



2023-2024

ANNUAL

REPORT

OEA Mission

The OEA will lead the way for continuous improvement of public education while advocating for members and the learners they serve.

OEA Vision

To create an Ohio where every student has access to a high-quality public education and where all members are supported, valued, and respected.

OEA Core Values

These principles guide our work and define our mission. We believe in democracy, collective action, fairness, inclusion, integrity, and professionalism.

OEA Strategic Priorities

- 1. Build OEA and locals' capacity to be more relevant to members.*
- 2. Educate and organize members to build support for quality public education.*
- 3. Build OEA as a member resource for professional issues.*
- 4. Educate and organize OEA and its members to advocate for racial, social, and economic justice.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2023-2024 OEA Annual Report details how OEA members and staff have continued providing Ohio's students with a high-quality public education over the past year. The report also contains information on OEA's four strategic priorities, and the work done consistent with related conditions of success for each of the priorities.

OEA locals continued to develop and implement local development plans encompassing member engagement activities to build the capacity and relevancy of locals.

Professional field staff facilitated trainings across the state to assist in developing local leaders and supporting locals as they advocated successfully for improved working conditions for members.

The OAESP leadership group, ESP EVA Academy, and ESP Member Ambassadors have led OEA's statewide efforts to advance the issues important to its ESP members. The fall began with the OAESP ESP Conference and highlighted the member-to-member training skills of OEA's ESPs.

OEA launched a digital magazine experience in February with the online publication of the February/March 2024 issue of *Ohio Schools*. In 2024, digital issues of *Ohio Schools* will be published in February/March and June/July. Members will continue to receive four print magazines – April/May, August/September (Member Resource Guide), October/November, and December/ January – at home. The digital issues offer interactive content including stories, videos, and photo galleries that share the work of OEA members to help all students – regardless of race, background, or zip code – learn, grow, and fulfill their potential; to advocate for educator rights and working conditions; to serve as leaders in the education profession; and to amplify educator voices from the school board to the statehouse.

The Computer Services Department (CSD) team continues to provide tools and support for all OEA meetings and conferences in live and virtual settings. The CSD team continues to research opportunities and solutions to meet member and local needs while maintaining information in a secure environment.

The Human Resources Department has made significant improvements to the OEA hiring process for new staff. From automating applications to having an online completion of all onboarding documents, the team did research, testing, and troubleshooting while continuing to monitor and modify the process. HR recruited and filled 17 positions including management, professional, and associate staff. The team is committed to ensuring OEA has a talented, diverse, and enthusiastic employee team.

In August of 2022, OEA began testing the ePay functionality through the NEA eBilling portal with targeted locals. More locals were added through the 21-22 and 22-23 membership years. In the 2023-2024 membership year it was opened to all locals. Currently, 61% of locals have converted to ePay and we have collected \$25,490,947.52 from September of 2023 – March of 2024 via the ePay process.

Throughout the year, Legal and program attorneys presented information on various legal issues to develop awareness of opportunities and challenges for members and local associations.

OEA continues to build staff and member awareness of the connection between racial, social, and economic justice and public education.

Public Education Matters! Public Education is “The Heart of It All!”

Respectfully submitted: Patricia Collins Murdock, OEA Executive Director

Membership

JoinNow online enrollment for the 2023-2024 Membership Year as of April 3, 2024:

- Number of Unique Locals utilizing JoinNow: 250
- Number of On-Line Enrollments: 2,320
 - Breakdown of On-Line Enrollments
 - First Time Members – 1,225
 - New Educator Members: 1,046
 - New ESP Members: 179

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Since beginning the VESI online program, on June 22, 2023, we have had 1,293 contacts via email regarding this program.

Contact Center Stats 12 Months Total (March 2023 – March 2024)

- 5,374 Calls were presented.
- 14,017 Cases were opened.
- 13,854 Emails were received.

The number of cases opened is fairly consistent month-to-month with slightly higher case volume during enrollment months.

FIELD HIGHLIGHTS

The OEA Field Department is organized into 4 Regions with offices in Howland, Canton, Troy, Monroe, Middleburg Heights, Findlay, Westerville, and Zanesville. The Field Department supports and provides services to 744 locals within 77 Leadership Councils.

The OEA Field Department also encompasses the Organizing and Member Engagement Department. This Department provides internal and external organizing support to locals in the field. The OME Department also supports capacity growth of locals through membership engagement strategies and facilitates organizing and engagement of members around political issues.

This year, locals continued to develop and implement local development plans encompassing member engagement activities to build the capacity and relevancy of locals. Locals engaged in bargaining boot camps, participated in trainings on prevalent issues related to health and safety, behavioral intervention, successfully advocated on behalf of members for improved safety conditions, and were successful in arbitrations. Hilliard EA and OEA joined forces to give away free books featuring diverse characters, written by diverse authors to Pre-K-sixth grade readers at the first-ever Summer Celebration of Diverse Readers, as part of the year-round Read Across America initiative.

Locals focused on addressing the mental wellness of members and utilized OEA Wellness Grants to organize mental health activities and programs. Finally, locals fostered positive relationships within their communities through organized community engagement activities and outreach while also promoting racial, social, and economic justice programs.

Strategic Priority 1: Build locals' capacity to be more relevant to members.

Professional field staff continued to facilitate trainings across the state to assist in developing local leaders including Association representative trainings, responsible digital use trainings, appropriate and effective use of technology trainings, bargaining trainings, and grievance process trainings.

Locals advocated successfully for improved working conditions for members. North Canton EA (Stark) held a new employee event where 20 new hires joined the Association. River View Education Association Paraprofessionals (Coshocton) was recognized as a new unit by SERB on October 26, 2023.

Favorable decisions were gained this year in grievance settlements, arbitration decisions, and a Memorandum of Understanding. Northwestern Local EA (Wayne) settled a grievance where custodians were denied paraprofessional positions due to the district improperly posting positions. Southern Local EA (Meigs) successfully bargained a Memorandum of Understanding that increased all steps below the state minimum salary up to the \$35,000 minimum.

Strategic Priority 2: Educate and organize members to build support for quality public education.

A significant number of locals made their voices heard and successfully engaged members in local school board elections. Locals successfully screened and endorsed school board candidates, facilitated candidate forums to educate members and the community about school board candidates, and engaged members in get-out-the-vote activities for supported school board candidates.

Columbus EA (Franklin) successfully passed a major school board levy, averting the loss of hundreds of bargaining unit positions. The passage also included continued capital improvements and expansion of Pre-K. Southeastern Local ESP and EA (Clark) hosted a school board candidate forum with four of the five announced candidates.

Strategic Priority 3: Build OEA as a member resource for professional issues.

OEA continued to provide programming in support of the difficulties shared by members as they continue to face post-COVID-related challenges and mental health stresses and concerns. The OEA Member Wellness Cadre continued “Wellness Wednesdays” programming and provided a variety of sessions to support member wellness and self-care including a virtual sip and paint, how to “you”-talize OEA wellness grants, and a letting go end-of-year event.

OEA launched the OEA Wellness Grants to help locals support the well-being of OEA members. The OEA Wellness Grants provide locals with up to \$5/per member to host an activity focused on the mental health of members. This year, OEA awarded 89 grants, impacting over 19,500 members, for a total of \$97,500 to locals for wellness activities. Locals hosted drop-in spa activities, positive message gifting, and social gatherings in support of member wellness utilizing Wellness Grant funds.

