



Fall 2005

The OAPMRDD

Newsline

Ohio Association of Professionals for the Mentally Retarded/Developmentally Disabled
An Affiliated Department of the Ohio Education Association

MR/DD At-Large Seat on OEA Executive Committee would represent issues important to members

Your OAPMR/DD officers and leaders request your support for an MR/DD At-Large Seat for the OEA Executive Committee/Board of Directors. There will be a vote on the issue, as "New Business Item #5," at this December's OEA Representative Assembly.

Last spring, the RA defeated a motion to change OEA's Constitution and Bylaws, which included the creation of an MR/DD At-Large Seat. For this December's vote, OEA's Constitution and Bylaws Committee divided the defeated packet into several pieces. Item #5 specifically clarifies the

number of at-large seats on the Executive Committee/Board of Directors, and adds At-Large representation on the committee/board for MR/DD members.

MR/DD members face challenges in Ohio that are different from traditional K-12 OEA members. Currently, there is only one Unit seat on the OEA Executive Committee that represents MR/DDs specifically. That is Unit 10 out of NEOEA, which is the only District that has a specific seat both within the district and at OEA. MR/DD issues need state-wide representation.

County Boards of MR/DD provide different services throughout the state and it makes great sense that there should be an MR/DD at-large seat similar to the other at-large seats that currently exist on the OEA Executive Committee. Therefore, we urge you to support Item #5.

By the time you read this, your local should have held the election for your RA delegates and we hope all of your delegates will attend the RA. If you are not a delegate yourself please contact your OEA RA delegate and request that he/she support this proposal.

Vote Yes on Issues 2, 3, 4 and 5 on November 8th

A YES vote on Issues 2, 3, 4 and 5 will help all Ohioans gain the basic principle of democracy: one person, one vote. OEA supports these issues.

- **Issue 2: Early Voting.** Makes it easier to vote by allowing all Ohioans to vote by mail. Voter would not be required to state a reason to vote by absentee ballot.
- **Issue 3: Reform of Campaign Finance Laws.** Helps stop the influence of big money in elections by greatly reducing campaign contributions.
- **Issue 4: Redistricting & Reapportionment.** Stops the politicians from drawing their own legislative districts and puts an Independent Commission in charge of this process.
- **Issue 5: Modern and Equitable Election System.** Places a bipartisan Board of Supervisors in charge of Ohio's elections, instead of a partisan official who backs candidates and takes sides in elections.

All are welcome to the next OAPMR/DD Executive Committee meeting:

**Saturday
November 19th, 2005
10:30 am - 12:30 pm**

Hudson UniServ Office
591 Boston Mills Road
Hudson, Ohio
800/654-4034
330/929-2882



Conference to expand in '06

The 2006 OAPMR/DD Annual Conference will be held March 3rd - 4th at Mohican State Park Lodge. Previous attendees will find many of the familiar activities they look forward to at this conference. Friday night will feature Gary Allen, OEA President, as the keynote speaker. There will also be a legislative update from Melissa Clark, OEA Lobbyist, and an FCPE drive. And, of course, there will be a social hour as well.



Saturday morning will feature conference favorites Kathy McKinley, OEA Plan attorney, and Linda Lewis-Day from ODMR/DD. Topics being pursued for the afternoon include mediation, bargaining hot topics, and sharing effective contract language. The cyberlobbying display will be available for members to contact their legislators on issues critical to education.

There may be even more attendees than usual, as the OEA ESP group has decided to join in this year. They will join OAPMR/DD Friday night and Saturday morning for Kathy McKinley, then plan their own breakout sessions that will be relevant to their members.

Postcards reminding you to "save the date" will go out before Thanksgiving, with registration materials arriving near the end of December.

Russ O'Brien
OAPMR/DD Chairperson

Ohio Supreme Court Rules Employee's Address is Private

On September 7th, a unanimous Ohio Supreme Court said that home addresses of public employees are not public records. The justices said home addresses generally are not public because they do not document the activity and functions of public agencies, the definition of a record. Home addresses serve no purpose to the public to be able to evaluate the work of a public agency and can therefore be shielded.

OEA was involved in this legal battle to keep the home addresses of employees from being part of the public record.

OAPMR/DD 2005-2006 Calendar

Executive Committee Meetings - open to all members!

- November 19th, 2005
- January 21st, 2006
- May 13th, 2005

Lunch Mixer at OEA Rep Assemblies - all MR/DD delegates welcome; lunch provided at local restaurant.

- December 3rd, 2005
- May 5th - 6th, 2006

Annual MR/DD Issues Conference - watch for upcoming notices.

