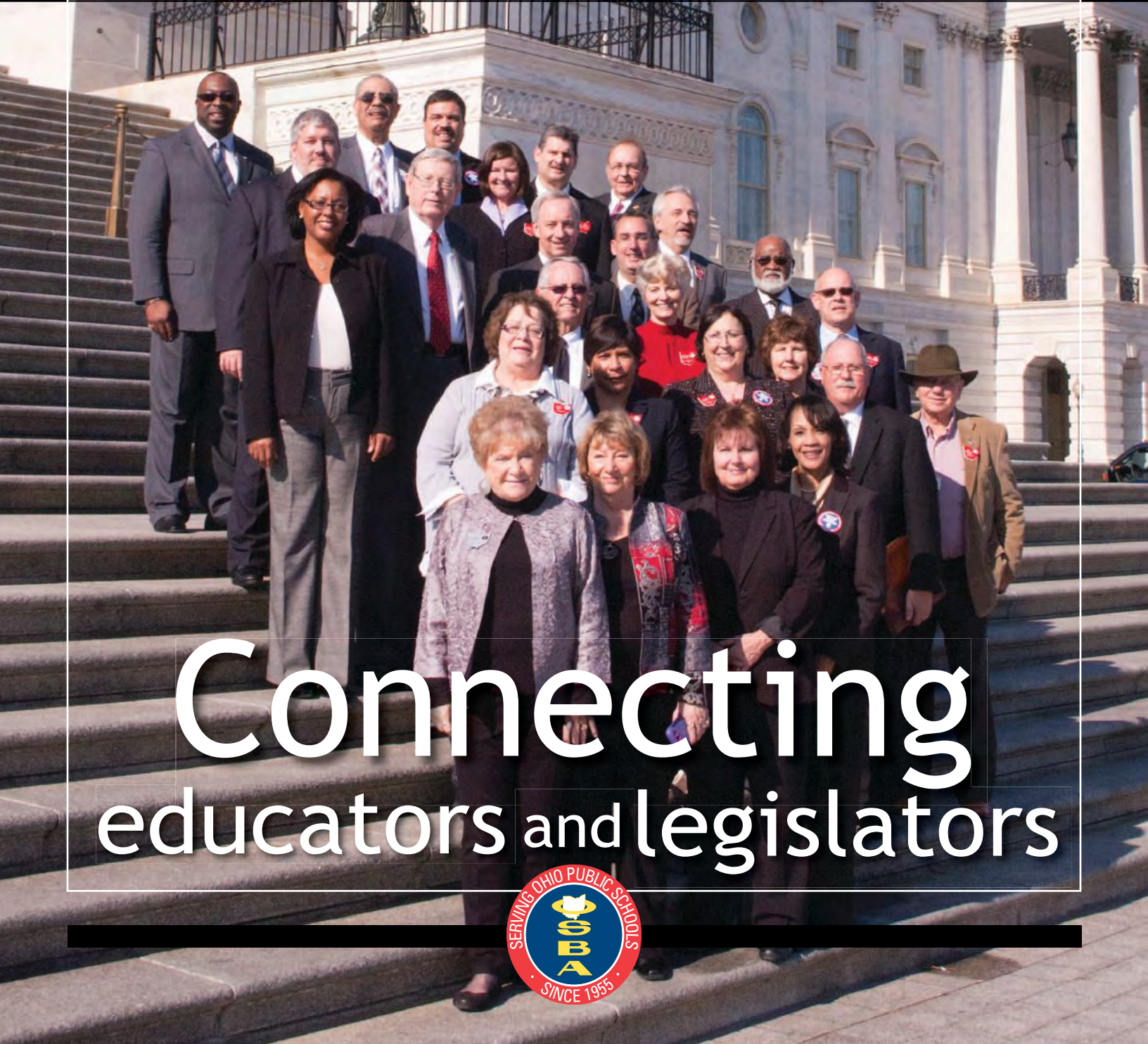


Governance issue • Students make volunteering a priority

February 2013 • Volume 57, Issue 1

JOURNAL

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Table Of Contents

JOURNAL

OHIO SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

ON THE COVER

Public education, politics, government and you, p. 16



Governance issue: Ohio's Federal Relations Network delegation stands before the Capitol during the FRN conference in January. — *photo by Jay Smith*

FEATURES

p. 12



Wilson is 2013 OSBA president 12
OSBA president's belief in public education runs deep.

Learning from the people behind the politics 30
Upper Sandusky provides political primer during election year.

Finding your 'known' to fill your school board seat 34
Succession planning can ensure strong board leadership teams.

Committed community servants 46
Northwest Ohio students make volunteering a priority.

NEWS

p. 44



Effective board member advocacy starts with you 18

BLI offers one-stop shopping for board members 42

Business Honor Roll enters third year of success 44

OSBA to be spotlighted in national event 50

DEPARTMENTS

p. 3



Executive Outlook 3

Management Insights 5

According to Law 6

Boardmanship 9

Capital Insider 10

OSBA: Working for You 37

New digital edition available!

You can access the *Journal's* new digital edition on the OSBA website at www.ohioschoolboards.org/journal.

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Mission Statement

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.

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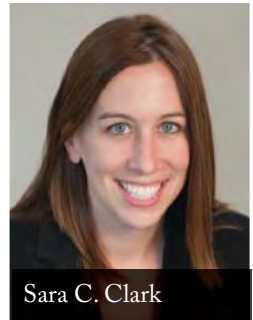
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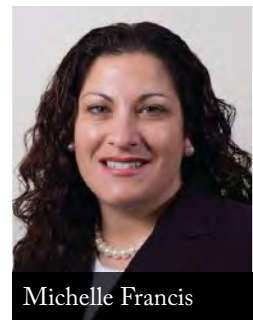
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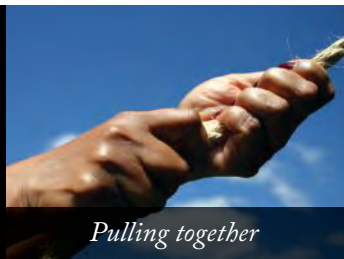


Dr. Richard J. Caster



Michelle Francis

Now is the time



Richard Lewis, CAE, executive director

“**N**ow is the time for all good men to come to the aid of the party.”

Charles E. Weller authored this phrase in 1867 as nothing more than a typing exercise.

I remember my dad rolling a blank sheet of paper into our Royal typewriter and having me type this phrase, hit the carriage return lever and type it again and again and again. It remains etched in my memory.

It's time to resurrect the phrase and bring it back into play as: “Now is the time for all good men and women to come to the aid of their *association*.” Let's take a look at some of the many ways you can provide support to OSBA.

Federal advocacy

At the 2013 National School Boards Association's (NSBA) Federal Relations Network (FRN) Conference, 27 Ohio school board members urged Congress to develop a balanced budget that protects education investments against across-the-board cuts. These cuts — known as sequestration — are scheduled to be implemented in March.

The Ohio FRN members also urged their representatives in Washington to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act; ensure adequate funding for education programs, including full funding for mandates such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and provide federal funding to strengthen school security.

FRN allows us to help shape federal

education policies, with the ultimate goal of making public education a top priority of the federal government. If you are interested in assisting NSBA and your congressional district's FRN members, please contact OSBA's legislative team. Learn more about the network on page 24.

Statewide advocacy

The 130th Ohio General Assembly has already launched into its work. The policy landscape appears to be filled with both opportunities and threats.

Gov. **John Kasich** recently unveiled his plans for changing Ohio's education and school-funding systems. Based on the initial release of information, OSBA was encouraged. The administration promised overall increases in funding for education; funds targeted to lower-wealth districts, special needs students and for equal access to early childhood education; grant funds available to help districts pursue innovative programs to maximize resources; school safety grants; relief from certain mandates; and no change from existing levels in the tangible personal property and utility tangible personal property tax replacement payments.

Upon deeper inspection, however, we are concerned about several outcomes of the proposal, including the lack of actual funding for our poorer school districts, the impact on educational service centers and the expansion of “choice” options and what impact that might have on school districts. It is still unclear exactly what is included in the school-funding plan and what the long-term effects on districts will be.

It is extremely important that OSBA members get involved in this process. Stay informed by closely following OSBA's legislative updates. Meet with your legislators regularly and let them know how their decisions will affect your district. Share proposals that will help your schools and work with them to secure their enactment. Outline the negative consequences of bad policy on your schools and be firm in your opposition to detrimental policies.

See page 18 for more on how you can be an effective advocate for your schools.

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Association governance

One OSBA vision priority is that members will want to participate in our programs, activities and governance, and actively advocate for public education.

To march closer to this vision, we need member involvement and communication. Consider lending your district's perspective to the association through service on one of our many regional and state committees and task forces. If you are unable to make the commitment, please take a moment to reach out and let the association know how we may better serve you.

If you are interested in learning more about how you can shape the future of

this association or just want to share your ideas, please contact me directly at rLewis@ohioschoolboards.org. For an overview of OSBA governance, see page 28.

Local board succession planning

Finally, if your term of office is coming to a close and you will not be returning to the board, please accept the thanks of a grateful association for your leadership. However, one assignment remains.

The final test of a leader is that he or she inspires in others the conviction to carry on. Please reach out to those who share your passion for public education — those who will carry the baton in the next leg of the race.

Challenging days lie ahead for all of us, and only with strong board leadership teams can we keep public education successful and school boards relevant. For some tips on ways to recruit like-minded board candidates, see page 34.

The Ohio School Boards Association needs your help. Public education needs your help. Your voice, your advocacy, must be heard loud and clear. The more voices we can add to that chorus, the stronger our influence on behalf of public education will be.

And, remember: *now* is the time to come to the aid of your association. ■

OSBA leader awarded top honor by NSBA

Bryan Bullock, assistant editor

Richard Lewis has spent nearly three decades in Ohio working to advance the cause of public education, support local school boards and improve the lives of schoolchildren.

In January, the National School Boards Association (NSBA) recognized Lewis for his outstanding commitment to leadership in public education. The OSBA executive director was honored with the 2013 Thomas A. Shannon Award for Excellence during NSBA's Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C.

The award, established in 1997 in honor of former NSBA Executive



OSBA Executive Director Richard Lewis accepts the Thomas A. Shannon Award for Excellence on Jan. 26.

Director **Thomas A. Shannon**, is given annually to recognize extraordinary efforts performed on behalf of NSBA, local school board constituencies and school communities. The award is the highest honor bestowed by NSBA; the winner is selected by NSBA from a group of highly qualified candidates from across the country.

"Rick Lewis is the quintessential executive director," said NSBA Executive Director **Thomas J. Gentzel**. "Rick combines extraordinary ability, a broad base of knowledge and experience, and last but not least, a wonderful sense of humor. He has a disarming way of making a point and helping others to think in new ways.

"He is an effective leader because when he speaks, he actually has something important to say, and when he moves on an issue, he knows where he is going. His selection as recipient of the Shannon Award is very well deserved."

Lewis has contributed greatly to the success of OSBA. During his tenure as executive director, he has overseen the association as it expanded services and transformed to meet the needs of members in the digital era. Lewis' leadership at OSBA has helped thousands of Ohio school board members reach their goals and improve the services they provide their students and schools.

Lewis joined OSBA in 1984 as a labor relations specialist. He also has served as OSBA's deputy executive director, director of communication and information services, director of labor relations and management services, business and marketing manager and policy specialist. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees in business administration from Ohio University.

Please join OSBA staff in congratulating Lewis on receiving NSBA's 2013 Thomas A. Shannon Award for Excellence. ■

New offerings from management services

Van D. Keating, director of management services

As 2013 gets into full swing, school districts have several important issues confronting them.

Some are old, such as finances. Others, like the teacher evaluation system, are new. There also are slow-developing issues, such as shared services.

The management services division continually tries to keep pace with school district needs, and I'd like to outline some of our new offerings that may help with these issues.

When you consider an old problem, like finances, one way to improve your economic picture is to simply be more efficient at what you do. Efficiency saves time and money, and has become the mantra for transportation.

OSBA hired **Pete Japikse**, formerly the Ohio Department of Education's (ODE) pupil transportation director, as a senior transportation consultant. Since starting in the fall, Japikse has been inundated with work in a variety of areas. Efficiency studies, shared transportation services and routing analyses are in immediate demand.

With his extensive experience in school transportation, Japikse is a knowledgeable resource for members. To learn more about Japikse and what he brings to OSBA, see "Driving forward with new transportation service" on page 37.

Newer issues, like the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES), are not as easily addressed because expertise can be in short supply. You often have to create your own experts, which is what the

management services division did. This new evaluation system created an immediate demand on our policy services staff to create new board policies.

To meet this demand, the staff increased its knowledge and understanding of how the new system works and what it requires. OSBA developed sample policies as soon as ODE released its model policy. Since then, other recent legislative enactments have required OSBA to make changes as well.

Nothing stays the same in the public education arena; the challenges just keep coming.

A byproduct of that policy work is our ability to discuss and present on this topic, and we began offering seminars in the fall. We will continue to conduct these seminars for the foreseeable future.

Another new topic for us to address is the impending Affordable Care Act (ACA), which will have major implications for health insurance benefits provided by school districts.

We also have been quietly working on expanding our expertise in another new area: employee handbooks. Handbooks are an important — and often overlooked — aspect of district governance. Handbooks must be kept up-to-date and consistent with board policies, collective bargaining agreements and other governing

documents, rules and regulations. Inconsistencies and old language create discrepancies that can lead to costly grievances or court cases.

We approach handbooks with a combined policy/employee relations background and can revise existing handbooks, or draft entirely new ones, and place them online. This searchable format is familiar to users of our policy services. We are offering this service as a stand-alone project or in combination with board policy services.

School security also is a high-priority issue and OSBA has a variety of resources available to assist school districts as they review and revise their plans. Some questions — such as policy implications, collective bargaining concerns and specialized transportation issues — all fall within the management services division. Employee security also is closely related to employee safety, and workers' compensation often can enter into the picture. This is another area our division works in. We also are collaborating with other OSBA divisions as they offer expanded and comprehensive security services and seminars.

Nothing stays the same in the public education arena; the challenges just keep coming. To help members keep abreast of the never-ending changes, the management services division is always looking ahead to provide programs and services school districts need.

So, feel free to give us a call or email us to find out what *your* association can do for you. You've got challenges, OSBA has solutions. ■



Legal bytes – current hot topics in cyberlaw

Sara C. Clark, deputy director of legal services

One of the things I enjoy most about working in school law is that the job is never boring. The law is *constantly* changing and nowhere is that more apparent than in the area of technology.

The rapid speed of technological change means that laws and policies governing technology are out-of-date almost immediately after their passage, leaving even the most adept school districts struggling to handle issues that arise.

Let's take a look at a few of the "hottest" topics in this area, with suggestions for what school districts can do to stay ahead of the game.

Fired over Facebook

Just before the holidays, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) answered a question facing a growing number of employees: When can your Facebook posts get you fired?

The case — *Hispanics United of Buffalo* — started in 2010, when an employee named **Marianna Cole-Rivera** posted a comment on Facebook from her home computer. In the post, Cole-Rivera complained about one of her coworkers, who had accused her fellow employees of not helping their clients enough. Four other off-duty employees responded to the post from their personal computers, generally objecting to the assertion that their work performance was substandard. The following workday, the employer fired all five employees, alleging their off-the-clock comments had violated the employer's anti-harassment policy.

In addressing the case, NLRB applied

the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), which generally establishes workers' rights to take collective action to improve their working conditions. This action is called "concerted activity" under NLRA. In analyzing whether activity is "concerted," NLRB typically examines whether other employees engaged in the activity, or whether it was solely by or on behalf of the employee. To be protected under NLRA, the content of the speech also must concern the terms and conditions of employment.

In this case, NLRB held that the terminations were unlawful because the employees' comments were the first step toward taking action against accusations about their performance that they believed the employee would make to management. NLRB found that the Facebook postings were concerted and protected, and because the employer discharged the employees based solely on their postings, NLRB found that the firings violated NLRA. NLRB wrote that by commenting on her Facebook post, "Cole-Rivera's four coworkers made common cause with her," and that "there should be no question that the activity engaged in by the five employees" fell under the labor law's protection.