The Organizing and Member Engagement Department has spent many hours conducting OEA Listening Circles designed for members to collaborate across the state on the difficulties they experience in today’s environment while providing a continued standard of care for their students.

Strategic Priority 4: Educate and organize OEA and its members to advocate for racial, social, and economic justice.

Organizing and Member Engagement staff worked to facilitate collaboration between local and district stakeholders to provide Cultural Competency and Equity professional development trainings. OME staff developed and implemented trainings to effectively highlight disparities along cultural and racial divides in discipline practices and policies and helped to facilitate momentum to create and sustain local plans of action to address interpersonal and systemic issues. OME staff also successfully facilitated regular Listening Circles for OEA members with a focused discussion on racial and social justice issues.

With the support of professional field staff, OEA locals continued to successfully organize members in bargaining and advocacy efforts related to racial, social, and economic justice issues. Springfield EA (Clark) held a professional development day focused on cultural awareness with 575 participants. Sylvania EA (Lucas) collaborated with Minor Collective, a community-based organization committed to a more just and loving community focused on learners, to facilitate discussions around cultural competency and equity.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The OEA’s Program Division includes the following departments: Communications and Marketing, Education Policy Research and Member Advocacy (EPRMA), Government Relations (GR), and Member Legal Services.

Education Policy Research and Member Advocacy (EPRMA)

The EPRMA Department consists of three Collective Bargaining and Research Consultants (CBARCs) and three Education Policy and Practice Consultants (EPPCs), who are supported by three Associate Staff. The EPRMA Department assists OEA field staff and the 744 locals of OEA through OEA statewide conferences, local and staff professional development trainings, bulletins, Bargaining Boot

Camps, and General Fund Analysis (GFA). This year EPRMA brought two new professional development resources to OEA members. The first is an Ohio-specific portal for the NEA Micro-Credentials. This portal allows OEA to place state affiliate branding on the NEA Micro-Credential content and, also control which courses are featured on the page. The second resource is VESi, which allows OEA members to earn up to nine graduate credit hours for a flat fee of \$200. The program has been well-received, with over 1,200 OEA members purchasing subscriptions since the program's inception in the spring of 2023.

This year, EPRMA organized and hosted statewide conferences and programs to build the capacity of locals and foster leadership development. EPRMA convened in-person Bargaining Boot Camp events at several locations across the state. EPRMA staff also collaborated with stakeholder groups in the educational field to advise and provide guidance on educational policy reflective of the best interests of OEA members. Department staff continued their advocacy at the State Board of Education, including convening monthly check-in calls with allies from the Board and representing OEA at Board meetings. Included in this work was navigating the realignment that resulted in the creation of the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW), which has limited the State Board of Education to a handful of constitutionally required duties, including educator licensure. The EPRMA team continues to monitor proposed rule changes, which are now coming from DEW and the State Board of Education and has advocated on several important issues as they go through the rule review process. The EPPCs also continued to support members on all issues related to education practice, including providing updates on OTES, Resident Educator, and Code of Conduct.

EPRMA CBARC staff supported locals in bargaining by providing GFAs, salary, and health insurance comparable data, and meeting directly with bargaining teams. A big focus of the CBARC's work this year was educating OEA leadership, members, and staff about the growing general fund balances that are being carried by Ohio school districts as well as the impacts of expiring Federal COVID relief funds. The minimum teacher salary schedule was once again increased in the state budget bill (HB 33). The CBARCs provided an analysis of the potential impacts of this bill during the legislative negotiations and then, upon passage of the bill, provided support to locals on the impacts of the changes.

Strategic Priority 1: Build locals' capacity to be more relevant to members.

One of the core functions of the CBARCs is to provide bargaining support to OEA locals. The General Fund Analysis (GFA) is an important tool in this work. GFAs provide locals with a detailed assessment of a school district's finances, including breakdowns of revenue and expenses as well as an analysis of historical accuracy. This year, EPRMA staff produced GFAs for over 300 locals. Additionally, CBARCs presented GFA training sessions to 26 locals, conducted financial presentations at 32 locals, trained 17 bargaining teams on salary schedule construction, provided training sessions on health insurance fundamentals to six locals, and provided twice-a-year updates to OEA field staff on trends in Ohio school finance. CBARCs also released bulletins on the following topics:

- Model Salary Schedule
- Salary Schedule Placement
- Recreational Marijuana
- Copay-Only Provide Provider Organization Health Insurance Plans
- Statutory Non-Renewal Process
- Dyslexia Guidebook
- Providing Urgent Maternal Protections (PUMP) Act

CBARCs also continued the popular Bargaining Boot Camp, hosting four boot camps for a total of approximately 200 members and OEA field staff.

The EPPCs provided training to members and staff on the following topics:

- Restorative Practices
- Equity Literacy
- Trauma-Informed Teaching
- Special Education, including caseload and workload
- Resident Educator Program (and RESA)
- Ohio's Code of Conduct for Educators
- Dyslexia laws, including Dyslexia guidebook implementation
- Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES)
- Ohio Professional Code of Conduct
- High-Quality Student Data (HQSD)
- Local Professional Development Committees (LPDC)
- Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS)

EPRMA staff continue to organize and support a cadre of members who work as English learner (EL) teachers. This group meets regularly, advocates on issues related to their profession, and takes part in Ohio's annual TESOL Conference.

The SalSim (Salary Simulator) is an internal tool that OEA staff use to cost out contract proposals. EPRMA staff provide support to the field on this tool, conduct periodic updates and fixes to the underlying Excel spreadsheet, and generate SalSim reports for ESP locals (SalSims for certificated locals are the responsibility of field staff). EPRMA staff regularly provide training to the field on this tool and, this year, they also hosted a statewide Zoom call to review the tool and provide helpful tips for its usage.

Strategic Priority 2: Leverage the image of education employees to build support for public education.

EPRMA staff provided support to OEA's efforts around the biennial state budget, with a particular focus on full funding of the Fair School Funding Plan. These efforts included analysis of various Legislative Service Commission (LSC) budget runs and feedback on budget provisions related to education policy.

EPRMA staff continued to work with stakeholder groups to foster support for quality public education, develop resourceful tools for educators, and encourage the implementation of effective educational policies and programs. Partners in this work include:

- Ohio's Whole Child Network
- Ohio Dean's Compact
- Early Learning Development Standards Advisory Group
- Guiding Coalition (Office of Exceptional Children)
- Senate Bill 68 Advisory Group
- P-20 Literacy Advisory Council
- Diversifying the Educator Workforce Committee (Ohio Dean's Compact)
- Ohio Leadership Advisory Council (OLAC)
- OSU Statewide Family Engagement Center's State Advisory Council
- Network for Public Education (NPE)
- Great Lakes Center for Education Research and Practice

- National Education Policy Center (NEPC)

EPPCs work with DEW's Office of Professional Conduct to author tip sheets on the various components of the Code of Conduct. These tip sheets, known as #ABCConduct, are only released publicly once approval has been given from OEA. This year, EPRMA staff partnered with DEW on the 14th installment of this series.

Strategic Priority 3: Build OEA as a member resource for professional issues.

