

OHIO ASSOCIATION OF PUPIL SERVICES ADMINISTRATORS  
REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
May 5, 2017

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

The Executive Board and the Governing Board of the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities (OCECD) met on March 28, 2017. After more than a year of inaction, the OCECD was awarded the Parent Mentor contract in January but there was a delay in releasing authorization to expend funds. That authorization was not given until March 1<sup>st</sup>. With the delays eating into the grant period, this current grant ends in June, 2018 but there is hope that an extension will be granted.

Because of the delays, the OCECD was not able to book a site for the Spring Parent Mentor conference. By the time they could issue POs, there were no hotels or conference sites available so they reserved space at the Xenos Christian Center with the conference set for May 3<sup>rd</sup> (two days ago).

The OCECD has had a strong and positive working relationship with Dr. Sue Zake who retired from OEC/ODE in mid-April. The Coalition is hopeful that her replacement will also develop a similar working relationship.

There was discussion during that meeting about Ohio's graduation rate (Sue had shared information about that at our February conference). Most of the Governing Board representatives were unaware of the implications of "vaulting" diplomas or having IEP students determined exempt from the consequences of the graduation test or allowed to take alternative assessment. In those cases, the student is not regarded as having obtained a "regular" high school diploma even though Ohio has only one diploma and does not make any distinctions on that diploma. As a result, Ohio is about 25<sup>th</sup> in states regarding graduation rates for students with disabilities.

This year a total of ten members signed up for Ashland University graduate credit. Five registered for one graduate credit and five for two credits. In the next two weeks, members will submit a "reflection paper" to complete the requirements for earning credit.

In this year's biennium budget development, one recent issue that is attracting attention is the proposed change in preschool program ratios. In the past it has been 6 students for one teacher but the new legislation sets it at 8 students per teacher.

There are a number of concerns regarding Medicaid both at the state and federal levels. At the state level, things are moving forward regarding the ORP issue. Although Ohio has a waiver for this year, it appears for the next school year that related services providers (OTs, PTs and SLPs) will be given limited authority to prescribe / order related services on students' IEPs. That means that third-party prescribers (physicians, nurse practitioners, etc.) will not be needed. All of the details of this situation have not yet been worked out but it appears that it will be resolved before the start of next school year.

Medicaid at the national level is another area of concern. In particular, Medicaid is slated for substantial cuts in the American Health Care Act which was just passed in the House on May 4<sup>th</sup>. It will now go on to the Senate. The just-passed legislation contains an \$880 billion (25%) cut to Medicaid over the next 10 years. It also contains a per-capita cap on funding for certain groups, including children. If these cuts materialize, school districts would be denied those Medicaid payments but would have to find funding elsewhere since the services are required to be continued. This situation should be monitored carefully.

Over the past two months I have remained in touch with ODE/OEC, OSPA, OCECD, CoP 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