The case confirms NLRB's position that social media comments will be analyzed in the same way that traditional oral statements have been evaluated. Moreover, NLRB's conclusion that the specific comments were "protected conduct" shows that the current NLRB is inclined to protect comments if they can possibly be construed as a first step toward group activity, regardless of

whether a union is involved.

The case serves as an important reminder to school districts to be cautious when considering discipline or discharge over employee comments made on social media. In addition, school districts should ensure that any social media policies in place are carefully drafted so they are not so broad as to prohibit employees from engaging in protected activity.

Storing data on 'the cloud'

The U.S. Department of Education's (DOE) Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) recently issued a frequently asked question (FAQ) document on the increasingly popular topic of using cloud storage for electronic data. Cloud computing typically involves using a network of remote servers hosted on the Internet to store data (rather than storing them on a local server or personal computer). Many districts are using cloud technology to store electronic data, such as student records.

PTAC was established by DOE as a "one-stop" resource for education stakeholders to learn about data privacy, confidentiality and security practices related to student-level longitudinal data systems. The FAQ document contains responses to questions about meeting necessary data privacy and data security requirements — including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) — and provides a short list of best-practice resources to ensure the proper protection of education records.

The FAQ document makes it clear that FERPA does not prohibit the use

of cloud computing solutions to host education records. FERPA permits a school district to disclose, without prior written consent, personally identifiable information from education records to a contractor, consultant, volunteer or other party if the school district meets certain conditions.

This exception to the requirement of consent in FERPA is often known as the “school official” exception and requires, among other things, that the school district maintain “direct control” over the use and maintenance of personally identifiable information from education records. To maintain this control, the FAQ document suggests that schools make clear in their service agreements or contracts that the outside party may not use or allow access to personally identifiable information from education records, except in accordance with the requirements established by the school district that initially disclosed the information.

The FAQ document also suggests that school districts use reasonable methods to ensure the security of their information technology (IT) solutions, including conducting a careful risk-management assessment before deciding whether this new technology is right for them. Some important considerations, according to PTAC, include:

- whether the cloud solution provides an appropriate level of security, such as firewalls, security monitoring and patch management procedures;
- whether the district needs to update its policies and procedures on record storage to accommodate the new system;
- how the district will exercise and manage control over the access and use of data;
- whether storing data on the cloud will interfere with the district’s ability to provide parents and eligible students with access to their records, as is required under FERPA.

A copy of the FAQ document is available online at <http://links.ohio>


schoolboards.org/54535. Schools considering a cloud solution should fully investigate these issues and work to ensure their education records remain protected and secure. A district’s IT employees will be helpful in this process. There also are outside technology

consultants and companies that can assist with this transition if the district needs additional support.

Board members’ use of social media
For the past decade, the public’s use of social media continues to rise, but

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many school board members have been reluctant to use social media, fearful of and focused on the potential negative outcomes. There are some good reasons why board members should be skeptical of social media. However, when used correctly, social media can improve communication with constituents, increase opportunities for community engagement, enhance collaboration and the exchange of ideas and increase the public's access to information.

A board member's status as a public official may make some members reluctant to dive into social media. As public officials, board members are subject to a number of standards and requirements that do not apply to regular citizens. For example, the Ohio Open Meetings Act (Ohio Revised Code (RC) 121.22) requires public bodies in Ohio to take official action and conduct all deliberations upon official business only in open meetings where the public may attend and observe.

Although neither the courts nor the attorney general have weighed in on the issue of whether social media is

governed by the Open Meetings Act, an argument could be made that if a board member posts a comment on social media about board business and a majority of the other board members respond to the post, this may constitute a "meeting" under the Open Meetings Act. A conservative approach would be to have less than a majority of your members comment on any social media post.

Public records laws also may deter some public officials from using social media. As defined in RC 149.011(G), a public "record" includes any document, device or item, regardless of physical form or characteristic, including an electronic record, created or received by or coming under the jurisdiction of any public office of the state, which serves to document the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations or other activities of the office. If the content of a board member's post or comment on social media meets this broad definition, it may constitute a record under Ohio's public records laws.

If it meets the definition of a record

and constitutes the board's official record (and not a secondary copy), the information must be retained in accordance with the board's records retention and disposition policy. To assist public entities with the challenges that accompany managing records created by social media, the Ohio Electronic Records Committee has published a document titled "Social Media: The Record Management Challenge." The document, which is available online at <http://links.ohio-schoolboards.org/75464>, serves as a resource for school districts to manage the creation, retention, disposition and preservation of social media records. School board members who use social media should review this document and ensure that they are properly managing their own social media content in compliance with Ohio's public records laws.

A final word of caution for board members interested in using social media: do not use social media to do something that you would not otherwise be able to do. For example, although it may be tempting to post photos of students at an assembly or the names of recent student award recipients, this information is likely protected student information under FERPA. Sharing employee health information or information discussed during executive session also are examples of inappropriate (and potentially illegal) posts on social media.

For more updates on technology and the law, please consider attending OSBA's annual Cyberlaw Workshop, which will take place at the OSBA office on March 15. To register, contact **Laurie Miller** at (614) 540-4000 or Lmiller@ohioschoolboards.org, or visit www.ohioschoolboards.org/cyberlaw-workshop. ■

"According to law" is designed to provide authoritative general information, sometimes with commentary. It should not be relied upon as legal advice. If legal advice is required, the services of an attorney should be obtained.

Are you currently involved in litigation that may have statewide significance?



The OSBA Legal Assistance Fund (LAF) is available to provide financial or legal assistance in matters of statewide importance to local school districts.

LAF offers direct financial assistance or other support in the form of amicus curiae briefs.

Please call OSBA at (614) 540-4000 or (800) 589-OSBA for information about your member status or to obtain an application if you have a pending matter that may meet the above description. Visit www.ohioschoolboards.org/legal-assistance-fund for more information.



Proper building, site design enhance safety

Dr. Richard J. Caster, senior school board services consultant

A challenge for every school board in Ohio is to protect not only students and staff, but the district's physical facilities, as well. Our buildings are central to the mission of ensuring the academic achievement of our students and must be safeguarded.

Constant financial struggles compound the challenge. Fortunately, there is a useful resource to help address this issue: Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

CPTED is not a new concept, but its practicality makes it an important tool for our schools. An efficient CPTED review can reveal methods and practices that bolster security but do not necessarily entail expensive purchases of hardware, such as surveillance cameras.

CPTED is the proper design and effective use of the building environment. Properly implemented, it can reduce the incidence and fear of crime, vandalism and discipline issues, as well as improve the quality of life and learning in a school. In other words, if a site is laid out well, the likelihood of it being a target for negative activity of any kind most likely will be diminished.

There are four principles associated with CPTED that promote safety:

- **Natural surveillance** — This involves designing the space to provide legitimate users good visibility and keep possible intruders under observation.
- **Territorial reinforcement** — This encourages territorial control of a space while discouraging potential offenders who can see this control and avoid it.

- **Natural access control** — This principle employs elements like doors, shrubs, fences and gates to deny offenders access to a crime target. It lets offenders know that there is a risk in selecting the target.
- **Maintenance** — Maintenance, including cleaning, repairing and landscaping, needs to be performed routinely to encourage use of the space for the intended purpose and discourage abnormal and criminal use. Maintenance sends a clear signal that someone cares about a

space and is likely to defend it against intruders or vandals.

A school can embrace these concepts and, with the proper training, put them into practice. Once implemented, these practices should significantly reduce the possibility of unwanted activity or people threatening a facility and its inhabitants.

For further information about this very effective tool, please contact the author at (614) 540-4000, (800) 589-OSBA or rcaster@ohioschoolboards.org. ■

Ohio School Boards Association
2013 Capital Conference and Trade Show
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Call for conference breakout session proposals!

The hallmark of the OSBA Capital Conference is the educational programming. Breakout sessions feature practical advice that attendees can take back to their districts. The conference offers sessions on innovative programs, cost-saving strategies, key legislation and other timely and important topics.

OSBA is now accepting proposals for breakout sessions for the 2013 Capital Conference. Proposals will be selected based on

- strong interest;
- relevance;
- creativity;
- innovation;
- proven success;
- practical, how-to information.

The deadline for proposals is 5 p.m. on March 18. Nominations must be submitted online; no paper submissions will be accepted.

Visit www.ohioschoolboards.org/nominate-a-session to submit your proposal today!



The state budget process – what you need to know

Michelle Francis, deputy director of legislative services

Are you getting goose bumps from the excitement and anticipation? Yes, it's a new year. Yes, we have a new General Assembly. And yes, we are starting a new legislative session with the biennial budget process.

However, this time we are getting a new school-funding reform proposal from Gov. **John Kasich**.

Every two years, the governor introduces his biennial budget proposal — his plan for how the state will fund various state agencies, programs and public schools. While the proposal traditionally includes appropriations and funding, it likely will include policy changes as well. The fiscal year (FY) 2014-15 biennial budget will be no different.

The highly anticipated state budget process is already under way. Kasich delivered his budget proposal for FY 2014-2015 and his new school-funding formula to the General Assembly on Feb. 4. This is the first step in the five-month state budget process.

The process and key people

The governor presents his state budget proposal in what is known as the “blue book,” so named for its blue cover. The budget document provides a way for the governor to share his ideas and priorities with the General Assembly, media and people of Ohio. The blue book includes the operating appropriations requested for state agencies, the state’s tax expenditures and other related information. It allows the administration to explain its proposals and policy agenda items while providing additional background information on each of the concepts. It is not Ohio Revised Code language or bill language.

Once the governor delivers his budget proposal, it goes to the General Assembly for consideration. Traditionally, the executive budget is introduced in bill form in the House of Representatives first, with a bill sponsored by the chair of the House Finance and Appropriations Committee. Rep. **Ron Amstutz** (R-Wooster) serves as chair of the committee, with Rep. **Jeff McClain**

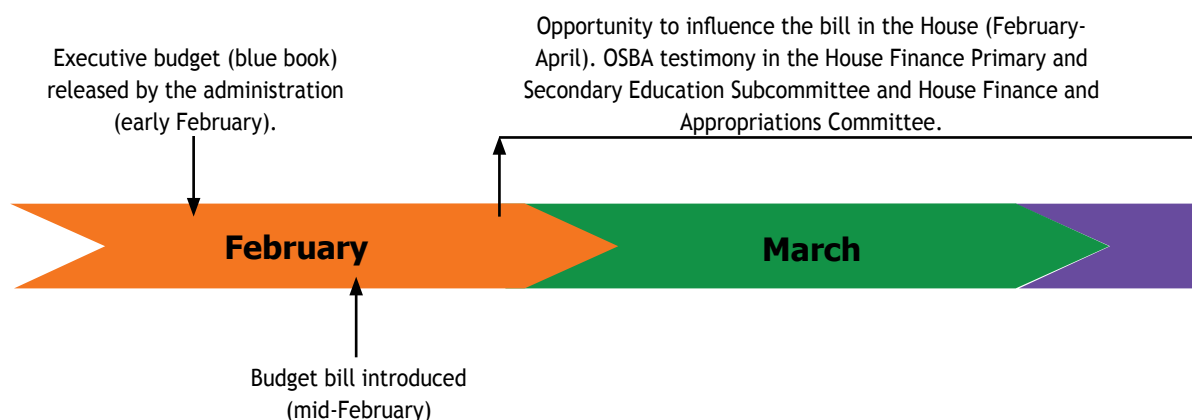
(R-Sandusky) as vice-chair and Rep. **Vernon Sykes** (D-Akron) as ranking minority member.

The full committee conducts initial hearings, then the standing subcommittees hold additional hearings on the various components. The Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee, which will hear the K-12 funding portion of the bill and the governor’s new school-funding reform plan, is chaired by Rep. **Bill Hayes** (R- Harrison Township), with Rep. **Matt Lundy** (D-Elyria) as the ranking minority member. Following the hearings and testimony, the House will introduce its version of the budget through a substitute bill. Normally, the legislation is introduced, considered and amended in the full Finance Committee before being reported out and sent to the full House for a floor vote.

After the House passes its version of the biennial budget, it is sent to the Senate for consideration. Because of the limited time available, sometimes the

Budget process time line

The budget process generally begins in February when the budget bill is introduced. It wraps up by June 30, the statutory deadline for the final budget.



Senate Finance Committee will begin hearings on the budget bill before the House completes its work. Sen. **Scott Oelslager** (R-Canton) is the chair of that panel; Sen. **Bill Coley** (R-Liberty Township) is the vice-chair and Sen. **Tom Sawyer** (D-Akron) is the ranking minority member.

Senate President **Keith Faber** (R-Celina) recently announced a new committee structure that creates a Senate Finance Subcommittee to cover education. Sen. **Randy Gardner** (R-Bowling Green) will serve as chair of the new subcommittee, with Sen. **Peggy Lehner** (R-Kettering) as vice-chair and Sen. **Nina Turner** (D-Cleveland) as the ranking minority member. The subcommittee will conduct hearings on the governor’s new school-funding formula; the full Finance Committee also may hold hearings on the plan.

After the hearings and testimony, the Senate will introduce a substitute bill, which will incorporate its changes. The substitute bills are considered and amended in the full committee, then taken to the full Senate for a vote.

If the House does not concur with the Senate changes, the bill is normally sent to the Conference Committee with representatives from both chambers. Following Conference Committee meetings, a report is prepared and submitted to both chambers. If both agree to the Conference Committee report, the bill is reviewed and signed by

the governor. It is important to note that because the budget bill is an appropriations measure, the governor has line-item veto authority and can exercise that authority before signing the bill.

Information and updates

During the biennial budget process, the OSBA legislative team will keep you up-to-date on the latest discussions and deliberations. We plan to offer webinars at each stage of the process to share information on each version of the budget. The testimony we present in the House and Senate, and any additional budget information, will be available on the OSBA BillTracker page at www.ohioschoolboards.org/budget. Weekly updates will be sent to members electronically through OSBA’s “Facts in a Flash”; more detailed, hard-copy updates will be featured in the “Legislative Report” in the *Briefcase* newsletter.

Most importantly, school board members, superintendents, treasurers and other members of the school management team should look for calls to action that will be sent electronically. Calls to action provide you with information, but also ask you to take some action based on that information, whether it’s contacting legislators or coming to the Statehouse to testify.

Advocacy

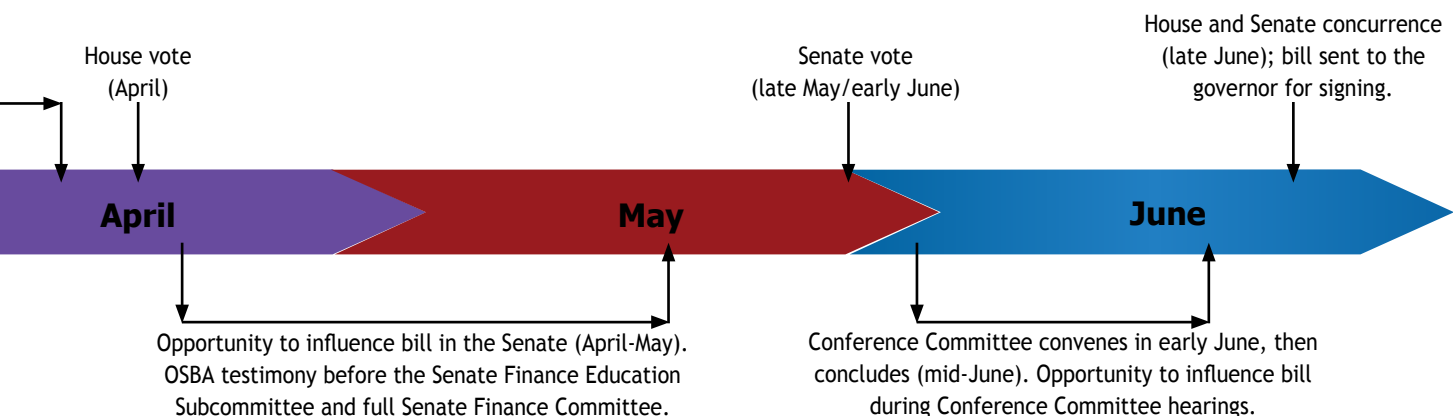
Over the next several months, General Assembly members — particularly those who serve on the House and Senate

finance committees and subcommittees — will receive a tremendous amount of information from various state agencies, lobbyists, special interest groups, think tanks and even other legislators. Lawmakers will sit through long hearings where proponents, opponents and interested parties will present testimony.