EPRMA staff are responsible for OEA's two yearly, large statewide conferences – Advocacy and Organizing Institute (AOI) and Summer Leadership Academy (SLA). SLA attracted 222 attendees and AOI had 233 attendees. Both events received overwhelmingly positive reviews from members, who found the content to be relevant to their professional lives and their work in the union.

EPRMA staff, with the support of OEA Governance, are responsible for monitoring the proceedings of the State Board of Education and the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. As part of this effort, EPRMA staff worked with OEA Governance to submit public comments on several issues that came before these bodies, including English language learners, gifted education, licensure, and special education. EPRMA staff also conducted monthly internal meetings to review DEW and State Board of Education agendas. EPRMA staff also create monthly reports summarizing the proceedings of the two bodies. The EPRMA Director also convened monthly meetings with OEA's allies on the Board to review key issues before the Board and advocate on behalf of OEA members.

The Professional Efficacy Committee, one of OEA's standing committees, is facilitated by the EPRMA Director and EPRMA staff. This year, the committee took on a charge related to student behavior. With the support of EPRMA staff, the committee produced a charge report that made specific recommendations for updates to OEA legislative policy related to Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

The CBARCs have begun regularly convening a group of OEA field staff as a Collective Bargaining Advisory Group. This group provides feedback on current trends in the field and helps to guide the work of the CBARCs and keep them connected to the membership.

Strategic Priority 4: Educate and organize OEA and its members to advocate for racial, social, and economic justice.

EPRMA staff presented sessions at OEA district leadership and bargaining conference and multi-day professional learning sessions in school districts on the following topics in support of Strategic Priority #4: Equity Literacy, Defining Equity and Inequity, Leading with Equity, Restorative Practices Basics, Recruiting Educators of Color, Developing Cultural Competency and Equity, Intro to Bias Training, and Restorative Practices. EPRMA staff also help to facilitate the Ohio cohort of the NEA Leaders for Just Schools program.

Title IX continued to receive significant statewide and national focus this year. EPRMA staff provided OEA field staff with updated guidance, including an infographic, on how members should address issues related to gender identity. EPRMA staff also provided ongoing support on specific questions related to the use of preferred pronouns in the classroom.

To support and advocate for the needs of English Learners (EL) and their Ohio educators, EPRMA staff worked with OEA field staff to bargain supports specific to class size and caseload for EL teachers. The EL Cadre again provided training at the Ohio TESOL State Conference.

The Advocacy and Organizing Institute (AOI) and Summer Leadership Academy (SLA) both featured sessions related to equity, social and economic justice, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. Specifically, AOI featured a panel on women in bargaining and SLA featured a session on inclusive learning environments.

Government Relations (GR)

The lobbyists (3 staff members) within the Government Relations Department monitor and analyze Ohio legislation, creates testimony in support and in opposition to legislation impacting OEA members, and works with Ohio General Assembly members to influence legislative bills and policies on behalf of OEA members.

This year, Government Relations provided regular reports on important legislation relevant to OEA members, assisted in organizing members to participate in legislative calls to action, and advocated for a variety of education issues with legislators, state agencies and stakeholder groups.

Strategic Priority 1: Build locals' capacity to be more relevant to members.

Government Relations staff provided updates and information to members and OEA staff on legislative and retirement issues before the 135th General Assembly and important elections in 2023.

In 2023, GR staff assisted with efforts in support of OEA's recommended candidate for the STRS Board. This included collaborating with other OEA departments on development of messaging, campaign materials, member engagement and additional support for OEA staff and members to advocate for OEA's endorsed candidate.

The Government Relations Department provided updates on legislation pending in the 135th General Assembly important to OEA members through the Legislative Watch and Legislative Calls to Action (HB 33, SB 83, HB 151, and others). Provided information to members on the voting record of legislators on education issues via an updated OEA Legislative Scorecard. Participated in legislative screenings and various other campaign efforts. Additionally, GR reviewed OEA Legislative Policies and attended OEA Legislative Committee meetings. Finally, GR provided legislative update documents and presentations for OEA members of the OEA Legislative Committee, OEA Fund State Council, Summer Leadership Academy, Higher Education Advocacy Council (HEAC), and other local membership meetings.

In early 2024, GR staff oversaw the process of recommending and endorsing pro-public education legislative allies for friendly incumbent endorsements, pre-primary screenings, and support from the OEA Fund. GR continues to coordinate with other OEA programs and field departments on the development and implementation of OEA's 2024 screening/endorsement and campaign programs.

Strategic Priority 2: Educate and organize members to build support for quality public education.

Government Relations advanced Strategic Priority 2 by working to organize members to participate in legislative advocacy, including engaging members to participate in legislative calls to action, provide testimony, and participate in legislative engagement with their elected leaders. GR also lobbied, prepared, and presented testimony in support of OEA's legislative agenda. GR will continue the work to build connections with OEA members and elected officials by assisting with the implementation of OEA's legislative screening/endorsement process for candidates running for the Ohio General Assembly in 2024.

Government Relations continued its lobbying efforts on behalf of OEA members on some of the important issues below:

- SJR 2: Government Relations staff worked in opposition to a proposed constitutional amendment (SJR 2) that would weaken the voice of Ohio citizens and make it harder to amend the Constitution. GR issued an Action Alert to members, prepared testimony for OEA officers, and lobbied key legislators.
- HCR 6: Government Relations continued its lobbying efforts on behalf of OEA members on retirement issues. GR issued an Action Alert and supported OEA officer testimony in support of House Concurrent Resolution 6 (HCR 6) to urge Congress to fully repeal GPO/WEP. Additionally, OEA targeted action at key members of Congress in support of the scheduling of a markup session to advance the legislation.
- Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82/ S. 597): OEA GR has worked to organize members to participate in NEA's Action Alerts supporting the Social Security Fairness Act, organized members, specifically with OEA-R, to contact their members of Congress to support the act and advocate for its passage, and developed targeted action at key members of Congress in support of the scheduling of a markup session to advance the legislation in the House Ways and Means Committee. Recently, OEA GR has urged members to share written testimony on the impact of GPO and WEP with the U.S. House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security during a recent hearing. OEA GR also assisted in drafting and submitting written testimony on behalf of OEA to the subcommittee.
- HB 11 and SB 11: Government Relations continued its lobbying efforts on behalf of OEA members on House Bill 11 and Senate Bill 11. Both initiatives would expand and create a universal voucher program in the State of Ohio. GR issued a member Action Alert, prepared officer testimony on HB 11 and worked with OEA members who provided testimony.
- HB 407: Ongoing work with legislators and stakeholder groups resulted in the introduction of HB 407 aimed at voucher accountability. The bill would make significant improvements in the fiscal and academic accountability of private schools who accept vouchers. OEA is in support of this legislation.
- SB 83: Prepared and assisted with the delivery of testimony in opposition to the Higher Education "Destruction" Act. Coordinated legislative engagement with external partners (WAO, Honesty for Ohio Education, OFT, and AAUP). Worked to engage members to send letters to their legislators urging them to oppose the bill and holding legislators accountable for their votes on SB 83.

