Report on Ohio Coalition for Education of Children with Disabilities (OCECD) for September 20, 2019 OAPSA Business Meeting

Representing OAPSA, I serve as Representative for Statewide Organization Representative on the OCECD Executive Committee and I also represent OAPSA on the Governing Board of OCECD. I participated in meetings with that Executive Committee on May 21 and also in a virtual meeting on September 5. I also attended and participated in 2 meetings with Ohio Coalition Governing Board. (May 21 and Virtual on September 5 on HB 305 Fair School Funding).

Most of the focus of the Coalition in May through the month of June was on the process of filling their Executive Director Position. On July 29 The Governing Board of the OCECD announced that Dr. Lisa Hickman would be the new Executive Director. Dr. Hickman graduated from Otterbein University, Westerville, Ohio, with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology in 1999. She then went on to earn two advanced degrees from The Ohio State University, which were a Master of Arts in Sociology in 2001, and a Doctorate in Sociology in 2006. Her career path has provided her with leadership skills, as well as experience in public policy. She has a strong understanding of Ohio’s political environment, grant writing, project oversight, budget management, data collection, reporting, presentations, staff development and supervision. Dr. Hickman has worked with elected and appointed officials, attorneys, law enforcement, and state criminal justice agencies. Additionally, Lisa was an Area Director for Special Olympics Michigan, implementing and directing all operations. During the period from 2007 to present, Dr. Hickman has been a member and involved with non-profit groups and organizations, such as the North Central Sociological Association and the Michigan Sociological Association. She also has volunteered for non-profit organizations, including Area 11 (Kent and Barry Counties) Special Olympics Michigan, Girls on the Run of Ottawa and Allegan Counties, and Ronald McDonald House of West Michigan. Dr. Hickman has received an award for service to a professional nonprofit organization. She also has experience with creative fundraising, as well as community outreach.

I have met Dr. Hickman in person and also through a Zoom Virtual Meeting and I’m very excited to have her in that new role. Dr. Hickman’s leadership role as Executive Director will continue the mission of the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities (OCECD), which is to endorse and promote efforts to provide appropriate quality education for children and youth with disabilities. The Coalition does that in the belief that all children have a right to a meaningful and relevant education. This belief affirms the dignity of each child or youth with disabilities, whose needs are unique, and whose needs must be met equally and appropriately. OCECD is dedicated to ensuring that every child with disabilities is provided a free, appropriate public education. They continuously strive to improve the quality of services for all children and youth with disabilities in Ohio.

In addition, OCECD sent representatives to the Memorial Service for Charlotte Andrist in June 2019 and presented a Resolution in Memory of Charlotte Andrist to the family members.

On September 5, 2019 Jim Betts updated the Governing Board for the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities regarding the Ohio Fair School Funding Bill (HB 305) which was ***not passed as part of the budget bill*** this summer. This is my understanding of what Jim explained. Representative Bob Cupp (R-Lima) and Representative John Patterson, (D-Jefferson) spearheaded development of this plan (reflected in HB 305 – the Ohio Fair School Funding Bill) which is highly regarded by educational groups.  You may recall that Cupp and Patterson had been doing highly respected work which began in November 2017 developing 8 subgroups with experienced, active Ohio educators and school financial officers with each subgroup co-chaired by a Superintendent and a Treasurer with the purpose being to create ***a comprehensive school funding plan for primary and secondary education*** by

(1) establishing a base cost amount to meet the cost of basic student educational needs

(2) adding additional resources for specific needs, such as sp ed, students in poverty, and transportation etc.

(3)  allocating state and local funding shares based on local capacity measured by property values and resident income and establishing a transparent formula to calculate a realistic base cost amount for each district.

Again, that plan was not passed as part of the budget bill this summer.   The budget bill did call for a ***more thorough examination of how special education is funded but stopped short of providing the funds to do that study.***   To provide you some history on funding for Special Education in Ohio, in early 2000's Ohio moved from unit funding to weighted funding.  You may recall that Ohio Coalition was very involved in the study that made that shift happen. Then the weighted funding was revised in 2008.   But nothing else has really changed in Sp Ed funding since then. As we all know, during that time changes in technology, remedial practices and educational philosophy have been significant and the workgroup had indicated it was time for a more thorough student to see if current funding for special education is adequate and if not, recommend changes. \* While Ohio’s new budget bill recognized the need for that study on sp ed -- but failed to put in the funding in order to make the study happen.     On the morning of September 5, Jim met with a group of many organizations from around Ohio that wants to see this study happen and wants to get HB 355 through.      The organizations were many and included BASA, OSBA, Ohio 8, Gifted Association, and others...   Jim is trying to talk to as many organizations right now as possible to get everyone to rally around making real changes in how schools are funded and get that money to fully fund an investigation on what the funding should be for Special Education.  There's a certain sense of urgency about this because the study will take at least a year so now we are trying to make real changes for the next budget in 2021.

The next meeting time for the Executive Committee and the Governing Board oF OCECD is September 24 at noon and 1:30 PM respectively.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna, Stelzer

Executive Director of OAPSA

09/20/19 Ohio Coalition Report