

OHIO ASSOCIATION OF PUPIL SERVICES ADMINISTRATORS
REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
December 8, 2017

The following is a summary of the various activities of the OAPSA Executive Director since our September conference. Further detail is available upon request.

Two recent developments have affected my level of involvement in these activities. First, the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) had been a multi-year project conducted by the Office for Exceptional Children. The initial years were focused on developing the plan and then beginning to phase it in across Ohio. I was heavily involved in those first few years. However, the plan is now in the implementation phase and being supported by all 16 SSTs in the state. As such, there have not been any meetings of the SSIP workgroup. The implementation phase will last until 2020. Second, the Committee of Practitioners, on which I served as an OAPSA representative, has taken a different direction in terms of committee membership. In the past, committee members represented a variety of state-wide organizations. Beginning this school year, they no longer have organization-based representatives but are now populating the CoP with individuals who submit applications for review. As a result, I am no longer involved with the CoP.

There have been two meetings of the Executive Board and the Governing Board of the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities (OCECD); one on September 26th and the other on November 28th. After more than a year when funding was being delayed through ODE/OEC, the Coalition is getting back into full operation although some of the actions taken to reduce spending are still in place. An analysis has shown that the Coalition has the strongest multicultural department than any other PTI (parent training grant) in the Midwest and is the only one to accompany parents in meetings with school districts.

One of the concerns expressed at the recent Coalition meeting was in regard to SB 216. This bill was introduced by State Sen. Matt Huffman, R-Lima and it is known as the Ohio Public School Deregulation Act. Sen. Huffman enlisted the assistance of a number of school superintendents in his area in the writing of this legislation. They have also involved BASA in this process. SB 216 is intended to roll back a large number of regulations and unfunded mandates that are seen as taking up too much of school superintendents' time with little benefit. It includes changes in the following areas: licensure requirements for educational aides, the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES), educator grade bands, non-teaching employee contracts, Kindergarten testing, State Report Card, state assessments, Reading Improvement Plans, School Mandate Report, excessive absences, gifted students, preschool special education, and the College Credit Plus program.

The status of Medicaid to Schools reimbursement remains the same as it has been. There has not been any official guidance issued from any source so school districts have been "on their own" in terms of dealing with this. Overall, there seems to be confusion virtually at all levels regarding the Medicaid situation and there are no indications that this will change in the foreseeable future.

We have had ten OAPSA members sign up for Ashland University graduate credit. Because there are five conference days this year (two days in February), those attending all five conference days are able to sign up for two graduate credits. Otherwise, those attending three or more conference days can register for one credit. To complete the requirement to earn credit, a short "reflection paper" is submitted following the May OAPSA conference.

Over the past two months I have remained in touch with ODE/OEC, OSPA, OCECD, and other groups and representatives. There are several key current issues and areas of concern and OAPSA maintains a level of participation in each.

Submitted by Dr. John Opperman
OAPSA Executive Director