- SB 168: Provided testimony in the Ohio Senate and worked with key allies in the Ohio House in opposition to the deregulation bill, particularly around permitting districts to hire unlicensed teachers, eliminating seniority as a factor in non-teaching staff RIFF, and permitting districts to not enter a supplemental contract with a teacher for duties outside of the workday.
- Teacher Licensure Fees: Worked with legislators on the State Board of Education funding issue that could impact teacher licensure fees. Created an OEA member Action Alert to urge legislators to support fully funding the State Board of Education.
- Eastern Gateway CC: Participated in a meeting with the Ohio Department of Higher Education, OEA staff, and OEA local president from Eastern Gateway Community College regarding the college's financial troubles.
- OAC Rule Review: Worked collaboratively with OEA EPRMA and Communications staff on public comment and talking points aimed at advocating for OEA's policy positions during agency rule reviews.
- STRS: OEA continues to represent the interests of active and retired members before the legislature and the retirement system boards. In March, the STRS Board voted unanimously to make a permanent change to retirement eligibility to 34 years of service at any age for full benefits. Additionally, members can retire with reduced benefits with 29 years of service at any age. OEA continues to advocate for benefits to be restored to active and retired members as the financial condition of STRS improves.

Strategic Priority 3: Build OEA as a member resource for professional issues.

To advance Strategic Priority #3, OEA GR worked with partner organizations to advance OEA's legislative and political priorities as a core component of the coalition efforts. During the latter half of 2023, most of these efforts focused on coalition advocacy around defeating Issue 1 in the August special election via the One Person, One Vote campaign. OEA coordinated fellow executive committee members to help formulate and execute the campaign's strategy, ultimately leading to a major victory in protecting democratic norms in Ohio. Leading up to the November 2023 local school board elections, OEA GR worked with coalition partners to develop messaging and deploy programs to oppose the election of extreme anti-public school board members and support pro-public education candidates.

Additionally, OEA played a role in the policy review and eventually the formation of the Citizens Not Politicians campaign and has been a leading coalition partner in the bi-partisan effort to end partisan gerrymandering.

Finally, Government Relations worked with coalition partners to advance OEA's policy priorities:

- GR worked with the We Are Ohio coalition to monitor and coordinate advocacy on issues related to SB 83 and other legislation intending to strip away public sector worker rights.
- GR worked with coalition partners to advance OEA's voucher policy priorities. This includes stakeholder groups on voucher accountability and the transition to the Department of Education and Workforce.
- Participates in and helps direct the work of the Ohio Education Policy Institute.
- Support the work of the Honesty for Ohio Education Coalition.
- Participated in coalitions regarding house bills that propose sweeping changes to Ohio's personal income tax and property tax laws.

Strategic Priority 4: Educate and organize OEA and its members to advocate for racial, social, and economic justice.

Government Relations advanced Strategic Priority #4 throughout the department's efforts on specific legislation and via work to advance initiatives that promote the advancement of social, economic, and racial justice.

Legislative efforts that support Strategic Priority #4 include work to defeat SB 83, which is bad for students, bad for higher education, and bad for Ohio. SB 83 would censor honest education in our institutions of higher education and significantly hinder programs that promote diversity, equity and inclusivity on our universities and campuses.

GR also lobbied, prepared testimony and drafted correspondences that went to the House, Senate, and Governor in opposition to House Bill 68. This legislation discriminates against the rights of transgendered students. Additionally, OEA worked to oppose HB 183, which would impose unsafe bathroom bans on Ohio's public schools and institutions of higher education.

OEA continues to be a leading partner in the Honesty for Ohio Education Coalition which advocates for and engages elected officials at the state and local levels to build support for public education, to protect honest, accurate education in our classrooms, and to ensure that our public schools are safe, healthy, and inclusive environments for all students.

OEA GR continues to advocate for the economic justice of educators and other public employees in Ohio by working to protect and improve retirement security. One major part of this work is OEA GR's efforts to organize and engage members to repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). OEA GR has engaged and educated members on the negative impact of GPO and WEP to public employees and their families in Ohio. The department has recruited members to contact their state legislators to support HCR 6, which passed the General Assembly in April of 2024 with overwhelming bi-partisan support from the Ohio House (85-0) and the Ohio Senate (30-0). OEA GR also organized members to contact their U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators to urge their support of the Social Security Fairness Act of 2023 (H.R. 82/S. 597) via NEA's Action Alert supporting the Act.

OEA GR organized members to specifically contact members from the Ohio Delegation on the House Ways and Means Committee to schedule a mark-up session of H.R. 82, and recently engaged members to send written testimony to the Social Security subcommittee of the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee during a hearing in April 2024 on GPO and WEP. OEA GR also drafted testimony for OEA that was submitted in advance of this hearing urging repeal of GPO and WEP by the favorable passage of H.R. 82. Finally, OEA GR is collaborating with OEA-R to organize a retired member lobby day to meet with members of the Ohio General Assembly to talk about important policy changes to protect the retirement security of public educators and improve Ohio's pension systems.

Finally, OEA is a partner with One Fair Wage's Raise the Wage Ohio campaign to increase the state's minimum wage and eliminate the tipped and sub-minimum wages and align them with the full minimum wage.

Communications & Marketing

In each issue, *Ohio Schools* has featured local associations and members working to improve the quality of public education and influence statewide education policies and practices.

During 2023-2024, *Ohio Schools* magazine has highlighted:

- OEA's Public Education Matters initiative
- Educator Voices
- Efforts of OEA members to support students and communities.
- How union involvement empowers educators
- Ohio Teacher of the Year
- Efforts to welcome new educators to the profession.
- Local association bargaining and organizing success stories.
- Association efforts to address issues of poverty in schools and communities.
- OEA members making a meaningful difference for students, schools, and communities.
- OEA action and advocacy on legislation
- OEA and member-led advocacy for racial and social justice
- Teacher recruitment and retention
- School funding in Ohio
- School vouchers
- Efforts to prioritize educator and student health and wellness.
- OEA strategic priorities
- Retirement Systems Updates and pension system elections
- Promotion of the OEA Fund
- Information about the OEA Educational Foundation
- OEA's New Educator and Aspiring Educator members and programs
- OEA-Retired programs and initiatives
- OEA's Minority Leadership Training Program
- OEA Summer Leadership Academy
- OEA statewide candidates
- Action taken at the OEA and NEA Representative Assemblies
- Report of the OEA Secretary-Treasurer
- Opportunities for awards, grants, and professional development
- American Education Week
- OEA Member Resource Guide
- Annual *Ohio Schools*' Create a Cover Contest

OEA launched a digital magazine experience in February with the online publication of the February/March 2024 issue of *Ohio Schools*. In 2024, digital issues of *Ohio Schools* will be published in February/March and June/July. Members will continue to receive four print magazines – April/May, August/September (Member Resource Guide), October/November, and December/ January – at home.

The digital issues offer interactive content including stories, videos, and photo galleries that share the work of OEA members to help all students – regardless of race, background, or zip code – learn, grow, and fulfill their potential; to advocate for educator rights and working conditions; to serve as leaders in the education profession; and to amplify educator voices from the school board to the statehouse.

Special Projects

Throughout 2023-2024, Communications staff designed and produced various print and digital products to fulfill OEA's Strategic Priorities. These projects have included:

- OEA Summer Leadership Academy promotional materials

- Print and online promotional and informational pieces to support OEA Aspiring Educators and Ohio's New Educators (ONE)
- OEA Public Education Matters initiative materials
- OEA Local Treasurer's Handbook
- OEA Local President's Handbook
- OEA Member Unemployment Guide
- OEA Crisis Manual
- OEA Fund materials
- OEA RA materials including Delegate Handbook cover and Board layout
- NEA RA materials
- OEA Public Education Matters podcast materials
- OEA-Retired materials
- STRS Board campaign materials
- OEA Wellness program materials

Social Media

During 2023, ohea.org had 300,926 visits, an increase of 20,487 compared to the prior year, with 240,254 unique visitors. During the first quarter of 2024, the website had 49,032 visits, and 3.6% of site visits were returning users.