That is why it is especially important that legislators hear directly from you about issues impacting education. You are their constituents, and your House and Senate members were elected to serve and represent you. Contact them via phone calls, letters, emails and testimony in committee hearings and individual meetings with legislators.

In addition, school board members, superintendents and treasurers should plan to come together as a lobbying team to the Statehouse on March 20 for the annual State Legislative Conference. Hosted by OSBA, the Buckeye Association of School Administrators and the Ohio Association of School Business Officials, this event is your “Day at that Statehouse.” It’s a time when school districts from across the state to lobby members of the General Assembly with a collective voice and a single message in support of public schools.

The OSBA legislative team is here to serve you throughout the chaotic budget process. Please do not hesitate to contact us. ■



Wilson is 2013



OSBA President and Worthington City Board of Education member Charlie Wilson joins first-graders as they answer math questions during Wilson's visit to Slate Hill Elementary School.

OSBA president

Gary Motz,
managing editor

OSBA president's belief in public education runs deep

Chosen by his peers to lead OSBA in 2013, President **Charlie Wilson** is a powerful believer in public education. He sees it as a cornerstone of American democracy and has pledged to support it in the face of ongoing attacks.

The **Worthington City** Board of Education member took office on Jan. 1 as OSBA's 58th president. He just finished his sixth year on the Worthington board, which serves more than 9,000 students in 19 school buildings in Columbus' northern suburbs.

Wilson strongly supports OSBA, participating in an extensive range of association governance and activities. His involvement with OSBA started soon after he took his board seat in Worthington. He serves on numerous committees and holds key offices at the regional, state and national levels (see "Wilson service snapshot" on page 14.)

A five-time winner of OSBA's Award of Achievement, Wilson earned Master Board Member status — a lifetime distinction — in 2010. The awards recognize board members who enhance their leadership skills through professional development, service to OSBA and work on behalf of their own boards. He received national recognition in 2011 with the NSBA School Board Member National Recognition Program Award.

Wilson, a law professor at The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, also is active in many community and professional organizations. They include the Worthington Area Chamber of Commerce and the American Association of University Professors Executive Committee. He also serves on numerous OSU committees.

The *Journal* asked Wilson to share his thoughts on the rewards and challenges of school board service, his plans for his year as president and the value of OSBA.

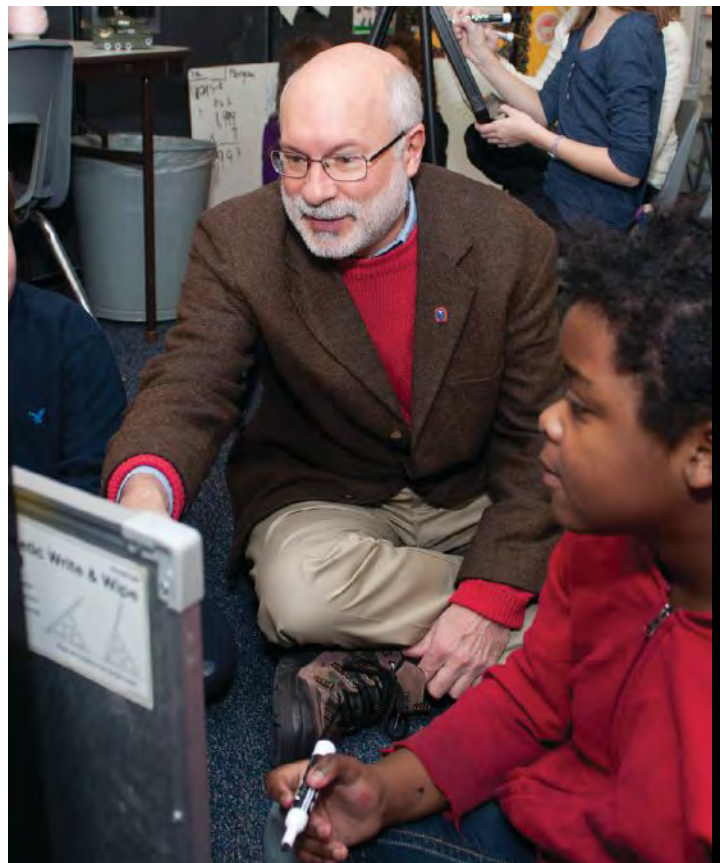
Why did you decide to serve on a public school board?

I am the product of public schools. I owe all that I have accomplished to public schools. Furthermore, several of our founders, including **Thomas Jefferson**, **Ben Franklin** and **John Adams**, wrote eloquently of the critical role of common schools to the survival of our experiment in democracy. As

I witnessed the attacks on public education, I decided that I had to do my part to assure the survival of our common public schools and, indeed, democracy itself, when there was an opening on our local school board.

What challenges has your district faced in your time on the board?

The greatest challenge has been maintaining the quality of our educational programs while enduring major cuts in state funding and experiencing major changes in the demographics of our students. In the past 10 years, we had the largest increase in free or reduced lunch students in central Ohio and one of the largest increases in the entire state. The percentage



Wilson helps a fourth-grader as she works a math problem on a "partner board."



Clay pinch pots are the lesson in this kindergarten art class. Wilson worked right along with the kids, making his own pinch pot.

of students on free or reduced lunch increased from 5% to more than 25%.

What district achievements are you most proud of?

First, the creation of the Phoenix Alternative Middle School has been especially gratifying. It was our teachers’ idea, and our school board and teachers union have been united in supporting this alternative school that has combined mastery learning with a longer school day to increase student learning.

Second, the creation of International Baccalaureate programs at Slate Hill Elementary School and Worthington Kilbourne High School are points of pride for the entire district.

Third, during my time on the school board we hired an outstanding superintendent and treasurer.

Finally, during the past election we passed a new operating levy to replace the drastic cut in state funding that was inflicted upon us, while also passing a \$40 million bond levy for maintenance and improvements in our current buildings.

What do you hope to accomplish as OSBA president?

First, I hope to help encourage all the major stakeholders in public education to work together with public school parents to build a movement to support public education in Ohio. I shall do all that I can to make sure that the Strong Schools Strong Communities initiative becomes a vigorous statewide movement that will educate Ohioans on the critical importance of public education. We must have a strong public school system if we are going to have strong communities and a strong Ohio.

Second, I want to strengthen support for local control of education by locally elected school boards. The 714 school boards that comprise OSBA are very different. One-size-fits-all edicts and mandates from either Columbus or Washington are not the path to improving the diverse communities and learning environments that make up OSBA membership. We must continue to support allowing locally elected school boards to determine what will work best for their unique communities.

Third, I want to make certain that everyone knows that, by all metrics, American public education has never been better. Our rankings and scores on international tests have never been better; our graduation rates have never been higher; and attendance rates have never been better since such data has been collected.

Wilson service snapshot

Board of education

Worthington City (six years)

Local board offices

OSBA legislative liaison (three years); OSBA student achievement liaison (three years); service on numerous board committees

OSBA Central Region offices

President (one year); president-elect (one year); immediate past president (one year); executive committee member (five years)

OSBA offices

President (currently serving one-year term); president-elect (one year); Executive Committee member (three years); Board of Trustees (five years); Legislative Platform Committee (three years); Nominating Committee (two years); Federal Relations Network (five years); Student Achievement Leadership Team (two years); Audit Committee (five years); Capital Conference Planning Task Force (four years); Board Member Cabinet (two years); Urban School

District Advisory Network (one year); Ambassadors for Education (two years); OSBA Mentor Program (one year)

National School Boards Association offices

Treasurer and director of the National School Boards Action Center (one year); 2013 Policies and Resolutions Committee (one year); Central Region Nominating Committee (one year); Prekindergarten Initiative Committee (four years)

Occupation

Law professor, The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law; chair, OSU Athletic Council; special counsel, National Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics

Education

University of Kansas, bachelor’s degree, business management and economics; New York University School of Law, juris doctorate

Family

Wife **Melonie Buller**, two children

Fourth, we must never stop improving public education. We must change the 19th century agriculture-based structure that still dictates too much of what we do in our schools. While reducing childhood poverty, we must continue to support new ways of educating students caught in poverty and in high-poverty schools. We must be certain that even our highest-poverty schools have the resources to improve student learning.

Fifth, I want it widely known that OSBA is at the forefront in promoting real, meaningful education reform. We must continue being vigilant to assure that all education reforms are based upon best practices that are based upon the best available research, data and evidence.

Sixth, I want to help all Ohioans understand that Ohio is not a random collection of isolated cities, towns and school districts. We all live in a single state. The benefits of adequately educated children are shared statewide and are not limited to a particular town or school district.

We live in a highly mobile society in which a child may be educated in the **Northern Local** School District in Perry County and, as an adult, reside in Worthington or Upper Arlington. That adult may serve or influence the town or state as an elected or appointed official, a business or civic leader, or in various other endeavors. The benefits of that citizen's public education and contributions to the community may be felt far beyond the boundaries of the educating school district. Therefore, it is basic to our collective well-being that all citizens of Ohio share in the common burden of educating our children.

Seventh, I want to make certain that our most experienced professional teachers are integrally involved in all efforts to change and reform our educational system.

Finally, I believe that if we continue to undermine the democratic ideal of a free common public school system for everyone, then we will end up with public schools that serve only the same children that are presently served by public housing. Not to mention that continuing on the current path will be the end of our democratic system of government. I hope to make certain that message is heard by everyone.

Why is OSBA membership valuable?

High-quality training and the opportunity to network and learn from other board members are the greatest benefits of OSBA membership. I find it incredibly valuable to meet and to learn from board members from all over Ohio. It has made me a much better board member.

In addition, by being an OSBA member, a district has access to all kinds of important services at a much lower cost than if the district bought the services on its own. Finally, OSBA workshops are designed to provide board members with the

latest and best information available to enhance everyone's potential. Our children deserve the best-informed and best-trained board members.



Wilson explains his role as OSBA president during a meeting of Worthington City principals. At left is Slate Hill Elementary School Principal Kenneth Pease.

How has your involvement with OSBA benefited your district?

Being active in OSBA has enabled me to learn from the best and most experienced board members in my region and in the state. If I weren't involved at the regional and state levels, I would never have this invaluable opportunity to learn from the best.

What would you say to encourage other board members to be more involved with OSBA?

Your community has entrusted you with America's most precious resource, our children. The educating of America's children is critical to their well-being, to America's well-being and to the future well-being of all of us as we age and our children take our place. Therefore, it is critical that every board member learn everything that she or he can to be a more effective board member and to enable our children to be better educated.

Studies show that effective school board members have considerable impact on the effectiveness of schools and children's learning. By getting more involved with OSBA and participating actively in association events such as the Board Leadership Institute and Capital Conference, board members can learn about the latest educational innovations that will enable our children to thrive in our globalized, "flat-world" economy.

You owe it to your district's children and their parents to get involved with your association so that you can be the best possible board member. ■



Gary Motz, *managing editor*

Whether you like it or not — and no matter what your party affiliation — the political process is something you must navigate as a public education leader. From running for re-election to a school board seat to meeting with state legislators to lobbying on Capitol Hill, politics is always at play.

As Ohio prepares to hash out a new biennial budget, politics and government are certainly at play right now.

Gov. **John Kasich** is promoting a new school-funding plan. School security and safety have taken on a new urgency. Public schools continue to face an increasing array of new regulations

and mandates. And pressure to further privatize education by expanding vouchers and charter schools is greater than ever.

In the face of these challenges, it is crucial that public education supporters everywhere advocate aggressively for Ohio's 1.8 million schoolchildren. And that means engaging with your government representatives.

This issue of the *Journal* takes a look at the nexus of public education, government and politics, and explores the intricate interplay among them.

You'll find topics ranging from the basic to the complex, from a glossary of legislative terms to the nuts and bolts of the biennial budget process and the key players involved. We'll explore ways school district leaders can be effective advocates, complete with step-by-step tips on how to hone your advocacy skills.

There's a look at OSBA's efforts to make public education a national priority through its work with the National School Boards Association's Federal Relations Network. In his "Executive Outlook" column, OSBA Executive Director **Richard Lewis** shares the avenues available for board members and administrators to get involved to support the association's efforts on behalf of Ohio's public schools.

On the local school board front, several OSBA leaders share what drives their desire to serve their communities. An **Urbana City** board member discusses strategies to recruit minority school board candidates. Another article advises members who are ending their board service to recruit like-minded candidates to run for their seats.

There's also a primer on how OSBA is governed, with a focus on statewide officers and committees, the Delegate Assembly and regional governance. The article illustrates how OSBA truly is a member-driven organization.

We'll visit an **Upper Sandusky EV** middle school to learn about a highly successful government day project that connects students with political leaders ranging from township trustees to statewide elected officials to U.S. Senate aides.

We also provide links to contact information for all of Ohio's state and federal officeholders.

We hope this issue of the *Journal* provides you with valuable information that will strengthen your advocacy efforts and build confidence in your potential to make a difference. With teamwork, knowledge and drive, we *can* shape the future of public education. ■

From a basic group life insurance plan, to one that includes options such as Accidental Death and Dismemberment, Dependent Life and Voluntary Life, member districts can build the right plan for their employees.



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Call Tony Wright or Diane Stepler at (866) 691.6290 for further information.

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Effective board member advocacy starts with you

Jay Smith, lobbyist

Supporters will continue to be called upon to defend public education as an important investment in Ohio's future as a new two-year General Assembly session gets under way. School districts will face major challenges over the next biennium with the phase-in of multiple school reform measures passed in the last General Assembly.

At the same time, the governor has proposed a new school-funding model and biennial budget. Over the next several

months, the education community will be compelled to demonstrate the effectiveness of its schools in delivering a high-quality education, as well as its ability to manage declining resources.

Your role as an advocate for public education is more important than ever. Whether through term limits, redistricting or the election process, some districts have new legislators with whom new relationships need to be established.

Reconnecting with incumbent legislators also is crucial. We urge you to spend time now with your local legislators and build relationships that will establish you and your district as a valuable resource for information.

New leadership in the Senate brings with it different committee assignments and different leaders. If your representative or senator is new, he or she will want to get to know you and your district.

Remember, you were elected as an education leader. You have influence, and should serve as an information resource to your local legislators. These are particularly trying times, and it is crucial that legislators have the right information to help them make decisions in the coming months. That information has to come from you.

Building productive relationships

Following are some tips on building and maintaining relationships with legislators:

- Introduce yourself to your elected representative by phone or letter, and request a personal meeting. Present yourself as a concerned constituent, fellow elected official and informed source on education issues.
- Attend meetings called by legislators, whether they're formal meetings, coffee talks or campaign stops.
- Invite legislators to discuss issues at your board meetings.
- Invite legislators to visit your schools, share special events or programs and discuss specific information and



Building strong relationships with local, state and federal legislators is key to becoming an effective advocate for your school district.

issues facing your district and schools in the community.

- Host or participate in joint meetings with other local districts in the county or legislative district.
- Plan for ongoing communication. Make sure you have contact numbers, mailing addresses and email addresses. Don't forget to provide yours to legislators and their staffs.
- Follow up after important votes and OSBA calls to action. Express thanks or disappointment, depending on how legislators vote on an issue.

Board member advocacy

School board members must proactively communicate with lawmakers throughout the year, discussing all the issues that are important to public education and your local school district. You may not agree on everything, but at least they will have an opportunity to hear your position and know where you stand. Remember, as a board member you are an elected official with a solid understanding of what is necessary to provide, sustain and improve public education in Ohio. Your opinion counts and has an impact.

