



Report on Ohio Coalition for Education of Children with Disabilities (OCECD)  
for December 7, 2018 OAPSA Business Meeting

I attended the OCECD Executive Committee Meeting and the OCECD Governing Board Meeting on November 27, 2018. Due to procedures that are in place at OCECD, the transition into Dr. John Opperman's role has taken many months even though we started this process in spring of 2018. On November 27, at the OCECD Governing Board meeting, I was elected to fill that state-wide organization position on the Executive Committee as a representative of OAPSA effective January 1, 2019.

OCECD thanked OAPSA for its September 28, 2018 Resolution Honoring Margaret Burley and explained that Margaret was thrilled with that designation which we sent to her following our September 28, 2018 Business meeting. Margaret is still having significant health problems and not really able to leave her home.

An Orientation for new Parent Mentors was held in October and there was very low district representative attendance at that meeting. It used to be expected that district representatives would attend that training with Parent Mentors so they will need to look into other ways to educate those district representatives who were not in attendance this fall. District Representatives are expected to attend the Parent Mentor Conference coming up on March 20. It was noted that district representatives have been participating in the various webinars that the Ohio Coalition has been offering. Also, Mid-Ohio ESC turned in 3 Parent Mentor Grants because they couldn't fill those 3 openings so the Ohio Coalition will be working with ODE to try to get those funds diverted to another district who has an unfunded parent mentor program in place.

We are in process of updating language in OCECD Constitution and Bylaws and there was much discussion about proposed drafts of those two documents.

We were provided detailed information regarding the settlement agreement reached in November 2018 in the longstanding Doe v. State of Ohio Special Education Class Action Lawsuit will improve the academic achievement of students with disabilities, in part by supporting their inclusion in regular classrooms. The settlement is expected over the next five years to improve the state's support for special education throughout Ohio, as well as create measurable improvements in student performance and inclusion for children with disabilities in 11 of Ohio's large urban school districts. Among other things, the settlement requires special efforts by the state to improve test scores and rates of inclusion in 11 school districts – Akron, Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Lima, East Cleveland, Toledo, Youngstown and Zanesville – which currently have very poor academic outcomes for students with disabilities

and high levels of segregation. DRO and the state will now work together to create a plan that will reverse those deficits. The plan will include effective strategies for improving literacy and other supports for students and classroom teachers, such as evidence-based behavior support. **The settlement will also provide more help for students as they transition from high school to employment, further education, and independent living.** The settlement will not go into effect until after an agreement is reached on Plaintiffs' attorneys fees and Court approves agreement.

We will be having representative from Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities at an upcoming meeting to discuss their proposal to combine their training in self advocacy with the Coalitions Programs on GPS and other trainings they offered. It should be offered that they have a required lower ratio than what Coalition offers.

Brenda George (OOTA) indicated that a paper is coming out soon on concerns about Medicaid School Funding which will be shared with other related services areas, Dept. of Education and MSP billing agents. Tom Shaffer (Licking County and Lancaster area) has been involved in that. Brenda thinks that parent rights need to be looked at carefully concerning that. There is no legislative plan connected to that at all.

Benda also mentioned that Representative Cupp has some kind of group formed working on a plan for school funding. No one seemed to know much about that group but we will try to find out more details.

Brenda, along with Ann Brennan (OSPA) and I, all members of the Related Service Shortage Workgroup, reported on the excellent progress that particular Workgroup is making with excellent products being finalized and released soon including a video and booklet about related services which can be used to recruit potential candidates into the fields and to educate educational staff as well as parents and students on roles of various related service staff. There will also be a survey sent to all Related Service Personnel in state of Ohio soon and we anticipate that we will eventually ask the Coalition to support our proposals for solutions to the Related Service Shortage to be fully funded by our state legislators in this upcoming budget later this school year. Members of the Governing Board for the Coalition indicated that they were excited and encouraged to hear of the progress of that Workgroup.

Since Margaret's health has prohibited her from being able to help Marcie Beers in her transition as the new Executive Director, the Coalition is looking into getting other assistance for Marcie to make essential connections with legislators as we approach the time this spring when budget becomes topic of discussion.

In the days following these November 27 meetings, the Executive Committee and the Governing Board had to resolve an unexpected situation. Marcie Beers, Executive Director of the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities resigned from her position as of November 30, 2018. As of December 1, 2018 Lee Ann Derugen and Marbella Caceres are Interim Co-Executive Directors of the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities. Lee Ann Derugen was Co-Director for 20 years. She is also currently serving as the

Parent Training and Information (PTI) Center Director and the Webmaster. Marbella CaCeres has been with OCECD since 2006 and she is also currently the Statewide Multicultural Director.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna Stelzer, OAPSA Executive Director