The OEA website visitors' primary source of viewing continues to be mobile devices first (53.6%), followed by desktops (49.9%), and tablets (1.5%). In 2023 more website visitors came to the OEA site through organic searches (49.6%) followed by direct links (34.5%).

Top 5 Pages: (from August 1, 2023, through March 1, 2024)

1. OEA-VESI partnership
2. Member-Only Benefits
3. Member Center
4. Educator Appreciation Nights with the Columbus Blue Jackets
5. eDues

- **Facebook:** The OEA Facebook page has 118,141 followers, a 4.2% increase from February 2023
- **Twitter:** The OEA account has 11,951 followers, a 1.4% decrease from February 2023
- **Instagram:** The OEA account has 3,539 followers, a 10.4% increase from February 2023
- **YouTube:** OEA's channel had 11,117 views in 2023, a 49% increase from 2022

Podcast

In spring of 2023, OEA wrapped up Season 3 of the *Education Matters* podcast. In the fall of 2023, the podcast relaunched for Season 4 with a new name and new sound. *Public Education Matters* moved to a semi-weekly format, with each half-hour episode featuring a spotlighted interview with members or outside experts about important education issues shaping the landscape in Ohio, as well as a shorter segment highlighting an OEA resource, program, or campaign that members should know more about. Season 4's 15 episodes to date have been downloaded a total of 2,565 times, as of March 22, 2024.

Podcast episodes this season have included:

- 5 things you didn't know about OASNP. Plus, the Medina City TA's Professional Development Day success.
- Educators serving as DNC delegates. Plus, fun opportunities to support the OEA Fund.
- NPE report gives Ohio failing grade on state's support for public education. Plus, OEA members talk about banned books (*ONE virtual Professional Development event*)
- See Educators Run. Plus, OEA's continued fight against SB 83.
- Elevating ESP voices. Plus, OEA's *Ohio Schools* magazine goes digital.

- Rolling out Ohio’s dyslexia policies. Plus, OEA’s Educational Foundation grants.
- Creating welcoming PE classes for every student – no exceptions. Plus, new resources for OEA members to hold legislators accountable.
- Practical guidance for building positive family engagement. Plus, bringing OEA’s Aspiring Educators together.
- The 2024 Ohio Teacher of the Year’s journey from the newsroom to the classroom. Plus, OEA member deals on grad credit hours (*VESI*).
- Meeting the needs of growing numbers of English learners. Plus, OEA Nights with the Cavs and Blue Jackets.
- Supporting student stewards of our democracy. Plus, OEA’s Affiliate Grant Programs.
- Educators belong on local school boards. Plus, OEA’s Legislative Scorecard.
- On Our Sleeves (*supporting students’ mental health*). Plus, celebrating Public Education Matters Day.
- Kids Voting Ohio. Plus, (*ONE Member Ambassador David Grimes*) running for Westerville City Council.
- Speaking in a united voice because Public Education Matters. Plus, the OEA App.

Videos

In 2023, OEA Comms saw an increase in demand for video content and utilized our contract with PlayPlay and other resources to create visual content for various departments, our website, and social media.

- Read Across America – OEA-R
- ESP video
- Public Education Matters
- PEM Day
- Vouchers Hurt Kids
- Honesty in Education
- Fair School Funding
- Native American Month
- Keep Our Schools Safe
- Early Voting/School Board

Marketing

In 2023, OEA’s Communications and Marketing Department was on the leading edge of the Public Education Matters initiative rollout, helping unite membership around the priority messages of the PEM initiative through things like a rollout video at the Spring RA (and an abbreviated version for the NEA RA). The department then rolled out PEM messaging to external audiences through multiple radio PSAs, TV and streaming television spots associated with Educator of the Week campaigns on Local 12, high school football sponsorship campaigns on ONN, and other opportunities. Staff have been firmly committed to having PEM messaging inform all internal and external messaging to bolster support for public education and to position OEA as the state’s leading advocate for public education.

Marketing efforts in 2023 also included work to help diversify Ohio’s education workforce, including sponsoring Black History Month content on NBC4 in Columbus, sponsoring the Classic for Columbus All-Star Basketball Game, and organizing paid television interview segments to talk about the importance of bringing educators of color into the profession. Additional sponsorship opportunities around addressing food insecurity through the Souper Bowl of Caring initiatives further demonstrate this department’s commitment to advocating for racial, social, and economic justice, in support of OEA’s Strategic Priority #4.

Office of the General Counsel

LITIGATION

CATA vs. Auburn Vocational School, 11-CV-003318, 2021-L-113; 2023-L-114: **UPDATE**. This litigation over an eighth period stipend began in December 2011. A final appealable order was entered on October 14, 2021, awarding just under \$1.5 million in damages. The district filed a notice of appeal to the 11th District Court of Appeals on October 29, 2021. The issue on appeal is over jurisdiction. The CATA CBA has a grievance procedure, but that procedure does not culminate in binding arbitration. As a result, we sued the District in the Lake County Court of Common Pleas. Our position is that this is a breach of contract claim that is governed by ordinary principles of contractual interpretation, rather than a dispute over collective bargaining rights. R.C. 4117.09(B)(1) supports our right to bring a claim for ordinary breach of contract in the court of common pleas. It provides that: “A party to the agreement may bring suits for violation of agreements or the enforcement of an award by an arbitrator in the court of common pleas of any county wherein a party resides or transacts business.” Nevertheless, the District has argued that an alleged breach of the CBA falls within the exclusive jurisdiction of the State Employment Relations Board (“SERB”) because it is a claim that arises from or is dependent upon public employment collective bargaining rights created by R.C. Chapter 4117. The 11th Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously upheld the trial court's decision in CATA's favor and awarded back pay of over \$1.4 million. On September 22, 2022, Auburn Vocational School District BOE filed a Notice of Appeal and Memorandum in Support of Jurisdiction to the Ohio Supreme Court. Additionally, the Ohio School Boards Association filed an amicus brief in support of jurisdiction. On January 17, 2023, the Ohio Supreme Court declined jurisdiction to hear this case. The district filed a Motion for Reconsideration. On March 28, 2023, the Ohio Supreme Court declined the Board's Motion for Reconsideration. We are discussing implementation with the school district and are considering additional action since the district has given RIF notices in response to the Ohio Supreme Court's decision declining jurisdiction. We are discussing implementation and possible settlement with the school district. On October 2, 2023, the district filed a Motion for Interpleader and to Deposit Total Judgment Sum for Safekeeping. On October 16, 2023, we filed a Motion to Strike Defendant's Motions as well as a Motion for Sanctions against counsel. On October 30, 2023, the Defendants filed Motions in Response as well as a Motion for Oral Arguments. On November 6, 2023, we filed a Reply to Defendant's Motion. On December 6, 2023, Auburn Vocation School District Board of Education filed a new appeal of decisions issued in Case No. 11-CV-003318 which is currently pending. **On April 9, 2024, the 11th District Appellate Court upheld the validity of the Trials Court's nunc pro tunc order and dismissed the appeal as a nullity.**

