grant, which was quickly approved.

Following that, we talked with our teachers to see if they thought the students would like to write kind sayings on bananas and hand them out to fellow students at lunch time. We ordered two full cases of bananas from a local store, and, after telling them what they were for, they gave us a great break on the price. It happened just that fast!

Now it is Newton Falls ACE, Newton Falls teachers, our students, and a local community store all working together to put a smile on students’ faces. Our staff, the teachers and our students had so much fun doing this and handing them out to all the other students,

Thank you NEOEA Grant committee for helping to bring so many smiles and laughter in our buildings.