Your advocacy for public education is vital to OSBA's overall legislative efforts. As a board member, you are in a unique position to provide information about education policy from a local perspective.

OSBA provides a variety of advocacy tools to assist members. These include OSBA's Legislative Platform, which provides position statements on where OSBA stands on key education issues. The platform is reviewed and modified annually by OSBA members serving on the Legislative Platform Committee. Once their recommendations are approved by the OSBA Delegate

Contacting legislators

Contact information for individual legislators can be found on the websites listed below.

Ohio Senate
Senate Building
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, OH 43215
www.ohiosenate.gov

U.S. Senate
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
www.senate.gov

Ohio House of Representatives
Riffe Center, 77 S. High St.
Columbus, OH 43215
www.ohiohouse.gov

U.S. House of Representatives
House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
www.house.gov

Assembly, they become part of the platform.

OSBA also emails a weekly legislative update called "Facts in a Flash," which highlights that week's legislative activities and hot topics on the horizon. OSBA's biweekly newsletter, the *Briefcase*, carries a regular feature called "Legislative Report" that offers synopses of passed and pending legislation. The report also keeps members apprised of other happenings around the Statehouse. The *Briefcase* is published in hard copy and electronically.

Board members also should be alert for calls to action that OSBA emails when a pressing issue arises and member advocacy is essential in getting our message delivered. Calls to action also may contain information necessary to stay on top of an issue going through many changes in the legislature.

You really can make a difference ... because kids count!

Children are our future and there is no greater investment than a child's education. By joining OSBA's political action committee, *Kids PAC*, you are helping to ensure all children in Ohio receive the quality education they deserve!

You can donate online at www.kidspac.org. To learn more about *Kids PAC*, contact **Marcella Gonzalez** at mgonzalez@ohioschoolboards.org or call (614) 540-4000 or (800) 589-OSBA.





Following are some key tips for effective advocacy:

- Keep it simple — most issues can be explained, and a position stated, in only a few sentences.
- Do what works for you — call, write a letter, send an email or schedule a meeting.
- Speak up on key public education issues — the more voices speaking out the better.
- Set priorities — focus on what is important.
- Be direct — make specific requests for specific positions and actions. Use talking points included in OSBA call-to-action requests.
- Keep it local — highlight the pros or cons of legislation on your local school district.
- Be a team player — be sure your advocacy efforts conform to your local board's policies and protocols.
- Join forces — remind legislators of any association, coalition or other stakeholder support for your position.
- Be an educator — invite elected officials to visit schools to showcase successful local programs.
- State the positive — be enthusiastic and courteous. In politics, there are no permanent friends and no permanent enemies.
- Say thank you — remember to thank each of the elected officials for their time and their position or action on issues where there is agreement.

- Follow up — be sure to provide any information offered or requested.
- Share your experience — your fellow board members, OSBA lobbyists and our allies can benefit from what you've learned.
- Relax — effective advocates do not need to be polished, professional lobbyists.

During these challenging times, school board members need to be involved and view these challenges as opportunities to make a difference. To help school officials and encourage conversation with legislators, the OSBA legislative division has created a grassroots advocacy tool kit, which is available online at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/90311>. The tool kit includes step-by-step information on how to set up a grassroots network in your community, along with a guide on how to conduct a candidates' night forum.

It is critical that we continue building relationships with our policymakers so public schools remain a key priority for legislators in Washington and Columbus. If you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact **Damon Asbury**, **Michelle Francis** or **Jay Smith** in the OSBA legislative division at (800) 589-6722. ■

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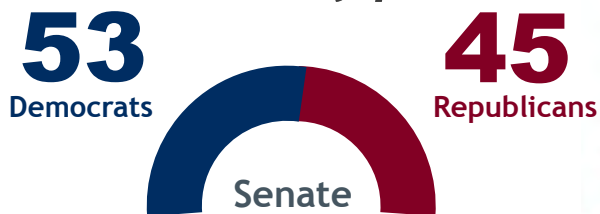


Brief picture caption Ohio's Leading Workers' Compensation Third Party Administrator

Political primer

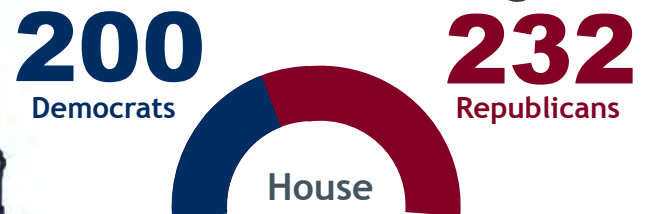
A look at Ohio's elected officials

Balance of power



*Two senators are independents.

The 113th U.S. Congress



*There are currently three vacant seats.

Notable Ohioans

Sen. Sherrod Brown (D) and Sen. Rob Portman (R) represent Ohio.



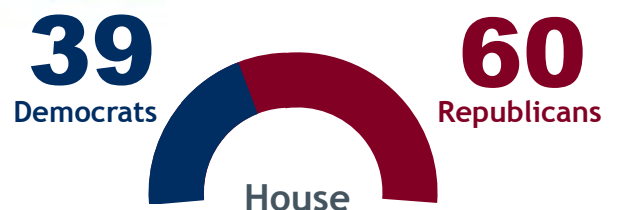
Rep. Marcia Fudge (D) serves on the House Education and Workforce Committee. Rep. John Boehner (R) is the speaker of the House.



Balance of power



The 130th Ohio General Assembly

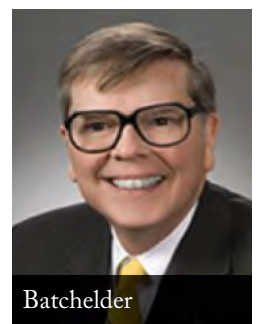


Notable legislators

Sen. Eric Kearney (D) is the minority leader. Sen. Keith Faber (R) is the Senate president.



Rep. Armond Budish (D) is the minority leader. Rep. William G. Batchelder (R) is the speaker of the House.





Speaking the language of lawmakers

Bryan Bullock, assistant editor

In today's digital age, people are bombarded with news and information. It can be hard to keep up with the top news stories of the day, let alone follow more complex developments that can impact your schools, like the movement of a bill through the Ohio General Assembly.

Staying up-to-date on Statehouse news doesn't have to be difficult, though. OSBA keeps member school districts informed of developments and advocates for them in the General Assembly. School board members also can follow legislative sessions online and access a wealth of information about proposed laws at the General Assembly's website, www.legislature.state.oh.us.

Whether you're a new or veteran board member, understanding some basic legislative terms and jargon will make it easier for you to follow what's happening in the Statehouse. The General Assembly, for example, is the state legislative body made up of a 99-member Ohio House of Representatives and 33-member Ohio Senate. That was an easy one, right?

Here are some common legislative terms you'll hear thrown around the Statehouse, with definitions provided by the Ohio General Assembly.

Act

A law passed by the legislature.

Bill

A proposed law.

Bill analyses

The Legislative Service Commission (LSC) staff produces bill analyses for bills scheduled for a committee hearing in either the Ohio Senate or Ohio House of Representatives. An analysis explains the changes made to existing law being proposed by a bill in narrative style, organized by topic, and includes a summary of the bill's key provisions.

Code

A collection of laws, rules or regulations organized by subject matter.

Codify

To collect and arrange laws, rules and regulations by subject matter.

Enact

To establish by law.

Engrossment

The drafting of a resolution or bill in the legislature just prior to the final vote.

Enrolled bill

The final copy of a bill or joint resolution that has been passed by both houses of the legislature and is ready for signature; a bill that has gone through all the steps necessary to make it a law.

Fiscal note

Fiscal notes, prepared by the fiscal staff of the Legislative Service Commission, estimate the effects of proposed legislation on state and local government revenues and expenditures. Local impact statements, which are included in fiscal notes, are required for bills that could result in a net additional cost (as determined by LSC) to school districts or local governments.

Intent statements

Sometimes, the legislature will amend or enact sections of law in response to judicial decisions and will legislatively declare through uncodified sections of law its intent to do so. These uncodified sections of law can serve as a powerful source of legislative history as to the intent or rationale behind the enactment of a statute.

Journals

The House and Senate Journals are the official printed records of the activities of the respective houses. The

respective clerk's office prints the journals on the day following each session day.

Legislative Service Commission

The Legislative Service Commission, created in 1953, is a nonpartisan agency providing drafting, fiscal, research, training and other technical services to the General Assembly. LSC's governing authority consists of 14 members of the General Assembly, including the speaker of the House and the president of the Senate.

Ohio Revised Code

The laws of the state of Ohio are codified in the Ohio Revised Code. It is organized into titles, chapters and sections. The 31 titles are the most general classifications and each is broken into chapters dealing with a particular topic of the law within the general subject of the title.

Session calendars

This tentative calendar gives the dates when the House and Senate will be in session or holding committee hearings.

Session law

The secretary of state's office compiles a list of all acts filed with its office. This list includes the date of filing, brief description, bill number and the bill's effective date(s).

Status Report of Legislation

LSC updates the Status Report of Legislation regularly when the General Assembly is in session. The Status Report of Legislation has a list of all bills and joint and concurrent resolutions introduced in the General Assembly.

Statute

An act of the legislature declaring, commanding or prohibiting something. ■



Have your voice heard at the
**State Legislative
Conference**

Wednesday, March 20 • Ohio Statehouse Atrium

9:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. • Cost is \$130

School officials need to be involved and have their voices heard by attending the annual State Legislative Conference. The 2013 State Legislative Conference is your opportunity to get the message out on the importance of a strong public school system.

The conference provides school board members, administrators and treasurers the opportunity to meet with their state legislators and discuss issues impacting public education.

To register, contact **Laurie Miller**, OSBA senior events manager, at (614) 540-4000; (800) 589-OSBA; or Lmiller@ohioschoolboards.org. Register online at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/89599>.

Visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/28276> for driving directions and parking information.

Agenda

9 a.m.

Registration

9:30 a.m.

Perspectives from the House

Rep. Ron Amstutz (R-Wooster), Rep. Bill Hayes (R-Harrison Township) and Rep. Debbie Phillips (D-Athens)

10:15 a.m.

Perspectives from the Senate

Senate President Keith Faber (R-Celina)

10:45 a.m.

Lobbyists' update/talking points/call to action

Damon Asbury, director of legislative services; Michelle Francis, deputy director of legislative services, and Jay Smith, lobbyist, OSBA; Tom Ash, director of governmental relations, Buckeye Association of School Administrators; and Barbara Shaner, associate executive director, Ohio Association of School Business Officials

11:45 a.m.

Lunch with your legislator

1 p.m.

Perspectives from the governor's office (tentative)

1:45 p.m.

Region roundtable

2:15 p.m.

Adjourn

Ohio schools' voice on Capitol Hill



Jo Ann W. Feltner, OSBA president-elect, FRN chair and Franklin City board member, greets Sen. Rob Portman in Washington.

OSBA works to make public education a federal priority

Gary Motz, managing editor

OSBA's advocacy efforts on behalf of public education are not limited to Ohio — they reach all the way to the nation's capital.

One way OSBA advocates at the federal level for Ohio public schools is through the Federal Relations Network (FRN). FRN is a jointly sponsored with the National School Boards Association (NSBA). The network is made up of school board

members from every congressional district in the U.S. who are committed to grassroots advocacy on behalf of their schools. The network exercises its power as grassroots advocates by telling federal policymakers what does and doesn't work in the nation's nearly 14,000 school districts.

Members are appointed by their state school boards associations and share an overriding mission — making public

education a key priority of the federal government. OSBA appoints two school board members from each congressional district to serve with FRN. The three OSBA officers — president, president-elect and immediate past president — are automatically named to the network, with the president-elect serving as chair. Members serve two-year terms and are eligible for reappointment.

Their duties include attending the annual FRN Conference in Washington, D.C., and maintaining contact with their congressional representatives year-round to share OSBA's and NSBA's positions on crucial education issues. Council of Urban Boards of Education (CUBE) members also are eligible to attend the conference. Two Ohio CUBE members participated this year.

OSBA's FRN representatives coordinate legislative activities in Ohio's congressional districts, monitor federal legislation that impacts public education and assist with communications from their school districts' legislative liaisons. They are supported by information from NSBA on federal legislation and national issues affecting public education.

“Our Federal Relations Network team is one of the most active and engaged in the country,” said OSBA Executive Director **Richard Lewis**. “From educating fellow board members and constituents at home to meeting with some of the nation's top elected officials and policymakers, they ensure that Ohio's concerns are carried to Capitol Hill and beyond.”

During the 40th annual FRN Conference at the end of January, OSBA's FRN and CUBE members addressed a number of priority issues, including the looming federal sequestration, reaffirming the concept of local control of schools and pushing for the reauthorization of the Elementary

and Secondary Education Act.

They also heard from national experts on such topics as the mounting attacks on public education; school board relevancy; charter schools; bullying and school safety; digital learning; Common Core standards; and turnaround strategies. Speakers included U.S. Secretary of Education **Arne Duncan**, political analyst **Norman J. Ornstein** and NSBA President **C. Ed Massey**, a school board member from Kentucky.

With so many competing interests vying for attention on Capitol Hill, it's crucial that public education presents a powerful and united front.

A highlight of the conference was the traditional “Day on Capitol Hill,” when nearly 700 FRN members met with congressional representatives and their staffs to air concerns and provide local perspective on federal issues. They were provided with detailed issue briefs from NSBA to help them make their points.

The Federal Relations Network plays a key role in public education advocacy. With so many competing interests vying for attention on Capitol Hill, especially right after a presidential election, it's crucial that public education presents a powerful and united front. The network enables school board members to do just that, and gives them the opportunity to make a difference in the education of the nation's public schoolchildren. ■



Ohio FRN members pose with Sen. Sherrod Brown, center, after a breakfast with the legislator.

OSBA in Washington, D.C.

► OSBA Immediate Past President Sharon E. Manson, Waverly City and Pike County Career Technology Center, left, and OSBA President-elect Jo Ann W. Feltner, Franklin City, show their support for school boards.

▼ OSBA member Warren Stevens, Urbana City and Ohio Hi-Point Career Center, meets with an aide in U.S. Rep. Jim Jordan's office.

Visit OSBA's Flickr page at www.flickr.com/OHSchoolBoards to view more conference photos.



▲ Trumbull County ESC board member Albert Haberstroh makes a point during a visit to Capitol Hill.

► FRN members Dr. Marguerite Bennett, Mount Vernon City and Knox County Career Center, left, and John W. Halkias, Plain Local (Stark), meet with U.S. Rep. Bob Gibbs' aide.





◀ OSBA members Cathy Johnson, South-Western City, left, and Ed Penrod, Logan-Hocking Local (Hocking) and Tri-County Career Center, meet with an aide in U. S. Rep. Steve Stivers' office.

◀▼ NSBA Associate Executive Director Michael A. Resnick addresses attendees during the opening of the FRN Conference. Also shown is NSBA Executive Director Thomas J. Gentzel.

▼ Board member Ruth M. Nau, Noble Local (Noble), visits a congressional office during the Day on Capitol Hill.



▲ Whitehall City board member Walter S. Armes listens to a presentation during the FRN Conference.

◀ The FRN Conference included breakout and general sessions. Attending a session are from left, Dr. Marguerite Bennett, Cathy Johnson and Linda Steinbrunner, Coldwater EV.





OSBA governed by members, for members

Gary Motz, managing editor

Founded in 1955, OSBA is a member-led organization dedicated to advancing Ohio public education. That dedication is driven by the principle of local control — locally elected school board members determining public education policy for their own school systems.

OSBA is governed by school board members from across the state. These board members set the association's policies, oversee its budget, nominate future leaders and determine its direction.

The association is guided by a member-adopted

constitution and bylaws. Its legislative platform, crafted and approved by members, states OSBA's positions on a variety of public education issues and directs its advocacy efforts.

Members serve as the association's three elected statewide officers. They also fulfill governance roles with the Board of Trustees, Executive Committee, Legislative Platform Committee, Delegate Assembly, region executive committees and a number of other state and regional panels.