- March 3rd - 4th, 2006



The OAPMRDD Newsline

Newsletter of the Ohio Association of Professionals for the Mentally Retarded/Developmentally Disabled

Editor: Gloria Stansberry
Associate Editor: Jené Wilson
OEA MR/DD Liaison: Bob Matkowski

Send inquiries to Russ O'Brien, phone: 330/678-3170 or e-mail: MisterO4@aol.com and/or Jené Wilson, phone: 440/449-1597 or e-mail: Jene@mac.com. *The OAPMRDD Newsline* is published quarterly by OAPMR/DD, an affiliated department of the Ohio Education Association, and is distributed to all OAPMR/DD members. For membership information contact Joe McCrone, 4431 West 210th St., Fairview Park, OH 44126, 216/344-1703.



OAPMR/DD to offer PR grants again this year

The Ohio Association of Professionals for MR/DD will be offering public relations grants again this year.

The PR Grant program is designed to support local associations in developing programs to reinforce the professional image of the MR/DD employee, and to enhance the image of education, work and life skills development for the developmentally disabled. The amount of the local's grant depends on the proposal, but is limited to \$500.

The OAPMR/DD Executive Committee will review grant applications in November. Please review the grant requirements:

- Application deadline is October 31, 2005.

- Elect delegates to the Fall and Spring OEA Representative Assemblies. Delegates must attend and vote at all assemblies.
- Send members to the annual OAPMR/DD conference.
- Send a representative to at least three OAPMR/DD Executive Committee meetings.
- Submit an article about your project to the OAPMR/DD *Newsline*.
- Grant money must be used for the benefit of your local membership.
- Submit financial statement with receipts by August 1, 2006.
- Completion deadline is September 2006.

Grant applications were

mailed to all MR/DD presidents in early September. If you would like to apply, see your president or contact OAPMR/DD Chairperson Russ O'Brien at MisterO4@aol.com.

Russ O'Brien
OAPMR/DD Chairperson

Three counties, three different successful projects

The Ohio Association of Professionals for the MR/DD has been awarding public relations grants for the past three years. For the 2004-05 year we awarded three grants. They went to ACCESS - Cuyahoga County MR/DD, WWSA - Summit County MR/DD, and COPE - Franklin County MR/DD.

The COPE grant was used for a member recognition program. COPE had a member appreciation breakfast last fall and luncheon during American Education Week. The purpose of both events was to show appreciation to members for the wonderful work they do with students. A newsletter was also developed and included articles featuring both staff and students.

The grant that was awarded to WWSA was used to assist a Summit County client with the expenses to participate in The International Special Olympics. Money needed to be raised to pay for a training session in Colorado Springs, CO, and the trip to Nagano, Japan. WWSA used the grant money plus \$500 from their treasury for a total donation of \$1000. We were told the athlete did very well and had a great time.

Details of the grant awarded to ACCESS are in an article on page four of this issue of *The Newsline*.

The OAPMR/DD grants have been given for a variety of purposes. Your local can apply. Visit oapmrdd.org for more information.

Russ O'Brien
OAPMR/DD Chairperson



Columbiana County aims to boost OAPMR/DD membership

The Columbiana County MR/DD Employee's Association is working to increase its membership in OAPMR/DD.

In September, OAPMR/DD officers, Chairperson Russ O'Brien and Secretary Sue Bour, attended Columbiana County's general membership meeting. Russ explained the benefits of OAPMR/DD membership, including our new membership incentive program, where any local newly reaching 100% OAPMR/DD membership receives a plaque and \$150. The top three locals with the largest increases receive \$100, \$75 and \$50 respectively.

Locals that have achieved and maintained 100% membership receive a plaque.

Sue Bour
OAPMR/DD Secretary





OAPMR/DD grant used to improve professional practices in Cuyahoga County

Student transitions

After a survey of staff found interest in developing a more effective way of transitioning students—between classrooms, to Adult Services, or to their local public school—the Association of Cuyahoga County Employees for Special Students (ACCESS) reenergized our Professional Practices Committee with a charge to improve the transition process.

A year of work produced a transition form and procedure that was piloted in three classrooms in the spring, and feedback from the sending and receiving teachers has been very positive. The transition

form will be made available to the rest of the staff this year.

Taking care of staff

The research on best practice in transitions also indicated that it was important to take care of staff when making changes or adding duties. Therefore, ACCESS launched a program of supports to help reduce stress and increase fun at work.

The first activity last year was a speaker who combined laughter and tai chi. Staff also received a bag of treats and symbolic items to get them thinking about the upcoming school year.

This year, staff members were

treated to a video on the FISH! Philosophy: how to “Play,” “Be There,” “Make Their Day,” and “Choose your Attitude” while at work.

The committee has planned short inservices on topics of interest to staff, a collaboration with the Wellness Committee to inject some healthy activities into the workplace, official nameplates outside classrooms, and ongoing events to increase the level of engagement and fun at work.

Thanks to OAPMR/DD for the grant money to help with the costs of these programs.

Jené Wilson
ACCESS President

