



Winter 2006

# The OAPMRDD

# Newsline

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

## What Can Be Done to Protect MR/DD Jobs?

As most everyone knows, the CAFS program, which provided federal funding for services including speech therapy, physical therapy and day habilitation services to both school aged children and adults, was terminated June 30, 2005.

The State submitted a plan to have some Medicaid payments provided to schools, including county MR/DD schools, at a lower



rate. This plan was rejected, costing schools \$67 million dollars in lost revenues. The State is working to appeal this decision.

OEA testified at a public hearing on December 19, 2005, to ensure that county Boards of MR/DD are included as one of the providers for day activities for individuals who live in ICF/MR facilities.

It is important to contact your state representatives and senators regarding the importance of this necessary resource for providing services to the MR/DD population throughout the state.

You can contact your state representative through [www.house.state.oh.us/jsps/representatives.jsp](http://www.house.state.oh.us/jsps/representatives.jsp) or [www.senate.state.oh.us/senators](http://www.senate.state.oh.us/senators).

Bob Matkowski, LRC  
OEA Liaison

## Bargaining Issues for MR/DDs

With an increased emphasis on waivers and providing individuals the opportunity to secure services outside of the county MR/DD Programs, local Associations should secure language that places restrictions on the ability of county Boards to conduct any RIFs, at least while the appeals are ongoing concerning the replacement of lost CAFS funding.

Local Associations must also encourage County Boards to ensure that Support Service Administrators (SSAs) have extensive information about the success and cost effectiveness of County MR/DD services.

Bob Matkowski, LRC  
OEA Liaison

## Revisiting the Bill of Rights for People with Disabilities in Ohio

For nearly 20 years now, it's been the legal responsibility of service providers in Ohio to ensure the rights of people with disabilities. Those rights are written into Ohio law as the "bill of rights for persons with mental retardation or a developmental disability," (Ohio Revised Code Section 5123.62), and the "legalese" can be difficult to understand.

A newly revised resource is now available to help make the challenging language of the Ohio Revised Code understandable to more people. Cuyahoga County Board of MR/DD has created a format

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

**Saturday**  
**January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2006**  
**10:30 am - 12:30 pm**

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





## MR/DD Seat on OEA Exec Committee Fails, OAPMR/DD Gains Input for Committee Recommendations

Several proposed changes to the OEA Constitution and Bylaws were debated and voted on at the OEA Representative Assembly held December 3<sup>rd</sup> in Columbus.

Two of the proposals were of particular interest to MR/DD members. One of them would have established an at-large seat for MR/DD members on the OEA Executive Committee. Another proposal would allow the OAPMR/DD president to recommend members to the OEA president for consideration to be appointed to OEA committees.

To the great disappointment of MR/DD members, the first proposal failed. The objections cited during the debate centered on additional cost, the fact that students traditionally served in MR/DD

settings are now going to public schools and the pool of MR/DD members is shrinking, and that other Executive Committee members should be able to represent MR/DD members and, therefore, the seat would be redundant.

MR/DD members in attendance pointed out that while there are many similarities between the needs in regular education and MR/DD, there are enough differences to warrant a representative who would be able to advocate knowledgeably for MR/DD issues.

The second proposal did pass, which means that the OEA president will have a pool of MR/DD members to choose from when filling committee posts. This opens opportunities for more MR/DD members to be involved on the

state level to help the rest of the organization understand our issues and to ensure that they are attended to.

Jené Wilson  
OAPMR/DD Vice-Chairperson

## Bill of Rights with Simplified Language and Pictures

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that lists each of the 24 rights alongside the same rights written in more simplified terms. A set of pictures is also included for each right for people who benefit from a more visual representation.

The new format has already been used successfully throughout the state. To receive a copy of the "Rights of Individuals with Disabilities" that includes simplified language and pictures, contact Gloria Stansberry, [stansberry@cgbmrdd.org](mailto:stansberry@cgbmrdd.org).

Gloria Stansberry  
The OAPMR/DD Newslite editor

### OAPMR/DD 2006 Calendar

*Executive Committee Meetings - open to all members!*

- January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2006
- May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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

- May 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup>, 2006

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

- March 3<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup>, 2006



## The OAPMRDD Newslite

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

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## Annual Leadership Conference to Join Two Groups

A new format is in the planning stages for the 2006 OAPMR/DD Annual Leadership Conference. We think all attending will be very pleased with the changes. The conference will be March 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>, 2006, and will return to Mohican State Park Lodge.