Statewide officers

OSBA's three elected state officers are president, president-



OSBA trustees listen to a presentation during the January Board of Trustees meeting.

elect and immediate past president. Each office carries a one-year term.

Every August, the OSBA Nominating Committee meets to interview president-elect candidates for the following year. Outgoing Executive Committee members comprise the Nominating Committee.

After careful consideration, the committee recommends one candidate to the Delegate Assembly for approval. The assembly meets in November during the OSBA Capital Conference to vote on the nominee. If elected, the candidate becomes president-elect in the upcoming year, then president and immediate past president in the subsequent years.

Executive Committee and Board of Trustees

The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees serves as the association's governing body between Board of Trustees meetings. The committee makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees throughout the year, determines the number of trustees each regional association can elect or appoint, and represents OSBA at National School Boards Association Central Region meetings. The Executive Committee is made up of OSBA's president, president-elect, immediate past president and a member appointed by each of the five regional associations to serve a one-year term.

The Board of Trustees has general charge of OSBA's affairs, funds and property. The board adopts the annual budget, authorizes fund disbursements, determines the boundaries of the five regional associations and employs the executive director, among other responsibilities. The board meets three times a year, in January, May and September.

The 32-member board is composed of the three statewide officers; the presidents of the five regional associations; and one representative from each of the six districts in the state with the largest pupil enrollment. The remaining members are apportioned among the OSBA regions. OSBA's executive director and regional managers are ex officio members of the board.

Legislative Platform Committee

The OSBA Legislative Platform is an evolving document that publicly states the association's positions on key education issues. It conveys to policymakers and the public where Ohio school board members stand on public education issues, guides OSBA's advocacy efforts and sets the association's education agenda.

The Legislative Platform Committee develops and recommends platform changes to be considered by the Delegate Assembly. The committee reviews resolutions from member boards and association staff to amend the

OSBA Legislative Platform and makes recommendations.

The committee is made up of the OSBA Executive Committee, plus five appointments from each of the region executive committees. The OSBA president-elect chairs the panel, which meets annually in August and at the legislative platform briefing held prior to the OSBA Delegate Assembly meeting at the November Capital Conference.

Delegate Assembly

The OSBA Delegate Assembly meets annually during the Capital Conference. Each OSBA-member district is entitled to appoint one of its board members as a delegate to the annual meeting or any other called meeting.

Delegates consider and vote on association policies, including the OSBA Legislative Platform and president-elect nominee. Members must be present at the meeting to vote.

The assembly also considers changes to the OSBA Constitution and Bylaws, and receives reports from the executive director, as well as selected committees and task forces.

OSBA regional governance

To better serve its membership, OSBA is divided into five regions — Central, Northeast, Northwest, Southeast and Southwest. Each is led by a president, president-elect, immediate past president and executive committee.

The executive committee sets regional policies, recruits association leaders, represents regional interests, helps assess needs, holds regional legislative platform meetings and organizes activities and programs to increase awareness of OSBA and further the association's mission. The committees meet at least three times a year. The association's statewide leadership is drawn from those who serve on regional governance bodies.

An OSBA staff member is based in each region to serve as a regional manager and treasurer. That individual organizes the region's conferences and meetings, and oversees regional nominating committee appointments and board recognition programs.

To learn more about OSBA governance, as well as the association's mission, vision and guiding principles, visit www.ohioschoolboards.org/osba-governance.

For those interested in becoming more involved in OSBA governance and other activities, contact any OSBA staff member or your regional manager. Regional manager contact information is posted at www.ohioschoolboards.org/regions. ■

Learning from the people



Ohio Secretary of State Jon Husted encourages students to listen carefully to candidates and determine which has similar values to theirs.

Upper Sandusky provides political primer every presidential election year

Just 11 days before the historic 2012 presidential election, students at Upper Sandusky Middle School (USMS) spent an afternoon with political animals of every stripe.

Billed as “Choice 2012 at USMS,” the event brought more than 25 public officials, candidates and political experts to the Wyandot County school to speak to students about what they do and why. Representatives from local, state and national offices were among the guest speakers, as well as lobbyists, candidates and a political science professor. The event — which is held every presidential election year — was part of

the **Upper Sandusky EV** school’s integrated curriculum unit on the November election. The unit also included a mock election for president held on the day of the general election.

Principal **Jim Wheeler**, who along with social studies teacher **Carol Minehart** launched the program in 2000, said one of the goals is to help students see past the frequently divisive, hyper-partisan nature of today’s politics.

“Politics is becoming like ‘The Jerry Springer Show,’” Wheeler said. “I can’t stand that, and I know the kids are thinking of it

behind the politics

Gary Motz,
managing editor

like that. I want to let them see that there are good people out there in politics trying to help and serve.”

Speakers were assigned a classroom and students rotated through a series of 25-minute sessions with them. The younger students — fourth- and fifth-graders — heard from local office holders and candidates such as township trustees, mayors and county commissioners. The sixth-, seventh- and eighth-graders attended sessions led by those representing state and federal offices. These included aides to Ohio’s U.S. Senate and House members; a congressional candidate; the Ohio secretary of state; Ohio General Assembly members; a state Supreme Court Justice; and a State Board of Education member. The older students also met with lobbyists and a political science professor.

“I try to put the more local people in the four-five slots, because, if I put a political science professor in a fourth-grade class, it will go over their heads,” Wheeler said. “But if they see their township trustee, they might think, ‘Hey, you’re the guy who plows my road,’ and make a personal connection.”

A schoolwide effort

Staff and students alike pitched in to recruit speakers and organize the event. Before classes started in the fall, Wheeler and staff members blanketed the state with invitations to potential speakers. After school began, students were provided with some background on the speakers and launched their own letter-writing campaign.

“I literally looked at every politician and candidate in the state ... and sent letters out,” Wheeler said. “Then, when the kids came back, I told them I would give them one hour of community service credit (toward a 15-hour requirement) for every four letters they wrote. We probably had 25 kids writing letters and we sent about 200.

“When the students’ letters starting hitting the mailboxes, that’s when I started getting responses. Someone will open a letter from a principal and then throw it away. But when they see a kid’s name on it, it’s a little harder to turn down.”

As notable as some who did come to Upper Sandusky were several who politely declined the invitation. A member of first lady **Michelle Obama**’s staff responded with a phone call to

the school. Actor, Ohioan and political activist **Martin Sheen**, after a flood of letters, finally responded to a student with a hand-written letter explaining he would be out of the country on the day of the event. Then-U.S. Rep. **Dennis Kucinich** (D-Ohio) also answered a student with a personalized letter.

Once the agenda was set, teachers began briefing students on the speakers: who they are, where they come from and what their roles are.

“Mr. Wheeler gave us a bio on everybody who was coming,” Minehart said. “In the eighth grade, I had the kids read the bios and come up with questions for the speakers. I didn’t want them to go into it cold; I wanted them to be intelligent.”



Eden Township Trustee Ken Beamer talks to a class about his role as a local government official in Wyandot County.



Students created an election poster showing the 2012 presidential and vice presidential candidates.

Learning from leaders

After their arrival, the speakers gathered in the school library for lunch, conversation and a quick briefing on the program by Wheeler. They then headed to their classrooms.

Each group of students participated in four sessions. In one classroom, Ohio Secretary of State **Jon Husted** discussed the presidential campaign and told students they had to listen carefully to what the candidates were saying.

“Each candidate is telling you why they would be the best and you have to decide which one most matches your values and the things you care about,” Husted said. “That’s what happens in a democracy; people have different ideas and they share those ideas.”

Jim Slone, a candidate for Ohio’s 4th Congressional District, cautioned students about the onslaught of negative political ads being run. He urged them not to take a dim view of the political process because he hoped that one day they might get involved in it to help their community.

In another classroom, a lobbyist and state senator paired up to discuss how legislation moves through the system. Ohio Sen.

Cliff Hite (R-Findlay) and Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) Deputy Director of Legislative Services **Michelle Francis** led a spirited discussion on how a bill becomes a law and the lobbyist’s role in that process.

“Lobbyists can tell us who might be opposing a bill and help us prepare what we think is best,” Hite said. “They will suggest changes that might make the bill even better so more people will accept it. We could not survive without lobbyists.”

“The bottom line is, it’s not who’s right, it’s what’s right. That’s what I believe. ... If you don’t work with people, you don’t get anything done.”

Francis explained OSBA’s role in the legislative process and how the association works for public school districts around the state.

“OSBA represents more than 700 school boards that are responsible for 1.8 million kids around Ohio,” Francis said. “That means we represent all of you, and that’s important, because we give you a voice in the Statehouse. For example, you’ve got some solar projects up here and wind turbines. Those are taxed and sometimes the money from that helps schools pay for things like desks, school buses and computers.”

A two-way street

The students clearly enjoyed learning more about who governs their communities and how it affects them and their schools. Seeing the speakers in their own school provided a personal touch to something that can seem distant and abstract to a young person. And the speakers clearly relished their time spent with the kids.

“I enjoyed today,” said eighth-grader **Chase Beekman**. “I



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liked hearing about the different types of politicians and how they can work with people and influence everybody's lives.

"I learned what lobbyists are and how they help the legislators get their information, because legislators can't know about everything. I also heard the political scientist talk about how people's emotions can affect how they vote."

"I liked Jon Husted's session," said **Taylor Hackworth**, also an eighth-grader. "He talked about the debt we're in and the presidential race. I also liked learning more about the political parties and what they believe and do."

"I was interested in hearing about the different levels of government, how it goes from the people to the local, then the state and the national," eighth-grader **Nate Morrison** said. "I would recommend that other schools do a program like this."

Hite praised the students for their enthusiasm and willingness to get involved in the sessions.

"As a former teacher, I can honestly say the students were wonderfully prepared and anxious to dive in and have fun learning," Hite said. "Face-to-face time with students and the people that make decisions that can affect their lives is invaluable. What is fantastic is that it is also invaluable to those who had the chance to visit with the students and interact with them."

"I hope other school systems can glean from the Upper Sandusky project and spread these type of activities all over the state. It was a wonderful experience for me and I can't wait to go back."

Dr. Raymond J. McCandless III, chief information officer at the University of Findlay and a professor of political science and administration, said it's important for those involved in the political process to reach out to schoolchildren.

"The K-12 period is the most significant and influential time for children," McCandless said. "They are not only absorbing ideas, concepts and content, but attitudes toward politics are being formed. Public officials can play an important, positive role by demonstrating to kids that 'politics matters,' that they should become involved and explore our political landscape."



Sen. Cliff Hite (R-Findlay) explains how a bill becomes a law as OSBA Deputy Director of Legislative Services Michelle Francis looks on.

He said that in addition to enjoying the give and take with the students, it also was valuable meeting with other guest speakers.

"While communication with the students was the primary goal for the day," McCandless said, "an additional positive result was the interaction and communication among all of the visitors to the school — a diverse group of individuals, politically and professionally, but all sharing a commitment to student learning."

Francis said the day provided an opportunity to show kids there is more to politics than attack ads, mudslinging and sound bites. Students need to see that people can come together to have civil conversations about the issues of the day.

"I talked to them about how everyone has a role in the political process," Francis said, "whether it's elected representatives, lobbyists representing individuals and groups, constituents contacting their legislators or citizens exercising their right to vote. I hope they learned that people — and politicians in particular — don't always agree on everything, but they can and do work together to solve problems." ■

Editor's note: For more information on this program, contact Upper Sandusky Middle School Principal **Jim Wheeler** at (419) 294-5721 or wheeler_j@usevs.org.

Finding your 'known' to fill your school board seat



Crystal Davis, editor

You've decided to step down from the school board, but would like to see all you've worked for and believe in continue. One way to help achieve that is to recruit someone of like mind to run for your seat.

If only you could clone yourself to ensure the progress you've made with the board will carry on. Cloning, obviously, is not an option. But the following advice might help you find not your clone, but your "known" — a candidate who shares similar ideals, motivations and ambitions.

While it's easiest to recruit candidates from individuals you may already know, your board might be best served by enlisting the help of highly connected professionals who can add diversity, as well as like-mindedness. Regardless, one

thing's for sure: you need to know what qualities you want in a recruit before you begin. Here are five steps to finding your "k.n.o.w.n.":

- **Know thyself** — Make a list of your positive qualities, ideals and motivations and try to find someone who shares similar philosophies. This is especially important when it comes to hot-button issues. For example, if you are a strong public schools advocate, you'll want to back a candidate who will carry on in the same vein.
- **Network creatively** — Call several local organizations you don't typically interact with and ask to meet with one of their top executives. At the meeting, suggest the possibility of recommending retiring board members to each other as a way to build organizational ties. Also, offer to speak at these organizations' luncheons or meetings and encourage

others to get involved. In your district, ask around to find dedicated volunteers who might make good board members.

- **Outreach and advertise** — Call organizations and be as specific as possible about what you're looking for in a candidate. Also, place ads on free sites that match those interested in community service with boards seeking new members, such as **boardnetusa.org**, **volunteer match.org**, **bridgestar.org** and **idealist.org**. In addition, work with your board to post ads in inexpensive or free places, such as newsletters, newspapers, and school and district bulletin boards and websites. Consider advertising with charitable organizations, college alumni networks, diversity groups and local chapters of networking or professional groups.
- **Whip up a flash panel** — Call several well-connected people you would want on the board, but who likely

wouldn't run. Ask them to come to a meeting where they'll be told more about board service. Then ask them to name one person they think would be a good board member. Afterward, call nominees and explain who and why they were recommended.

- **Notice, listen and compare** — Evaluate whether each recruit is a good fit for the board, especially when it comes to demeanor and time availability. Develop a rubric to compare candidates with your listed qualities, ideals and motivations.

By following these steps, you and your board colleagues may find an abundance of potential board candidates. While there will always be some element of the unknown about how your "known" will serve once elected, at least you can walk away knowing that you have again served your community by thoughtful recruitment of your successor. ■

Why I serve: OSBA leaders share what drives their dedication

Crystal Davis, editor

As OSBA thanks outgoing Board of Trustees and Executive Committee members and welcomes new ones, we thought it might be a good time to ask these leaders, "Why do you serve?"

We wanted to know what motivates them to dedicate so much time and energy to working for schoolchildren in their districts, as well as children statewide. We also asked what drives them to be so involved in OSBA governance and other association activities.

Following — in their own words — is why they serve.

Jim Sommer, OSBA Southwest Region president; board member, Greenville City

"I grew up and graduated in this district and wanted to make a difference for not just my children and grandchildren, but *all* children. My first year on the board was spent attending as many OSBA workshops and seminars as my schedule would allow. By the end of my first year, I had enough hours to attain Master Board Member status. This is something I am very proud of. I quickly learned how important networking with other board members is."

David Spridgeon, OSBA Northwest Region immediate past president; board member, Arcadia Local (Hancock)

"I serve ... because I believe in the power of children. It is important that we, as adults, assist kids in their learning experiences and do the best we can to provide them with quality learning spaces. Also, being on OSBA's Board of Trustees and Executive Committee allows me more opportunity to learn the workings of public schools and strengthens my commitment to them."

Julie A. Schafer, Northeast Region president; board member, Copley-Fairlawn City

"I choose to serve our children in any way I am able because I believe that it is my privilege as an American to ensure that we each — personally — do what we can to take care of each other so that the government doesn't have to. 'Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.' I'm all about *local* control."

Jo Ann W. Feltner, OSBA president-elect; board member, Franklin City

"I serve ... because this is one way that I can pay my community back for all of the blessings I have received in years past. During my former tenure as a teacher and administrator, I was fortunate enough to be able to earn a living, spend quality time with my children when they were in school, make lifelong friends and hopefully make a difference."

Charlie Wilson, OSBA president; board member, Worthington City

"My grandfather, who had a limited formal education but thought very wise thoughts while spending his entire life as a dirt farmer plowing the Kansas prairie, often told me: 'If you want one year of prosperity, plant wheat; if you want 10 years of prosperity, plant a fruit orchard; but, if you want a century of prosperity, get an education and educate your children.' That was the saying that guided my thinking when I originally was trying to decide whether to apply for an opening on the school board. I have to believe that Grandpa Delbert would be very proud of me for serving."

