

Ohio School Boards Association

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Gov. DeWine among the speakers at mental health/social-emotional learning summit

COLUMBUS — Gov. Mike DeWine spoke before about 1,200 public education stakeholders at the Feb. 25 Mental Health and Social-Emotional Learning Summit at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. The summit was organized and hosted by the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) and nearly 20 other statewide organizations. The free daylong event was designed to help school districts better serve their students' mental health and social-emotional learning needs.

DeWine pledged to support more state Student Wellness and Success program funding in the next biennial budget. He told the educators he would not sign a budget that did not include that funding. The current biennial budget is providing \$675 million to the program to help districts and schools support their students' academic achievement through mental health counseling, wraparound services, mentoring and after-school programs.

The summit also featured two general session speakers and 24 workshops on student mental health issues and social-emotional learning. In addition, there was a Resource Fair filled with more than 40 booths staffed by agencies that provide mental health and social-emotional learning services and programs.

The keynote speakers were Dr. Thomas G. Maridada II and Dr. Kathy McFarland. Maridada is the Jim and Susan Swartz Fellow in Christian Studies at the Harvard Divinity School at Harvard University. The former educator and superintendent previously served as president of BRIGHT New Leaders for Ohio and national director of education policy, practice and strategic initiatives for the Children's Defense Fund in Washington, D.C. McFarland is OSBA deputy chief executive and a former public school educator and principal.

Gov. DeWine among the speakers 2/2/2/2/2

“OSBA and the other organizations that put together this event are thrilled about how many public education leaders and staff members participated in the summit,” OSBA Chief Executive Officer Rick Lewis said. “The impressive turnout shows that Ohio schools have a powerful interest in promoting good mental health and strong social-emotional learning skills in their students. It also demonstrates that Ohio’s education community clearly understands how important it is to address these non-academic barriers to learning and nurture their students’ all-around well-being.”

The following groups collaborated to develop and host the summit:

- Buckeye Association of School Administrators
- National Alliance on Mental Illness Ohio
- National School Boards Association
- Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators
- Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators
- Ohio County Commissioners Association
- Ohio Department of Education
- Ohio Education Association
- Ohio Educational Service Center Association
- Ohio Federation of Teachers
- Ohio High School Athletic Association
- Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services
- Ohio School Boards Association
- Ohio School Counselors Association
- Ohio School Psychologists Association
- Ohio State University
- State of Ohio

Founded in 1955, OSBA leads the way to educational excellence by serving Ohio’s public school board members and the diverse districts they represent through superior service, unwavering advocacy and creative solutions.