Columbus City School District, et al v. State of Ohio, State of Ohio Board of Education, and Stephanie Siddens, 22-CV-00067: **UPDATE**. This litigation was filed in Franklin County on January 4, 2022. Plaintiffs are challenging the constitutionality of the EdChoice Scholarship Program (“EdChoice Program”), codified at R.C. Chapter 3310, et seq. Initial disclosures were submitted on March 1, 2022. Several parties have intervened as defendants. A discovery conference was scheduled for May 3, 2022. The Defendants filed a Motion to Dismiss. Intervenor filed Motions for Judgment on the Pleadings. The Plaintiffs filed a Memorandum in Opposition to the Defendant's Motion to Dismiss and Intervenor's Motion for Judgment on the Pleadings. Numerous Amicus Curiae briefs were filed by both sides. On July 1, 2022, OEA prepared and filed an Amicus Curiae brief with the Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT) on behalf of the Plaintiffs. An oral argument on the outstanding motions had been scheduled for October 25, 2022. This case is set for trial on Tuesday, January 3, 2023, at 9 AM. After a conference, the parties agreed to a schedule with the first due date for fact discovery being July 31, 2023, and trial assignment starting June 10, 2024, at 9 AM. On December 21, 2023, Judge Page determined that Matthew Huffman would be required to answer 20 interrogatories rather than an oral deposition. On January 22, 2024, Matthew Huffman, a non-party, filed an appeal to the Tenth District Court of Appeals from the Franklin County Common Pleas Court on December 21, 2023. On March 29, 2024, the Court

of Appeals dismissed the appeal concluding that the December 21, 2023, order was not a final appealable order. On April 4, 2024, Matthew Huffman filed a Motion of Non-Party for a stay pending appeal to the Supreme Court of Ohio. The Motion is pending.

Monitored Litigation

Doe No 1 et al. v. Bethel Local School District Board of Education, et al., 3:22-CV-00337. US Court of Appeals for 6th Circuit, 23-3740. UPDATE. On November 22, 2022, America First Legal Foundation sued Bethel Local School District Board of Education regarding bathroom use alleging a violation of Title IX and Ohio law by implementing a policy that allowed students to use bathroom facilities based on their gender identity. The interfaith (Muslim and Christian parents) are alleging that the school district is infringing on their ability to exercise their religious beliefs and to direct the upbringing of their children. A hearing on preliminary injunction was held February 7, 2023. Briefs were filed on March 17, 2023, followed by Motions for Sanctions by Plaintiffs on March 24, 2023, and a Motion to Dismiss by Defendant's on March 27, 2023. The Court order responses to the motions were due on April 12, 2023, which was immediately followed by unopposed motions to extend the deadlines for responses to April 17, 2023, for Plaintiff's response and by May 1, 2023, for Defendant's response. Oral arguments on the pending Motions to Dismiss were held on May 9, 2023. On August 8, 2023, the court granted the Defendant's Motion to Dismiss. On September 8, 2023, the Plaintiffs filed a Motion to Appeal. **The appellee's brief is due on May 13, 2024. Reply briefs are due 21 days later.**

Kaltenbach, et al. v. Hilliard City Schools. 2:23-CV-00187. UPDATE. On January 16, 2023, several Hilliard School District parents sued the Hilliard City School District seeking a declaratory judgment and injunction to affirm their established constitutional rights to direct the upbringing of their children. Specifically, the Plaintiffs state that the district is permitting activist teachers to solicit information about sexual behaviors, attitudes and private religious practices. On January 23, 2023, the District filed a Motion to Dismiss for failure to state a claim for which relief can be granted. On February 8, 2023, the Plaintiffs filed an Amended Complaint. On February 9, 2023, the Court deemed the District's motion moot. The due date to file a response was March 1, 2023. On March 27, 2023, the District filed another Motion to Dismiss for failure to state a claim. A pretrial conference was scheduled for March 15, 2023. A Response to the Motion to Dismiss was filed on March 20, 2023, and the reply was filed on April 3, 2023. A Motion for Protective Order was filed on April 2, 2023, and responses are due by April 24, 2023. A response in opposition to the Motion to Dismiss for Failure to state a claim was filed by the Plaintiffs on May 15, 2023. On August 29, 2023, the Court determined that the Amended complaint failed to comply with Civil Rule 8. On October 3, 2023, the Plaintiffs filed an Amended Complaint, and the Defendants filed a Motion to Dismiss for Failure to State a Claim. On October 20, 2023, the Magistrate signed a stipulated Protective Order. On October 24, 2023, the Plaintiffs filed a response to the Motion to Dismiss. On November 7, 2023, the Defendants filed a reply brief. On November 26, 2023, a Notice of Promulgation of Discovery was filed by the Plaintiffs. **On April 1, 2024, Plaintiffs filed a second amended complaint.**

Legal Services

OEA/NEA Legal Services Program

The Legal Department (Legal Services) administers four association programs: the Kate Frank/DuShane Unified Legal Services Program, the Educators' Employment Liability Insurance Program, the Association Liability Insurance Program, and the Attorney Referral Program.

For the fiscal year 2022-23, Legal received 930 applications: 670 for teachers (72%), 187 for affiliates (20%) and 75 for education support professionals (8%). Legal Services also processed payments (including cancellation fees, court reporter fees, and arbitrator fees) for 60 arbitration cases.

From September 1, 2023, we received 641 applications: 471 for teachers (73%), 129 for affiliates (20%), and 41 for education support professionals (6%). Legal Services also processed payments (including cancellation fees, court reporter fees and arbitrator fees) for 23 arbitration cases.

Legal finalized retainer agreements with six law firms that provide legal representation to Association members and local affiliates.

Insurance Programs

From September 1, 2023, through April 10, 2024, five claims were filed under the Educators Employment Liability (EEL) Program and no claims were filed under the Association Professional Liability (APL) Program.

Legal Services Briefings

On April 11, 2024, Legal Services held a Plan Attorney Conference where all plan attorneys learned about and discussed: Legislative Updates, Positive Behavior Interventions, Ensuring, Safe, Just & Welcoming Schools, Communications Updates, Artificial Intelligence, and EGCC & K-12 Consolidations.

On April 22, 2024, Legal Services is holding a briefing for staff on Ensuring Safe, Just & Welcoming Schools. Two more briefings are scheduled throughout the year.

Presentations/Member Outreach

Throughout the year, Legal and program attorneys presented information on various legal issues to develop awareness of opportunities and challenges for members and local associations. Legal Services presented a Legal Update at AOI, and the Legal Department held several Constitution and Bylaws Workshops. On September 19, 2023, the Legal Department provided in-person Constitution and Bylaws assistance to Teays Valley EA. On March 7, 2024, the Legal Department held a Constitution and Bylaws Workshop for SWOEA. General Counsel Brian Eastman has presented information on Artificial Intelligence at several conferences and meetings.

Organizing Assistance

Plan attorneys assisted legally in various organizing campaigns.

Legislative

The Legal Department has reviewed various house and senate bills for legal issues and provided feedback on areas of concern. On March 11, 2024, Assistant General Counsel Kelly Phillips testified before the Ohio Board of Education regarding timeliness issues with professional conduct procedures and the effect of potential budget cuts on those processes. Tara Crawford continues to attend and monitor State Employment Relations Board meetings.