Watch for more motivational comments from OSBA leaders in the April and June issues of the *Journal*. ■



Tips on recruiting minority candidates for school boards

Warren Stevens, board member, Urbana City and Ohio Hi-Point Career Center

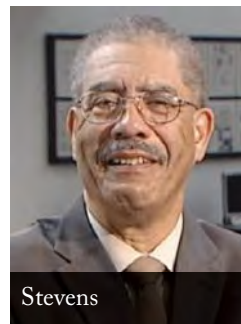
There are a number of avenues school boards can take to recruit minority candidates for school board seats. One excellent way is to teach high school students about the importance of community service. Boards can encourage students to get involved by implementing policies that help prepare them for future service on school boards and with other community groups.

I recently introduced a Community Service Policy to the **Urbana City** Board of Education. It provides academic credit to high school students in exchange for volunteer community service. In addition to that policy, I presented a Student Involvement in Decision-Making Policy to our board, which would allow any high school student to serve on the local school board.

Another way to locate and recruit candidates for service is to create a community leadership program to train future leaders and encourage them to pursue local leadership roles.

Most communities have churches with predominately minority congregations. School board members could set up meetings with church leaders to discuss whether there are any people in their congregations who would be interested in running for a school board seat. In some school districts, church pastors have chosen to run for school board, as well as other elected offices.

In the past, the Urbana community has had several all-minority membership service clubs, which also are a good source for recruiting school board candidates. Since service



club members are already serving the community, they might be interested in branching out to school board service.

School board members can invite prospective candidates to board meetings to introduce them to what being a board member is all about. Better yet, I do not see anything wrong with inviting them to attend the OSBA Capital Conference as district guests. That would provide prospective candidates a look at the bigger picture of school board service, as well as give them a chance to meet with board members and administrators from around the state.

There are many sources that we, as community members, can draw from to recruit minority candidates to serve our school districts. There also are many highly qualified candidates in our communities who would make excellent board members. Our job is to find out who they are and aggressively recruit them. ■

About the author: A school board member for nearly 10 years, Stevens serves OSBA in a number of capacities. They include service with the Black Caucus, Urban School District Advisory Network, Delegate Assembly, Federal Relations Network and Legislative Platform Committee. He also has represented OSBA on the National School Boards Association Delegate Assembly and is a member of the Urbana University Board of Trustees.

Point your district in the right direction

Whether you call it setting district goals and direction, strategic planning or mission and vision work, school boards are responsible for clarifying the district's purpose.

OSBA consultants offer expertise about the school board's role in this work. For more information, contact Kathy LaSota at (614) 540-4000 or (800) 589-OSBA.





Driving forward with new transportation service

Amanda Finney, senior marketing coordinator

OSBA is ready to help your district get into the driver's seat by proactively assisting your district with all of its transportation needs.

OSBA is proud to roll out its transportation program to members, a new offering in OSBA's suite of services. **Pete Japikse**, who joined OSBA as a senior transportation consultant in October, leads this important new program.

Prior to joining OSBA, Japikse was the state pupil transportation director at the Ohio Department of Education for 12 years. He also served for 20 years as a school district transportation director in the Cincinnati area.

"I am very pleased to continue to support Ohio's school administrators with their pupil transportation needs," Japikse said. "With nearly one million students depending on Ohio buses every day, it is more important than ever that schools have the resources necessary to help them with this very challenging support service. OSBA looks forward to being of assistance."

Japikse's extensive experience in public school transportation offers OSBA member districts valuable assistance with their transportation needs. He is available to consult with members on transportation issues such as safety, operations and financial matters.

A past president of the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation, Japikse co-founded the American School Bus Council. In 2010, he received the Administrator of

the Year Award from *School Bus Fleet* magazine.

"The association is very happy to have Pete on board," said Director of Management Services **Van D. Keating**. "His extensive knowledge and expertise ensures our members are well-served in all areas related to school transportation."

Member districts can take advantage of an array of OSBA transportation services, including personalized assistance with transportation rules interpretation, policy questions and technical advice.

In addition, specialized contract services are available. These include:

- Transportation operation cost analysis and benchmarking studies — This service evaluates the district's operating costs, provides comparisons to peer districts and helps school systems see where they could reduce costs through changes in practices or procedures.
- Routing analysis — This in-depth service provides a study of the bus transportation currently being provided and examines operational costs and ways to reduce them by implementing different logistical models, such as changing routing plans.
- Fleet management assistance — This program evaluates the cost of maintenance and current maintenance practices, and explores different options to increase effectiveness and reduce costs.
- General operations evaluation — This program includes spending

time with the district to evaluate existing practices and procedures, and provide recommendations for improvements and adjustments to enhance safety and increase operational effectiveness.

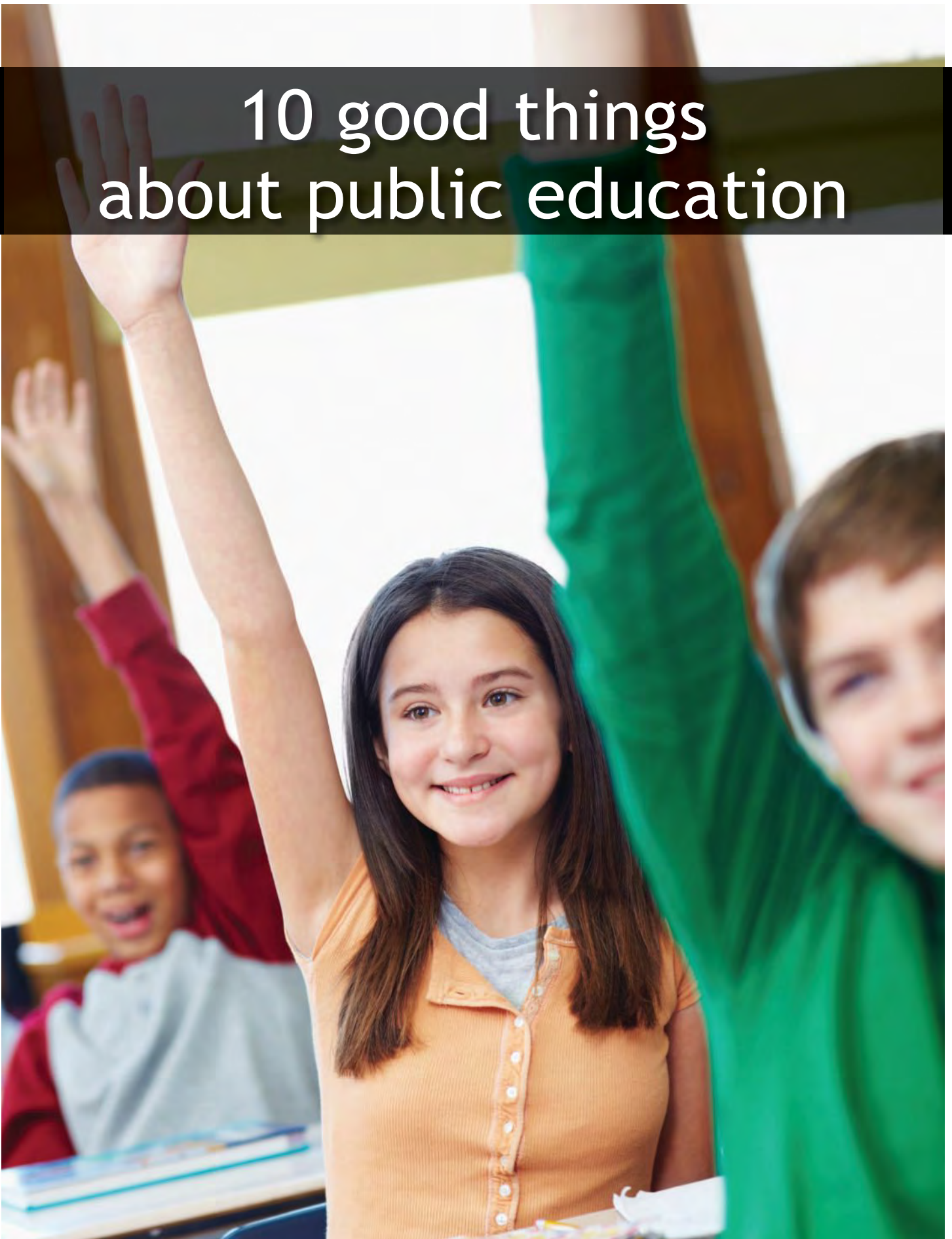
- Regional coordination studies — This service includes working with multiple districts in specific areas to determine if opportunities exist to share transportation support services, as well as bus transportation.

Other general transportation services OSBA provides include:

- in-service presentations for drivers and administrators that focus on pupil transportation safety issues and current transportation events;
- training presentations for school administrators responsible for pupil transportation;
- evaluation of specific transportation services, including payment in lieu of transportation;
- bus purchasing and specification development;
- driver qualifications compliance review;
- assistance with district obligations for state reporting;
- transportation emergency plan development;
- development of local pupil transportation handbooks.

OSBA looks forward to serving your district and assisting with your transportation needs. To find out more about these valuable programs, contact Japikse at (614) 540-4000, ext. 256; (800) 589-OSBA, ext. 256; pjapikse@ohioschoolboards.org; or schoolbus@ohioschoolboards.org. ■

10 good things about public education



The naysayers are wrong – public schools are not failing. Here’s a list of the many things we are doing right, with suggestions for ways to improve even more.

Patte Barth, director, National School Boards Association’s Center for Public Education

Policymakers and pundits have decried “our failing schools” so often it’s become an accepted truth. But the naysayers are wrong. Sure, our schools need to do better. But we have much to be proud of, and it’s on this foundation that we can build a 21st century system that will work for all kids.

It’s time that we recognize our accomplishments and give public schools a collective pat on the back. Here is my personal top 10 list of things we’re doing right and where we should go next.

10. A tradition of universal education

Beginning in 1642 when Massachusetts enacted the country’s first education law, Americans have placed a high premium on producing an educated populace. As **Thomas Jefferson** wrote, “Whenever the people are well-informed, they can be trusted with their own government.” Indeed, the history of American education is one of expanding educational opportunity. From the push for compulsory schooling in the last half of the 19th century through *Brown v. Board of Education* in the mid-20th, it’s a story that continues to this day.

What’s next? The Common Core State Standards define expectations for all students that will prepare them for their next steps, whether they lead to a four-year college, two-year credentials or training for 21st century jobs. As of this writing, 46 states and the District of Columbia have adopted the Common Core State Standards, including Ohio.

9. Beginning reading

Over the last decade, our fourth-graders have improved their reading skills by six points on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). If that doesn’t sound like much, consider that 10 points on the NAEP scale is approximately one year’s worth of learning. More significantly, the gains have largely been from the bottom up, and the achievement gap is narrowing between children of color and their white classmates. As a bonus, American fourth-graders rank among students from the top-scoring nations in reading literature.

What’s next? Middle and high school students aren’t making the same gains. We need to do more than just teach kids how to read, but also focus on developing critical readers, especially of informational texts.

8. Civics

On the 1999 international assessment in civics, U.S. ninth-graders were No. 1 in civics skills. By a lot. But what about now? There hasn’t been an international look at this topic since then, but NAEP offers a clue. Over the last decade, American fourth-graders have improved their civics performance by seven points. Hispanic students improved the most — by a whopping 17 points.

What’s next? As with reading, middle and high school students are not showing the same progress as the younger students. This deserves our attention, considering that high school seniors are able to cast their first votes or will be voting soon.

Here is my personal top 10 list of things we’re doing right and where we should go next.

7. English language learners

An original study for the National School Boards Association’s Center for Public Education (CPE) compared the reading achievement and characteristics of limited-English-speaking students in the U.S. to other industrial nations with high proportions of immigrant children (“PIRLS of Wisdom,” 2009). While English language learner (ELL) students in American public schools tend to come from poorer families compared to those in other countries, their schools nonetheless provide resources not available to their international counterparts and their performance is as good or better as a result. The big advantage? The U.S. has more teachers trained to teach ELL students.

What’s next? The number of ELL teachers, though larger than other countries, is still too small to meet the need. Another big issue: Evidence-based instruction for ELL students too often takes a backseat to politics. Yet the research is clear in this regard: Dual immersion programs produce the best long-range results for ELL students, followed by language support in elementary school. Despite its appeal to some, English-only submersion has been proven to have the least effect, according to a 2007 CPE study.

6. ESEA and IDEA — monumental laws

In 1965, the country passed the first Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as part of President **Lyndon Johnson**'s war on poverty. Its intent was to provide poor children equal access to a solid public education. As such, ESEA did nothing less than establish education as a civil right, and every president since then has supported providing Title I funds to schools serving poor children. These goals were further extended to children with disabilities in 1975's Education for All Handicapped Children Act, now the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which guarantees a "free and appropriate" education to all special-needs children.

What's next? Under President **George W. Bush**, ESEA became the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). It added a sharp focus — and school accountability — on narrowing achievement gaps among groups of students based on race, ethnicity, family income and special needs. While the idea of accountability no doubt will continue, both proponents and critics recognize adjustments need to be made.



Schools have ensured beginning readers are developing critical reading skills, but need to extend these gains to older students.

5. High-level high school courses

One of public education's biggest successes is the increase in high school academic rigor. In 1990, less than a third of high school seniors (31%) had a core curriculum that included math through at least algebra II and three lab sciences. By 2009, that number was 59%. Moreover, the course-taking gap between white and black students has disappeared.

What's next? The U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights recently reported that there are still 3,000 high schools in the country lacking the capacity to offer algebra II, meaning their graduates will not be college-ready or qualified to enter training programs for many 21st century jobs. Making sure all students have access to high-level courses and support to succeed must be among our highest public priorities.

4. High-quality prekindergarten

No educational investment pays off more than making sure children are ready for school when they walk through the kindergarten door. Recognizing the potential return on investment, states have been expanding access to and increasing the quality of pre-K programs. Over the last decade, the number of 4-year-olds enrolled in state-supported programs has doubled to the current 27%. When including Head Start, we now have 39% of 4-year-olds in publicly funded programs. And it's not just access that's improving. States have been more active in ensuring the programs attend to children's educational preparation as well as to their social and emotional development.

What's next? Despite the recession, states have attempted to preserve their pre-K funding. However, last year witnessed the first decline in state funding for pre-K since 2002. These are painful setbacks, as the nation still has a long way to go to ensure universal access for families who wish to participate in pre-K.

3. High school graduation rates

Researchers have uncovered student characteristics — such as poor attendance, failing grades and disciplinary actions — that are highly predictive of students who may be in danger of dropping out. In response, states and districts have implemented data systems to flag these "early warning signs" and provide effective interventions, often in collaboration with community-based organizations. The result is that graduation rates are beginning to improve. Since 2002, on-time graduation rates have increased from 72.6% to the current 75.5%. According to an analysis by CPE's **Jim Hull**, including late graduates in the calculation would raise that rate by another five to eight percentage points.

What's next? Even an 80% to 83% graduation rate leaves too many young people out of jobs paying a decent wage. President **Barack Obama** has set a goal for the nation to reach a 90% high school graduation rate by 2020. Reaching this mark will require the combined efforts of schools and

their communities to keep kids in school and on track to graduate.

2. Mathematics

Yes, really! We may not be No. 1 in mathematics internationally, but math progress is still the great untold story in American education. Since 1990, American fourth-graders have gained a phenomenal 28 points on NAEP math assessments. Eighth-graders weren't far behind, posting a 21-point boost over the same period. And progress was evident in every student group. Still not convinced? Scores on the mathematics portion of the SAT are significantly higher than in 1972, while the number of test takers has more than doubled so that the scores no longer represent the academic elite alone.

What's next? Education technology may be the engine that propels math achievement of all students, and can be especially helpful in remote or hard-to-staff schools. Innovators like **Salman Khan** are developing new ways to make even the most sophisticated concepts understandable to students using online platforms. Moreover, access is not determined by geography.


And my No. 1 good thing about public education is ...

