



Ohio Association of Pupil Services Administrators

Report of the Executive Director

February 8, 2019

The following is a brief summary of the activities I participated in between December 7, 2018 - February 8, 2019. Further details are available upon request.

In mid-December I learned OAPSA had an opportunity to participate in a stakeholder process that The Ohio Department of Education was planning in order to develop and implement a plan for Ohio's system of support for meeting the educational needs of students with disabilities. Beginning in January 2019 a Plan for Ohio's State System of Supports was to be created that will lead to improved outcomes for our students with disabilities. Completion of the plan is targeted for the end of calendar year 2019. A steering committee of education, state board, and policy leaders was planned to be formed to provide input to ODE regarding the plan development process. Educators, administrators, related service personnel, education and disability-related organizations, and parents of children with disabilities will be engaged throughout the process. The planned activities will be done in the context of Each Child, Our Future to ensure that the improvement plan is aligned with the articulated vision and goal for each child in Ohio.

As part of the plan development, ODE and the steering committee planned to seek information in at least the following ways:

- Engage national and Ohio experts on supporting students and educators who support students with disabilities across the span of age 3 – 22;
- Conduct a statewide survey to ask key questions of school district personnel who work directly with students with disabilities at every grade level;
- Coordinate parent meetings to identify how families are currently experiencing the education system with a child who has a disability;
- Hold targeted focus groups to gather input as the plan develops;
- Examine state data and research literature reviews on best practices for supporting students with disabilities; and
- Identify and share exemplars across the state.
- Engage stakeholder driven workgroups focused on literacy, disproportionality, successful post-secondary transition and graduation, and effective teacher and school leader practices.

The plan was for the new steering committee to meet monthly (alternating face to face meetings and two-hour Skype calls) with the goal of producing a Plan for Ohio's Statewide System of Supports

As part of that process I was requested by Dr. Kim Monachino to recommend to her a list of three OAPSA members who would be willing to serve on that new Steering Committee with the plan being that ODE would choose one from the three names we submitted. ODE did that particular process to help them ensure a diverse and representative steering committee (e.g., demographic and geographic diversity).

With winter breaks approaching, we got word out to our OAPSA members that we needed some volunteers, and I'm happy to report that we had 9 OAPSA members that applied to be that representative. We convened a team from our Executive Board Members to review the applications and, as planned, they chose 3 names to send to ODE for consideration. ODE announced in January that the individual who would be representing OAPSA on that Steering Committee is Donna McCance. Donna will be giving us updates on the work of that group at our OAPSA Business meetings starting at our February 2019 OAPSA Business meeting. I thank those nine members that responded so rapidly to the need we expressed and I encourage them and all of our OAPSA members to continue to respond to our requests for leadership opportunities within OAPSA.

In January, I participated in another meeting of the Ohio Department of Education Related Service Shortage Workgroup. That was our 7th meeting and we reviewed draft products that we have produced now and worked on a plan to finalize our work and to prepare our final report for our legislators. We intentionally are finalizing our work earlier than what legislators had requested so that our work can be considered as the new budget is discussed this spring.

I also continued conversations with Dr. Luann Purcell, CASE Executive Director and our OAPSA Board about CASE. Recently, OAPSA's Executive Board have been exploring the possibility of OAPSA becoming an affiliate or subdivision of CASE. CASE (which stands for Council of Administrators of Special Education, Inc.) is a division of the Council for Exceptional Children. To give you some history behind that, CASE had a subdivision in Ohio which was fairly strong in the late 80's early 90's. At that time OAPSA began branching out because pupil service directors were being given additional responsibilities for special education and related services. Many special education directors wandered away from CASE and joined OAPSA and the Ohio CASE group eventually disbanded. When the group of 7 OAPSA members traveled to the Washington DC Special Education Leadership Summit in July 2018, it was arranged prior that they would find some time to sit and talk with CEC and CASE leadership. In late October, I also arranged for Talia St. Clair, one of our OAPSA members and also a CASE member, to attend an Executive Board Meeting of the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) held in early November in Mississippi. Talia shared her experiences with our Executive Board and will share her report with you at our February OAPSA Business Meeting. I have arranged to have Dr. Luann Purcell, the Executive Director of CASE, speak to our membership at our upcoming

May conference. Luann is a nationally recognized speaker. She will be speaking to us not only on the benefits of being a CASE Member and the potential benefits of OAPSA becoming an affiliate of CASE but also providing us with updates from Washington DC and also one of her featured presentations entitled “Hit the Ground Running or Hit the Ground”. She will focus on how to thrive as a leader using balance and resiliency.

I also obtained door prizes for our February conferences that include a one-night stay at the Fairfield Marriott by Quest Business Center hoping that some lucky participant at our February Conference will be able to use that gift certificate at our upcoming May OAPSA conference at Quest. I also received a commitment from CASE for door prizes for our February conference. Those door prizes will be given away today at the conclusion of our OAPSA conference.

I followed up with a repeat visit to another additional potential conference site in the Columbus area and also had some phone calls with other hotels in my quest to compare facilities and prices with our current conference sites.

I followed with Ashland University to arrange that Dr. James Powell would be able to join us for our February conference to encourage our attendees at our OAPSA conference to consider signing up for Ashland credit. To remind all, in addition to attending our conferences, a short paper must be submitted in May 2018 about what you learned from our OAPSA conferences during the 2018-19 school year to earn that credit.

On a continuous basis, I have also maintained day-to-day email and/or phone contact with the OAPSA Executive Board members, providing input or taking on and completing assignments as directed, and responding to members and other’s contacts.

I have extra copies of our membership flyers and I encourage you to take some or forward the electronic versions we send out to you to your colleagues in your region who aren’t currently OAPSA members. We need to all help spread the word about the great benefits of being OAPSA members. If you ever have an event where you’d like some OAPSA membership flyers to distribute, just let me know and I’ll make sure you get those.

I would be remiss if I didn’t encourage all OAPSA members to consider opportunities to run for an office for OAPSA and/or volunteer to be part of our committee work. Running to be an officer for OAPSA’s Executive Board was one of the best decisions I ever made professionally. It’s generally a four-year commitment to be on the board, with the cycle being that first year you serve as Secretary, then President Elect, then President and then Past President. The two exceptions to that are Treasurer and the Communications Officer. Those two positions have no term limit and they are elected for a 2-year cycle. Each officer on our Executive Board has specific duties assigned to that particular office but they constantly communicate as a collaborative team on decisions. The work is so meaningful, exciting and worthwhile.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna Stelzer, OAPSA Executive Director