Constitution & Bylaws

Since January 1, 2022, the review of all Local's Constitution and Bylaws has been transitioned to the Office of General Counsel/Legal Services from Membership Services. The Legal Department has reviewed approximately 128 compliant C&Bs. The Legal Department is also working with various Locals to bring their C&Bs into compliance. If you would like the Legal Department to conduct a Constitution and Bylaws Workshop in your District, please send an email to CandB@ohea.org. Any C&Bs that are due for review should be sent to the new C&B email address at CandB@ohea.org.

Several plan attorneys who represent OEA members and General Counsel Brian Eastman attended the NOLEA Annual Conference in October 2023. OEA Legal Department regularly attends the NEA OGC training/meetings as well.

Transition to NEA 360

Breonna Jackson and Page Hicks have been serving on the pilot group for the rollout of NEA 360.

BUSINESS SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS

The Business Services Division is comprised of 30 employees and includes: Accounting, Investments, Pension, Building Operations and Facilities, Computer Services, Human Resources, Membership Processing, and Printing and Mailing Services. The Division is the primary organizational provider of technical tools, processing and software systems, and human resource support for the organization which includes 186 employees. The departments are responsible for: processing membership enrollments, dues, local affiliations, and audits; budgets, financial statements, investments, payables, tax returns and regulatory filings with both DOL and IRS, assisting locals with IRS compliance and tax filings, payroll, pensions, and benefit plan accounting including annual audits; all aspects of employee recruitment, coordinating staff training, and procuring benefits through vendors; managing facilities, vendors, and maintenance contracts, securing office space and negotiating leases, maintaining the OEA headquarters property and equipment, and managing the internal operations of the Printing and Mailing Department. The Division also provides reception services for all visitors to the HQ property.

This team strives for operational efficiencies and ways to align support with the needs of OEA. Important successes of the Business Services Division for the fiscal year include vetting and choosing software to replace an outdated PAC Contribution System, transitioning the organization from OEA360 to the NEA360 membership system, rebuilding network infrastructure to be more cyber-secure and efficient in advance of moving to the "cloud", securing highly qualified candidates to fill OEA positions with a commitment to a diverse and talented workforce, and supporting OEA staff and members in a changed working environment that mixes virtual and live systems.

Building Operations

Building operations has completed several large facility projects in the HQ building and Annex. The Annex roof has been replaced and the entire facility has been evaluated for building code compliance and corrections made where needed. We have begun the process of resealing all the exterior windows and rebuilding the manager parking lot. Meeting and conference rooms have been fitted with video and sound for hybrid meetings.

The lobby visuals have been refreshed to incorporate the Public Education Matters graphics, continuing to highlight members. Building Ops coordinated the logistics behind the historical marker presentation in Akron and the 175th Anniversary historical marker display has been added to the HQ lobby.

Physical facility leases have been renewed for all OEA field offices with expirations ranging from March 2026 through August 2028. One additional lease is up for renewal in the fall of 2024. The drop-in meeting spaces have been evaluated for usability and negotiations are underway for adding/moving spaces in Mansfield, Steubenville, Jackson, and the northwest corner of the state.

The Team added a new coordinator position to better manage the myriad of projects completed in-house. The print shop has completed 1,000 jobs in the past year from Public Education Matters materials to postcards, to member communications.

Computer Services

The Computer Services Department (CSD) team continues to provide tools and support for all OEA meetings and conferences in live and virtual settings. The CSD team continues to research opportunities and solutions to meet member and local needs while maintaining information in a secure environment.

Defending the OEA network against constant intrusion attempts by bad actors requires vigilance in OEA security monitoring and policymaking. The team spends considerable time keeping abreast of and countering the threats. The team completed a statewide redundancy project for internet access. CSD has implemented various protocols to protect member data, both housed on OEA servers and data being transferred via email and shared files. The team also implemented a third network structure for the ONE group and provided support and guidance.

Accounting and Membership

The Accounting and Membership teams have successfully implemented software audits and conversions. The team converted all banking activity to a new banking institution and sent RFPs to secure investment advisory services for OEA reserves and the HRA benefit plan. The team also, in conjunction with management, revamped the budget process to make efficiencies in establishing and tracking expenditures.

OEA completed all routine audits with our external auditors Clark, Schaefer, Hackett & Co. (CSH). This included the OEA financial statements along with seven OEA benefit plans and the OEA Fund. In addition to providing opinions on OEA's various financial statements, the auditors continue to provide "best practice" advice, through management letter comments that are used to implement and help strengthen OEA's internal financial controls. The audit firm also provided tax services and assisted OEA in timely filing Form 990 and Form 5500 and the various benefit plans, along with other OEA-associated political entities.

OEA's Pension Plans are being reviewed as part of OEA's standard schedule of maintaining all Plan documents in accordance with IRS/ERISA provisions. The legislation passed throughout the pandemic related to pension and savings plans created many amendments to the plan documents to remain in compliance.

The Membership team has been instrumental in testing and evaluating the NEA360 conversion from our OEA system. OEA is now live in the new environment.

Human Resources

The Human Resources Department has a newly formed team and they have made significant improvements to the OEA hiring process for staff vacancies. From automating applications to having an online completion of all onboarding documents, the team did research, testing, troubleshooting, and continuous monitoring and modification of the process. HR recruited and filled 17 positions including management, professional, and associate staff. The team is committed to ensuring OEA has a talented, diverse, and enthusiastic employee team.

LIAISON REPORTS

OEA Aspiring Educators Division (OEA-AE)

As of April 14, 2024, enrollment has increased to 875 members. The four AE BOD members planned and held a successful leadership conference where they exceeded their engagement goals of a 5% increase in attendance from the previous year's conference in both advisors and AE members. There were 77 members registered for the conference in total. We hosted 58 students, four advisors, and had 16 Ohio colleges and universities in attendance. Both OEA members and staff supported and led the PD of the weekend. The structure and content of the conference were designed and suggested by the AE members directly and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Saturday evening, they hosted the first-ever GramAE award ceremony where schools that reached their growth goals and/or chapter challenge awards were recognized, and graduating seniors were celebrated. The ceremony also included the following awards which were chosen by a committee that used a universal rubric to score submissions.

Emerging Chapter	Ohio University-Lancaster AE
Distinguished Advisor	Terri Jewitt-Ashland U-AE
Local Excellence	Ashland University-AE
Outstanding Local Leader	Madalynn Aumend-Ashland U-AE
Outstanding Local Project	"Educator Appreciation"-Ashland U-AE
Chapter Challenge	Kent Student Education Assoc 4/5 criteria Ashland U-AE 5/5 criteria

In addition to all the wonderful networking and learning that comes with a successful conference, they held their annual elections for next year's BOD. All but one position was filled by election or appointment, with a vacancy in the NW Region rep role - the current leaders are currently working to identify some potential leaders in this area with the support from the AE liaison. The NEA RA 2nd delegate and alternate were also elected. Finally, they closed the conference with an issue-organizing workshop facilitated by Ellen Adornetto on the most widely felt issue identified during the World Café at the AE-ONE conference in January: Licensure Exams. The work developed here will be continued into the planning process with next year's BOD. Several other schools were added to our list of potential new targets because of AE member attendance at this conference: Hiram College, Akron-Wayne satellite, University of Cincinnati, Mount Vernon Nazarene U, and Miami University.