1. Community support

Approximately nine out of 10 school-aged children attend public schools in this country — a figure that has remained fairly stable for 40 years. Communities maintain their support of their local schools even as their opinion of public education in general declines. In 2011, only 17% of Americans told Gallup pollsters that they would grade American public education as an A or B. In contrast, 51% would give an A or B to their local schools. Parents were the most satisfied; 79% of them gave their child's public school these high grades. When asked to explain the discrepancy, respondents cited familiarity and local pride.

What's next? Public schools have their work cut out for them, especially as they tackle the job of preparing all of their students for success after high school in this increasingly complex 21st century world. Policymakers at the federal, state and local levels all have a role to play. But the supportive involvement of the community — from one district to the next — is our strongest guarantee that the challenge will be met. ■

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Celebrate the stars in your district at the

OSBA Student Achievement Fair

Nov. 12, 2013 • Greater Columbus Convention Center

The OSBA Capital Conference Student Achievement Fair highlights outstanding initiatives from school districts across the state. OSBA is seeking fresh, innovative programs or practices your district is willing to share with thousands of Ohio school district representatives. One hundred programs and practices will be selected based on creativity and impact on student achievement. The fair will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 12, during the OSBA Capital Conference.

Five performing groups from across Ohio will be selected to entertain attendees during the Student Achievement Fair. To be considered, you must submit an audio or video recording of the performing group. DVDs or CDs can be mailed to OSBA or a video or MP3 can be submitted with the online application.

OSBA is now accepting nominations for district programs and performing groups. While multiple programs may be submitted for consideration, no more than two per district will be selected, so districts should prioritize their submissions.

Nominate your district at www.ohioschoolboards.org/saf-nominations. The nomination deadline is May 24, 2013.



BLI offers one-stop shopping for board members

Angela Penquite, assistant editor

For board members, learning on the job is the norm rather than the exception. That's why it is essential for them to attend the Board Leadership Institute (BLI).

Designed by board members for board members, BLI provides “one-stop shopping” for professional development. The comprehensive curriculum enables board members to accomplish a great deal of training and networking in just two extremely educational days.



BLI attendees can shop at the on-site OSBA Bookstore.

The 2013 BLI is set for April 26 and 27 at the Hilton Columbus/Polaris in north Columbus. The Friday-Saturday event offers board members the chance to learn from the experts and network with their colleagues.

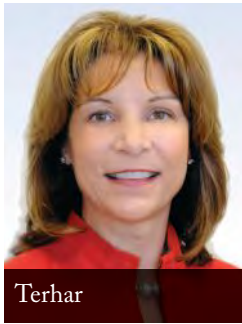
Representatives from school districts, Battelle for Kids, the state auditor's office and the Ohio High School Athletic Association will present on topics ranging from board development, student achievement and blended learning to financial forecasts, assessments and school security and safety. Other presenters include OSBA staff, school law attorneys and representatives from the Ohio Department of Education.

“Outstanding professional development continues to draw new and veteran board members to BLI,” said **Rob Delane**, OSBA deputy executive director and BLI coordinator. “We begin planning at the OSBA Capital Conference in November with a focus group of board members suggesting session topics that will be useful to all board members.

“This year, we're trying something different. Based on attendees' comments that they sometimes find it difficult to choose between great presentations, we are repeating two sessions we feel will be of particular importance this year.”

Those sessions — “The many shades of the budget and school funding” on Friday afternoon and “A look at controversial school safety and security measures — are any of them right for your district?” on Saturday morning — will be offered

in back-to-back time slots. For a full list of BLI topics and breakout sessions, see “BLI breakout sessions” below.



Debe Terhar, president of the State Board of Education, is Saturday’s Closing Luncheon keynote speaker. A former licensed Montessori teacher with extensive experience in early childhood Montessori education, her experience includes working with children with disabilities and diverse socioeconomic backgrounds in both public and

private schools.

Terhar previously served on the Cincinnati Montessori Society Board of Directors and the Parent’s Advisory Council of the Kelly O’Leary Center for Autism at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital. She currently is a board member on the Women of Excellence Council of the President’s Advisory Council of Xavier University in Cincinnati. She also is a founding member of the American Spirit Education Alliance, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation of American heritage.

As an elected member of the State Board of Education, Terhar began her term on Jan. 1, 2011, representing the Fourth District, which includes Hamilton and Warren counties. BLI attendees will hear an update on state education reform efforts and what they mean to local school boards.

The cost to attend BLI is just \$240, which includes

continental breakfast and lunch on Friday and Saturday, and workshop materials, including a CD containing handouts from all the workshops. This convenient format allows you to learn about sessions you couldn’t attend and share information with others back home in your district. Attendees also will receive 20 credits towards OSBA’s Award of Achievement and Master Board Member distinctions. The luncheons are sponsored by CompManagement Inc. and CompManagement Health Systems Inc.

“Outstanding professional development continues to draw new and veteran board members to BLI.”

— Rob Delane

OSBA secured a reduced hotel rate for BLI attendees: just \$123 per night if the room is booked by April 5. To reserve your room, contact the Hilton Columbus/Polaris at (614) 885-1600 and mention you are with OSBA.

A Board Leadership Institute brochure with a full schedule and a registration form will be mailed to all board members in March. You also can register by contacting **Laurie Miller**, OSBA senior events manager, at (614) 540-4000; (800) 589-OSBA; or Lmiller@ohioschoolboards.org. In addition, registration forms and institute details, including the complete agenda and speaker information, are available online at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/33166> and in OSBA’s *Briefcase* newsletter. ■

BLI breakout sessions

Student achievement

- Beyond the buzz about blended learning
- Measuring what matters
- The road map to Ohio’s next generation of assessments

Finance

- A wellness checkup for your financial forecast
- Negotiations 101 and bargaining trends
- The many shades of the budget and school funding

Legal/legislative

- Moving forward together – preparing for HB 555 and other changes
- Trick or tweet – legal concerns with board members use of social media
- The many shades of the budget and school funding (repeat)

Board development

- That works for me – veteran board members’ advice for getting good work done
- A new perspective on micromanagement – policy and practice
- Board champions – winning with difficult people

Critical issues

- A look at controversial school safety and security measures – are any of them right for your district?
- How I met your mother ... and her attorney
- Skinnier, smarter Ohio schools

Hot topics

- A look at controversial school safety and security measures – are any of them right for your district? (repeat)
- Issues on the radar screen in high school athletics
- Affordable Health Care Act and schools



Business Honor Roll enters third year of success

Amanda Finney, senior marketing coordinator

OSBA is excited to announce the Business Honor Roll will continue to be offered as a service for members in 2013. The popular program began in 2011 and offers school districts a way to recognize local businesses for their support.

Local businesses play an important role in supporting their communities' schools. This support is especially important as Ohio school districts face budget uncertainties, ever-increasing accountability demands and a tough economic climate.

The program provides districts a way to recognize their local businesses and say "thank you" for their contributions. If there are companies in your district that are deserving of this recognition, OSBA strongly urges you to select them for the Business Honor Roll. Selection details are on page 45.

"The Electrical Trades Program at the **Upper Valley Career Center** has participated in the Business Honor Roll program for a few reasons," said **Jeffrey Bertke**, an electrical trades paraprofessional at the center. "First, we



Upper Arlington City board president Robin Comfort, right, greets Glenda Huffman and her son Ryan in recognition of Huffman's Market in 2012. The district recognized the family-owned and operated grocery store for supporting the district through monetary donations, student fundraising and advertising support in district publications.

wanted to showcase to the community the businesses that have worked with us to make public education stronger and publicize their commitment to our students. Also, the businesses recognized proudly display the certificates awarded to them, thus reinforcing a stronger bond between the school and businesses.”

Below are just a few examples of how businesses assist school districts:

- internship/job shadowing programs;
- volunteering in schools and offering employees time off to volunteer;
- serving as a mentor or tutor;
- supporting extracurricular programs;
- hosting company tours or sponsoring field trips;
- supporting programs with in-kind or financial support;
- delivering presentations to individual classes or at assemblies;
- buying ads in event programs;
- donating to scholarship programs.

These are just a few of the many ways businesses support their schools, so don't limit yourself to this list.

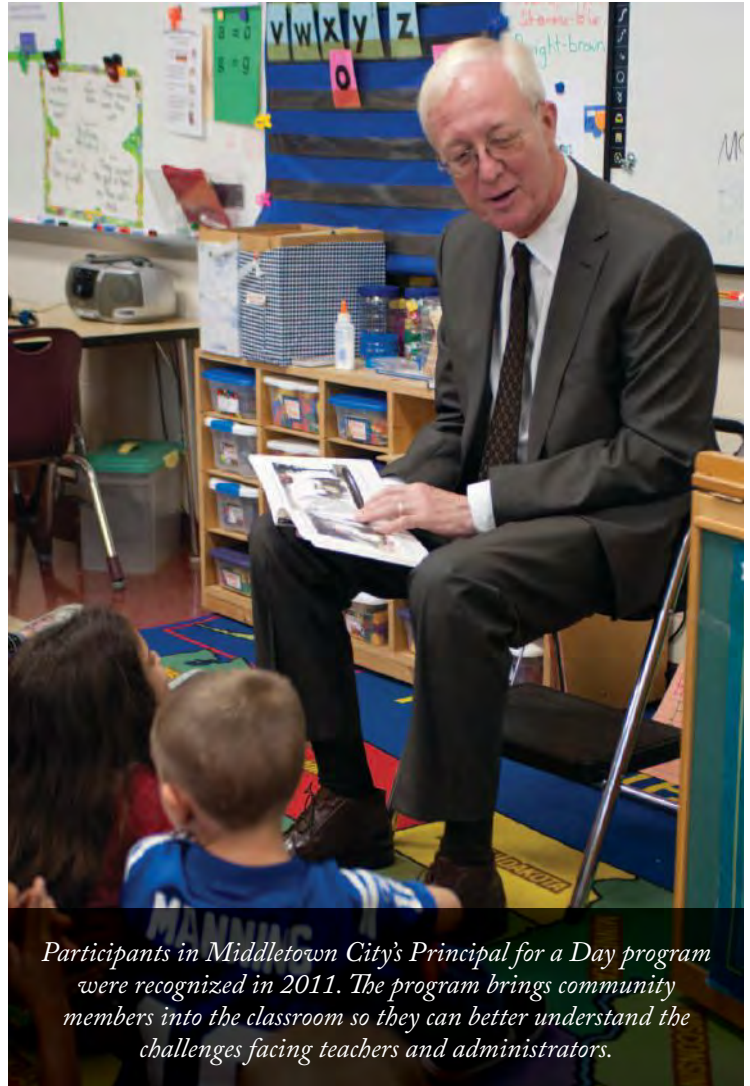
Districts that participate in this program have crafted innovative methods to recognize businesses. **Lynchburg-Clay Local (Highland)** developed a recognition program for area businesses called the L-C Varsity Club.

“Each year the Lynchburg-Clay Board of Education honors two area businesses for their financial and in-kind support of our students and staff,” said Superintendent **Shane Shope**. To learn more about the district's program, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/28832>.

School-business partnerships are good for all involved. Schools receive the additional support they so badly need. Students get real-world experience and the benefits of learning from professionals in many different fields. Businesses are able to gain a better understanding of their school systems and let educators know about the critical workforce skills they need.

“For our district, this program opened up several opportunities, including donations to a fundraising activity for a student who needed a new wheelchair,” said Superintendent **Darrell Edwards of Goshen Local (Clermont)**. “Through this program, our district is able to build the bridges in our community on behalf of student achievement. We are continuing the program for 2013, and we hosted our second annual Business Recognition Night in January.”

Districts that participate in the Business Honor Roll can recognize four single businesses for any kind of support and one specific project that can include multiple businesses.



Participants in Middletown City's Principal for a Day program were recognized in 2011. The program brings community members into the classroom so they can better understand the challenges facing teachers and administrators.

To make your selections online, go to the OSBA Business Honor Roll Web page at www.ohioschoolboards.org/business-honor-roll and click on the nomination form link. The deadline to submit selections is Friday, March 29. Selections cannot be accepted after that deadline.

The Business Honor Roll Web page also features a resource kit with everything districts need to recognize the valuable contributions of their business partners. The kit includes a sample board resolution, sample press release and tips on ways to recognize honorees.

OSBA will mail personalized certificates for each firm to district superintendents in time for boards to present them at May meetings. The program will be featured in the June OSBA *Journal* and a full list of honorees will be posted on the association's website.

For questions on this program, please contact the article's author at (614) 540-4000, (800) 589-OSBA or afinney@ohioschoolboards.org. ■

Committed community



Students from a variety of northwest Ohio school districts participate in a service project following Leadership, Learning & Serving Together, a community service event in January. Students sorted food to assist Lourdes University's homeless outreach program.

Northwest Ohio students make volunteering a priority

Grisoranyel Barrios vividly remembers the experience that got her hooked on community service. The **Springfield Local (Lucas)** student was volunteering in downtown Toledo, passing out toys to children in need during the holiday season. A small boy approached the station Barrios was working at and she handed him a toy.

“It was just a little car, but the child was so happy. I’ve never seen someone’s face change like that when you give them something,” the Springfield High School senior said. “I think that’s what got me hooked on community service, it was such

a great experience.”

Barrios has gone on to perform much more volunteer work, but she’s not alone in her efforts. High school students throughout northwest Ohio are fired up about giving back to their community — and they’re working together to achieve meaningful results.

Last year, students at 24 northwest Ohio high schools volunteered at nursing homes, soup kitchens and other places in their communities. Together, the students logged more

servants

*Bryan Bullock,
assistant editor*

than 145,000 service hours, making an estimated \$3.05 million impact. The student group, which now includes 31 area high schools, is on track to greatly surpass those numbers this year.

“It’s amazing what these kids can do,” said **Dave Schlaudecker**, executive director of Leadership Toledo. “Give them a little guidance, but don’t dictate to them, and you will see how far they can go.”

The student-led volunteer work is coordinated through a program facilitated by Leadership Toledo, a nonprofit leadership development group for youth and adults. The program, known as the Youth Jefferson Awards/Students in Action (SIA), is part of a national initiative by the Jefferson Awards for Public Service to encourage leadership and service at the high school level. Students in Action is designed to pass the tradition of service and volunteerism to the next generation of young Americans. The program is in 14 parts of the country and 325 high schools.

Northwest Ohio is the only region in the state that currently participates in SIA, but the program and the spirit of volunteerism it fosters could serve as a model for schools across Ohio and the U.S.

“Students don’t have to change the world,” Schlaudecker said. “They can make a difference in their own community by helping one person at a time, and that’s something that can be fun and rewarding.”

Students in Action

Students in Action is designed to be flexible enough to work in schools of all stripes — public, private, rural, suburban and urban. The program started in northwest Ohio in 2008 with four diverse pilot high schools, including three from public districts: **Lake Local (Wood)**, Springfield Local and **Toledo City**. The program has flourished and is now in 31 northwest Ohio high schools, including those found in the following public districts: **Anthony Wayne Local (Wayne)**, **Maumee City**, **Northwood Local (Wood)**, **Ottawa Hills Local (Lucas)**, **Perrysburg EV**, **Sylvania City** and **Swanton Local (Fulton)**. Sylvania City and Toledo City both have multiple high schools in the program.

At each school, student leaders are encouraged to redefine the

culture of their campus to one of service by heightening peer awareness of volunteer opportunities and bringing attention to ordinary students involved in extraordinary service to others. It’s up to each school to decide how to do that.

“We support the creation of a Students in Action initiative at each school that reflects the unique characteristics and personality of that school,” said **Kristina White**, community liaison with Springfield Local and director of community impact with Leadership Toledo.

Students in Action groups at each school determine how often they should meet. An adult — such as a principal, staff member or volunteer parent — acts as an adviser of the group, but SIA is student-run. The group works with clubs and student organizations throughout a school to support and encourage community service. Students use morning announcements, fliers, social media or whatever means they determine to promote service opportunities and encourage every student in school to participate. Each school encourages



Springfield Local Assistant Superintendent Dr. Michael D. O'Shea talks to more than 120 northwest Ohio students about the importance of character at the Leadership, Learning & Serving Together event.