The Ohio Association of Professionals for MR/DD will be combining efforts with the Ohio Association of ESPs. The OAESPs have recently become a department of OEA and since the OAPMR/DD and OEASP share many interests, we felt it would be logical to have one conference for both groups.

The Friday evening session will be a combined meeting of both groups. OEA President Gary Allen will be the keynote speaker. An FCPE drive will also be conducted.

Concurrent sessions will be held during the two Saturday morning time slots. One series of sessions will be aimed at MR/DD interests and the other for ESPs. During the first time slot, Linda Lewis Day, ODMR/DD Deputy

Director, will give an update on what is happening at the state department of MR/DD. Also presenting will be NEA Director Debbie Minnic on the topic, "Negotiating a Living Wage." Kathy McKinley, OEA attorney, will speak during the second time slot about current court decisions affecting MR/DD members. Also scheduled for the second morning session is Lydia Garcia, NEA staff member, discussing, "Recruiting and Maintaining

Members."

After lunch there will be a business meeting for MR/DD attendees and a social hour for ESPs.

The final presentation, scheduled for Saturday afternoon, will be on the FISH! Philosophy. This program will be for the combined groups.

Registration information will be in the mail January 2006. Mark your calendars.

Russ O'Brien  
OAPMR/DD Chairperson

### Tentative Conference Schedule

- |          |  |   |
|----------|--|---|
| Friday   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ OEA President, Gary Allen</li> <li>■ FCPE Fund Drive</li> </ul>   |   |
| Saturday | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ ODMR/DD Update</li> <li>■ Legal Update</li> <li>■ OAPMR/DD Business Meeting/ESP Social Hour</li> <li>■ FISH! Philosophy Presentation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Living Wage</li> <li>■ Recruiting &amp; Maintaining Members</li> </ul> |

Throughout the event: OEA Cyber-lobbying display, NEA Member Benefits, and door prizes.



## Congratulations to OAPMR/DD Grant Recipients

OAPMR/DD approved three Public Relations Grant Applications for 2005-06. The purpose of the grants is to help local associations fund activities that they would not be able to afford on their own.

The first grant approved was for Cuyahoga County for a continuation of activities that began several years ago. The program is two-fold: the first is a transition program that allows for a consistent procedure when students are transitioned into new environments; the second is a recognition program to support and celebrate the hard work of members.

The second grant approved was for Marimor Education Association. They are going to begin a public relations program that will inform the community

and parents how important the MEA is to their children. They will be purchasing books with MEA mentioned as donors of the books, create groups that meet after school to promote literacy activities, and also purchase shirts with an MEA embroidered logo.

The last grant was for Stark County to begin publishing a newsletter. They will be purchasing a computer and publishing software for members to write and edit the newsletter. It is their feeling that the newsletter will keep members informed about local issues. Congratulations to all the grant recipients. We look forward to hearing about the results of your projects in upcoming Local Focus articles in *The Newsliner*.

Russ O'Brien  
OAPMR/DD Chairperson



### What an offer! What an opportunity to be involved!

Would you like something that will help with your job as Association leader and keep your membership informed?

OAPMR/DD is offering to help reimburse the cost of sending a delegate to an OAPMR/DD Executive Committee meeting.



As you already know, OAPMR/DD has become much more active over the past several years. The appointment of an OEA staff liaison and lobbyist has helped us in more ways than can be mentioned. The regular newsletter, *The Newslines*, has improved communication. Attendance at the Annual Issues Conference has steadily increased each year. Membership has also increased, allowing us to make you the following offer.

In order to help locals pay expenses for traveling to OAPMR/DD Executive Committee meet-

ings, we will reimburse the local for any first-time delegate to Executive Committee. The reimbursement includes a \$100 stipend and mileage reimbursement.

Executive Committee meetings are currently scheduled five times a year, all Saturday mornings, at the Hudson UniServ office. It is very important that as many associations as possible participate at the Executive Committee level.

If you have questions, call 330/678-3170 or e-mail [MisterO4@aol.com](mailto:MisterO4@aol.com). See you at the next meeting.

Russ O'Brien  
OAPMR/DD Chairperson