As of April 19, 2024, the AE liaison was also able to connect with a BGSU staff member to begin talks of affiliation with their nearly 1,600 pre-service students in relation to the new pre-service licensure requirement. Another organizing effort was started in April with EdRising and several DEW staff to connect further with EdRising chapters at the high schools to support educator recruitment.

Finally, the current and incoming AE Board have been making connections with each other in preparation for upcoming tabling events and their transition meeting that will occur May 17-18 at OEA HQ where the two BODs will be working together as mentors and learners to ensure a smooth transition from one BOD to the next.

Ohio Association of Education Support Professionals (OAESP)

Over the last six months, the OAESP and ESP Advocates have continued to grow in capacity and resources. The OAESP leadership group, ESP EVA Academy, and ESP Member Ambassadors have brought new energy and creativity to OEA's statewide efforts to reflect and advance the issues important to its ESP members. The fall began with the OAESP ESP Conference and highlighted the member-to-member training skills of OEA's ESPs. During early winter, OEA staff worked with OAESP to create new landing pages for ESP members on OEA's website. In January, OAESP sponsored the first President's Summit for ESP leaders as well as initiating an online survey for ESPs statewide. In early spring, over 40 OEA members attended the NEA ESP Conference, and the group is about to launch the first round of Listening Tours in Akron and Pickerington. The group is also preparing a presentation to the OEA RA and is looking for locations for next year's OAESP Conference on October 11, 2024.

OEA Minority Leadership Training Program (MLTP)

The OEA Minority Leadership Training Program (MLTP) provides OEA members of color with the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully serve as leaders at all levels of the Association: local, district, state and national. This program includes leadership development experiences and support throughout the year to develop each participant's ability to match their leadership interests with leadership opportunities to positively impact OEA's growth as an inclusive and diverse organization.

To that end, OEA president, Scott DiMauro, selected an OEA Planning Committee to guide the program and provided them with a committee charge that includes the following objectives:

- Develop a system to identify, train, and support new MLTP trainers.
- Evaluate NEA resources related to its MLTP and determine the most appropriate resources to utilize in OEA's MLTP.
- Set participation goals and involve committee members in recruitment and support of new program participants.
- Establish goals for the program and monitor its success over time.

The following OEA members currently serve on the OEA MLTP Planning Committee:

- Joyce Coney-Lacy – Co-chair, Leshun Ship Collins – Co-chair, Adrienne Bowden - OEA Board Liaison, Linda Aguinaga, Checole Andrews, M.J. Burkett, Courtney Coman, Deloris Rome-Hudson – OEA Board Liaison, and Alice Sneed – OEA Board Liaison

To train and support new OEA MLTP Trainers, the OEA MLTP Planning Committee established an OEA MLTP Training Cadre. The following OEA members currently serve on the OEA MLTP Training Cadre:

- Checole Andrews, Crystal Boyd Funderburk, Leshun Ship Collins, Carol Correthers, Deloris Rome Hudson, Deborah Jackson, Lisa Johnson, Linna Jordan, Doris Moore, Alice Sneed, and Merele Wilder

On June 9-10, 2023, the first in-person (post-COVID-19 Pandemic) OEA MLTP took place at the Marriott Columbus/OSU. This was also the first in-person training under the current OEA MLTP Planning Committee and the new OEA MLTP Training Cadre. This training had a high rate of in-person attendance (56 registrants, 5 cancelations, and 8 no-shows). Almost half of the registrants were from NEOEA. The 2023 program also saw the most first-time attendees: (19).

After the June 2023 OEA Minority Leadership Training Program, the OEA MLTP Planning Committee met (in person and virtual) to debrief and plan the 2024 program. Staff from the National Education Association Center for Racial and Social Justice (CRSJ)/Human and Civil Rights (HCR) continued to support the growth and development of OEA's MLTP by inviting the OEA MLTP Training Cadre to co-train with the NEA National MLT trainers at the NEA Minority Leadership Training/Women's Leadership Training – West Seminar in San Francisco, CA, where the following OEA MLTP Training Cadre members served as co-trainers in December 2023:

- Checole Andrews, Crystal Boyd Funderburk, Leshun Ship Collins, Carol Correthers, Deloris Rome Hudson, Doris Moore, Alice Sneed, and Merele Wilder

In January 2024, the following OEA MLTP Training Cadre members served as co-trainers at the NEA Minority Leadership Training/Women's Leadership Training – East Seminar in Baltimore, MD:

- Crystal Boyd Funderburk, Leshun Ship Collins, Carol Correthers, Deloris Rome Hudson, Deborah Jackson, Doris Moore, Alice Sneed, and Merele Wilder

In preparation for the 2024 OEA MLTP scheduled for May 17-18, 2024, at the Renaissance Columbus Westerville-Polaris Hotel, the OEA MLTP Planning Committee selected *No More. Know More. Do More.* as the conference theme. The following NEA MLT modules were selected for the 2024 training:

- Advanced Running for Office
- Conducting a Meeting Using Parliamentary Procedures
- Confronting the Rise of White Nationalism in Public Schools
- Message Development for Public Education Advocates
- Racial Justice 101
- Understanding the Association

The OEA MLTP training cadre will facilitate the training for all modules except for *Confronting the Rise of White Nationalism in Public Schools* – This module will be facilitated by NEA National MLT trainers. Additionally, the planning committee has invited Hasan Kwame Jeffries, PhD, Associate Professor (Department of History), The Ohio State University, to serve as the keynote speaker for the MLTP Dinner.

Currently, 46 participants are registered for the 2024 program and 12 OEA MLTP Planning Committee Members and/or Training Cadre members are registered. The goal is to have 50 participants (not including the MLTP Planning Committee and MLTP Training Cadre).

The OEA MLTP Staff Liaison continues to support the work of the OEA MLTP Planning Committee and OEA MLTP Training Cadre. This support has included working with OEA's Conference Coordinator to select the training venue. Working with NEA staff to obtain training materials and arrange for the training cadre to participate in the NEA Minority Leadership Training/Women's Leadership Training–WEST/EAST. The OEA MLTP Staff Liaison has also assisted with program registration, meeting logistics, program promotion, and other operational training and event coordination tasks.

OEA-Retired (OEA-R)

OEA-Retired continued this year with the theme R.E.V. Up – OEA-R. R.E.V. stands for relevant, engaged, and visible. Our goals are to make OEA-R relevant to both our retired members and active members, to engage more of our members in OEA-R activities, and to be more visible within the OEA organization and our communities.

OEA-R has created teams for each district that are responsible for engaging current and potential members in their areas. The membership drive targets two groups, those within five years of retirement and those who have retired in the last few years. OEA-R representatives have been assigned to the Leadership Councils across the state to develop relationships with our active leaders, and to make sure that all our members understand the role of OEA-R and to promote membership. Additionally, we have committed to having several OEA-R members present at each STRS Board meeting and getting more information about retirement issues out to our members.

OEA-R continues to strive to offer quality programming and events for retired and active members. The Racial and Social Justice Committee has hosted book discussions since September 2023 and trainings focusing on justice, equity, and belonging. Also, this year OEA-Retired will host its first Lobby Day dedicated solely to retired members and issues that impact retirement.

OEA-Retired members continue the tradition of advocating for public education and retired members and their efforts have been recognized on the state and national level. We look forward to 2024-2025 to continue the work.