Students wash a Springfield Township Fire Department vehicle during an annual Sept. 11 service event organized by Springfield High School students.

its students to volunteer by recognizing their efforts with Youth Jefferson Awards.

“We knew that so many students in all the schools in our area were already doing service work, but there wasn’t a support structure for it or a language for students to collectively refer to it,” said White, who works with schools throughout northwest Ohio on behalf of Leadership Toledo.

Students in Action, she said, gives students a framework for understanding service, identifying community needs, tracking volunteer hours and working with other schools. Student representatives from each high school’s SIA group meet one Sunday a month to discuss collaborative service projects and share ideas, best practices and success stories. If a tragedy strikes, students are able to use their contacts at other schools to respond quickly.

One example, White said, was a fire in the Springfield Local School District last spring that impacted 22 families.

“I sent out one email about it to the Students in Action advisers, and the next thing we know students from five or six high schools are bringing van loads and van loads of donations,” she said.

Students raised more than \$2,500 worth of gift cards, \$1,500 for the Red Cross and enough items for the fire victims to fill a storage unit and two additional pods.

Springfield students step up

Whether it’s washing firetrucks or hanging Christmas lights, Springfield High School students have made themselves known in their community for their commitment to volunteerism — but they’ve also received national recognition for their work. Last school year, Springfield was named a Bronze Level Award Recipient for Outstanding Service by a High School at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. The Jefferson Awards honor signifies Springfield has one of the three best high school service programs in the nation.

“That’s an honor we’re very proud of,” said Springfield school board member **Keiran Menacher**. “It says our students stand above the crowd, and they want to serve their community.”

Menacher, an 18-year board member and two-time OSBA Award of Achievement winner, said Springfield has a long tradition of volunteerism.

“For as long as I can remember, community service has been tied to our academic program,” she said. “We have a very positive program that allows kids today to volunteer in ways they want to help.”

A handful of Springfield High School students delivered presentations to peers from other regional schools at a community service event at Lourdes University in January. The Saturday event — Leadership, Learning & Serving Together — was designed to teach northwest Ohio students about SIA, how student leaders have built successful youth service programs and ways to overcome barriers that keep students from volunteering. At the end of the event, all the students worked together on service projects.

“One thing every Students in Action team should have is a representative from every club and organization in the school, because that will give you diversity, input and productivity,” Springfield High School junior **Carla Marzari** told her peers from other schools. “You have to ask your clubs and ask your friends to come volunteer with you.”

Springfield students said they try to organize at least one large-scale volunteer opportunity each month; they often schedule events on days when classes are canceled, including holidays. Springfield High School junior **Chris Park** said he was happy to get involved with service projects when he transferred to the school.



Springfield High School students display their bronze medal for community service at the Jefferson Awards ceremony in Washington, D.C.

"I really liked that a lot of people got involved and did service projects together," Park said. "At my old school, it was always a small group that did all the service projects, maybe 10 people or so."

Springfield Superintendent **Kathryn A. Hott** said she is pleased with the work students are doing inside and outside the classroom.

"Springfield is proud that our students use their time and talents to benefit others," Hott said. "We have a long, proud tradition of encouraging students to become active in community service."

Changing a school culture

Springfield Assistant Superintendent Dr. **Michael D. O'Shea** said character education can have a transformative impact on students, schools and the communities.

"I think the great responsibility of public education is to create students who are capable and willing to make significant contributions to the larger community," O'Shea said.

"If schools focus even a little bit on behavior, responsibility, work ethic and what it means to be a contributing member of society, research shows us not only will we improve in these areas, but grades go up."

Cory Dippold, associate executive director of Leadership Toledo, said he has seen the effect youth leadership programming has had on schools in northwest Ohio over recent years.

"We're seeing a change in school culture already," Dippold said. "There's a lot more focus on service and helping people out. We're seeing schools that may have sports rivalries come together and work on service projects."

He said Students in Action and other youth leadership development efforts by Leadership Toledo are designed to give students the skills they need to be successful. Students also learn the importance of building a leadership team that encompasses multiple grade levels and is sustainable year-to-year. It's also important, Dippold said, to show students volunteering can fun — not a chore.

"Many students don't realize how fun service projects can be, and how rewarding this work can be," he said.

Dippold said students at any school can start their own sustainable, broad-based service initiatives by partnering with local businesses, nonprofit groups and adult service groups, like the Kiwanis or Rotary Club. He said it's important to develop relationships with local media outlets to help publicize volunteer work and draw more support. *The* (Toledo) *Blade* and Buckeye CableSystem both provide



Springfield High School students Kurt Metz, left, and Brian Chamberlain help out at Rosary Care Center on Lourdes University campus following Leadership, Learning & Serving Together; 40 northwest Ohio students volunteered at the center. "We appreciated so much the enthusiasm and willingness of students to do anything we asked of them," said Cheryl King, Rosary Care Center director.

funding for the Toledo region's Students in Action initiative, and both media outlets actively report on student volunteer efforts.

Northwest Ohio students involved in SIA are part of a broader volunteer effort across the country. Last year, SIA groups throughout the U.S. logged 1.5 million hours of community service, making an estimated \$31.5 million impact. Students who participate in SIA are eligible to compete for the Jefferson Awards for Public Service, the so-called Nobel Prize for public service.

Maryann D. Younger, national director for the Jefferson Awards for Public Service, said her nonprofit group hopes to spread Students in Action to more schools across the country. The group also has launched a website, www.youthservicechallenge.net, with resources to help students at any school spearhead volunteer projects, as well as record service hours.

"The millions of hours students are logging is impressive, but what's better than that in my mind is the impact that service has had on students," Younger said. "These are not the just the leaders of tomorrow, they're the leaders of today." ■

Editor's note: To learn more about Students in Action or the Jefferson Awards for Public Service, contact **Maryann D. Younger** at m.younger@jeffersonawards.org or (302) 295-0532.



OSBA to be spotlighted in national event

Bryan Bullock, assistant editor

The Buckeye state is poised to make another big splash at the National School Boards Association Annual Conference & Exposition. The 73rd annual event will take place April 13-15 at the San Diego Convention Center.

“OSBA and Ohio public schools have maintained a strong presence at the annual event,” said OSBA Executive Director **Richard Lewis**. “I’m pleased with the large group of Ohioans heading to this year’s conference, which is a great opportunity to share expertise and learn from others.”

At NSBA’s invitation, nine OSBA staff members are scheduled to present conference workshops, including a representative from nearly all of the association’s divisions. OSBA state and regional leaders are participating in the NSBA Delegate Assembly Business Meeting, National Black Caucus of School Board Members events and Council of Urban Boards of Education sessions. Following are the sessions Ohioans are participating in, according to NSBA’s schedule as of late January.

NSBA Delegate Assembly Business Meeting

The assembly — NSBA’s governing body — is composed

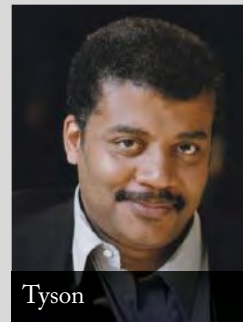
NSBA conference boasts standout speakers

First General Session, Saturday, April 13 – Geena Davis

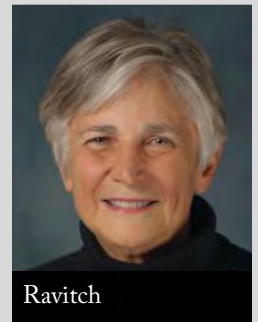
From “Thelma and Louise” to “The Accidental Tourist,” **Geena Davis** is probably best known as an Academy Award-winning actress. But her work off the screen is even more impressive. A member of Mensa, she founded the nonprofit Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media. She works with film and television creators to reduce gender stereotyping and increase the number of female characters in media targeted for children 11 and under. Hear from Davis how media plays a key role in children’s development, and how her organization is making a difference.



Davis



Tyson



Ravitch

Second General Session, Sunday, April 14 – Dr. Neil deGrasse Tyson

Educated in the public schools of New York City, **Dr. Neil deGrasse Tyson** took his passion for science to Harvard and Columbia and then went on to become one of the world’s most engaging and passionate science advocates. From PBS to NASA to presidential commissions, organizations have depended on Tyson’s down-to-earth approach to astrophysics. He has been a frequent guest on “The Daily Show,” “Real Time with Bill Maher” and “Jeopardy!” In his own words, he wants to reach “all the

people who never knew how much they’d love learning about space and science.”

Third General Session, Monday, April 15 – Diane Ravitch

Those who attended the 2012 OSBA Capital Conference are familiar with **Diane Ravitch**’s powerful message about the value of public schools. A former U.S. assistant secretary of education, Ravitch once strongly supported the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). But, after witnessing NCLB’s true impact, she now speaks out against standardized testing, charter schools and vouchers. She is a New York University professor and author whose most recent book is *The Life and Death of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice are Undermining Education*.

of 150 representatives from state school boards associations around the nation. OSBA delegates to the assembly are: President **Charlie Wilson, Worthington City**; President-elect **Jo Ann W. Feltner, Franklin City**; Immediate Past President **Sharon E. Manson, Waverly City** and **Pike County Career Technology Center**; **Bob Vasquez, Toledo City**; and alternate member **Cathy Johnson, South-Western City**.

Lewis also is attending the meeting, as well as the State Association Executive Directors Meeting and the NSBA Liaison Committee Meeting.

National Black Caucus of School Board Members

The caucus promotes NSBA’s goals and provides leadership to help school board members enhance student educational opportunities through collaborations that foster excellence and equity in public schools. Representing OSBA in the organization are caucus Chair-elect **Tawana Lynn Keels, Princeton City** and **Great Oaks ITCD**; and caucus Secretary-Treasurer **Catherine D. Ingram, Cincinnati City**.

Council of Urban Boards of Education (CUBE)

This NSBA group helps urban school board leaders find solutions to challenges at the local level by sharing innovative practices through conferences, legislative advocacy, research projects, networking, publications and more. OSBA members who are participating in council activities include **Lock P. Beachum Sr.**, immediate past chair of the CUBE Steering Committee and a **Youngstown City** school board member; and CUBE Steering Committee members **Bruce D. Alexander, Akron City**; and **Willetta Milam, Cleveland Municipal**.

National Association of Superintendent Searchers (NASS)

NASS collaborates with NSBA to provide a forum for state and national school board association superintendent searchers to share information and best practices. Superintendents and those interested in becoming a superintendent also are welcome to meet with NASS representatives. OSBA Director of School Board Services and NASS Immediate Past Chair **Kathy LaSota** and Deputy Director of School Board Services **Cheryl W. Ryan** will help staff the NASS station. They also will attend the NASS Annual Business Meeting.

Meet the Experts workshops

These sessions offer opportunities to learn from groups and individuals who are not directly associated with a particular school district, but have vital information to share with school board members and other educational leaders. Following are the OSBA staff presentations.

Ryan is leading a workshop titled “Good, Better, Best: Solving 10 of the Toughest Board Challenges” on April 13. The session addresses common tasks facing boards, including



Ohio’s representatives participate in the 2012 NSBA Delegate Assembly.

superintendent evaluations and new policies and regulations.

Ryan and NASS search consultants from several other state school boards associations are leading a session focusing on the challenges of executive searches. The April 14 workshop “Superintendent Selection — Why You Need To Do It Right” will help board members understand legal and practical responsibilities during the superintendent search process.

Ryan and LaSota will present “Your Board of Education Meetings: Magic or Madness?” on April 13. The session will feature a mock board meeting video that gives insights into the do’s and don’ts of boardmanship.

LaSota will lead another workshop — “What Am I: Manager or Leader?” — on April 14. This session will feature a scenario-based discussion designed to improve school governance.

Policy Consultant **Kenna S. Haycox** will present “I Didn’t Know There was a Policy For That ...”. The April 13 workshop will help administrators and board members understand, develop and implement effective policies.

Deputy Executive Director **Rob Delane** will present “Can



This Relationship Be Saved — A Board/Superintendent Partnership” on April 14. He will highlight data, communication strategies and role-playing scenarios to show how boards and superintendents can work together more effectively. Delane also is participating in the Deputy Executive Directors Meeting.

Senior School Board Services Consultant Dr. **Richard J. Caster** is leading a workshop titled “A Realistic Study of School Threats: What Board Members and Administrators Need to Know to Protect Students and Staff.” The April 14 presentation will focus on student safety, including internal and external acts of school violence.

Communication Coordinator **Bryan Bullock** and Staff Attorney **Candice L. Christon** will present “Embracing Social Media: A Legal and Logistical Guide” on April 15. The session will cover legal and practical information to start, manage or expand a social media campaign.

Director of Management Services **Van D. Keating** and Deputy Director of Labor Relations **Renee L. Fambro** will lead the session “Negotiations in Times of Change.” The April 15 workshop will highlight the impact of new state

legislation on the collective bargaining process, and what other states can learn from Ohio.

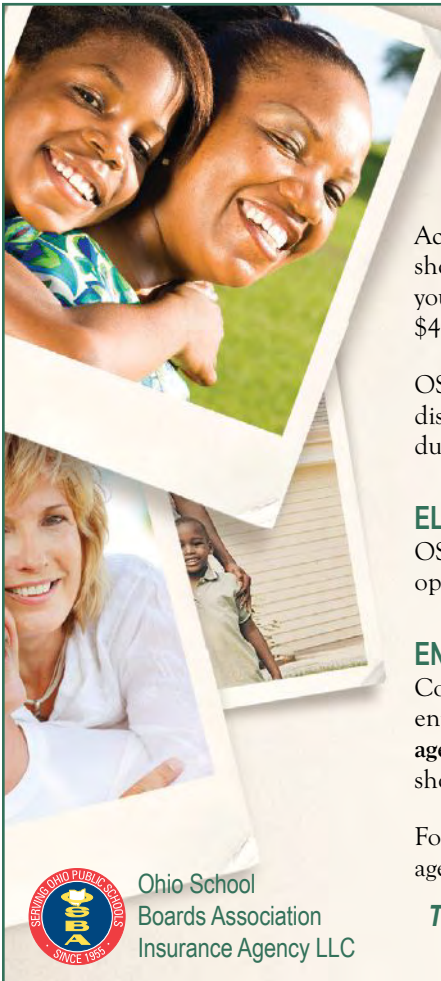
The Ohio Reception

OSBA is hosting a reception for Ohio’s conference attendees on April 13 in the Hilton San Diego Bayfront’s Indigo Ballroom.

The reception provides an informal atmosphere for education leaders to discuss current issues and share their thoughts with peers. Ohioans registered for the conference will receive invitations to the reception in early March.

The NSBA Annual Conference offers OSBA staff members and Ohio school district leaders outstanding opportunities to share their expertise and gather information, ideas and contacts that enable them to better serve Ohio schools and their students. Networking and learning at this national level also provides fresh approaches that help OSBA provide its members with the superior services and creative solutions they need to successfully lead their districts.

For complete conference details and to register, visit <http://annualconference.nsba.org>. ■



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For more information, contact **Janice Smith**, chief financial officer and licensed insurance agent, at (800) 589-OSBA, (614) 540-4000 or jsmith@ohioschoolboards.org.

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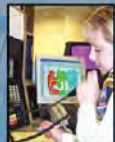


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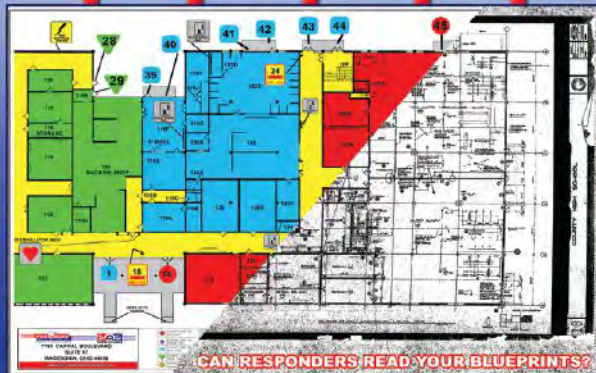


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