



Northwestern Ohio Education Association
NEWSLETTER

www.nwoea.org

Over 9,600 Members

101 West Sandusky – Suite 302 • Findlay, Ohio 45840 • Tel: 800-366-9632 • Fax: 419-422-3417

NWOEA Endorses Dan Greenberg

Dan Greenberg (Sylvania) has announced his candidacy for the office of NEA Director #5. Dan was endorsed by the NWOEA Board of Directors at its November meeting and by the NWOEA delegates at the 2017 OEA Fall RA. The election for the position of NEA Director #5 will take place at the OEA Spring RA on May 11, 2018.

Dan is currently serving his first year as the NWOEA Unit I Representative on the OEA Board of Directors. In 2012 he was elected to the NWOEA Board of Directors as a Unit I Representative, a position he held until June 2013 when he was appointed as the NWOEA Vice President. At the local level, Dan is in his fifth year as President of the Sylvania

Education Association (SEA). He has also served as his local's Vice-President, the SEA Representative on the AFL-CIO Council, a member of the Sylvania Labor-

Management Relations Committee, and a negotiator on the bargaining team.

Dan is in his twentieth year of teaching and is currently instructing English at Sylvania Southview High School. He received his Bachelor's Degree from Kent State University and his Master's Degree from Marygrove University.

Eager to improve the education profession, Dan states: "Public education is under attack, and our collective action as part of the education association, at all levels, is the way to stand up for our schools and our students. I am committed to finding ways to connect with and empower our members, to increase the strength of our association and the power of our voice." ■



From left, Miriam Downing and Ernest Daugherty (Lima) and Katherine Jensen (Sylvania) congratulate Dan Greenberg on his endorsement for the position of NEA Director #5 by the NWOEA Delegates at the OEA Fall RA.

NWOEA Board of Directors Appoints Three

At its first board meeting in September, the NWOEA Board of Directors appointed Recording Secretary Jennifer Gent (TAWLS) to fill the vacancy of Vice President and Brenda Ames (Kenton) to fill one of the two vacant Unit II positions. At the November meeting, Anna Drake-Kotz (Sylvania) was appointed to replace Jennifer Gent as the NWOEA Recording Secretary. All three will serve on the Board of Directors until the next NWOEA RA scheduled for April 12, 2018, when elections will be held for these positions. ■

Jennifer Gent - Vice President



Jennifer Gent (TAWLS) is a language arts teacher at Washington Junior High School and an active member of the Teachers Association of Washington Local Schools. She has

been serving as the NWOEA Recording Secretary since April 2014. She also has been serving as the chair of the NWOEA Resolutions Committee, a member of the NWOEA Budget Committee, and the NWOEA Representative on the OEA Resolutions Committee.

Brenda Ames - Unit II Representative



Brenda Ames (Elida) was hired this year as a 5th grade Language Arts teacher for Elida Schools after teaching for three years at Kenton. Brenda served

as the Kenton Education Association Social Committee Chair from 2015-2017. She has been a local delegate to the OEA RA for the past two years and attended the 2016 OEA Summer Academy.

Anna Drake-Kotz - Recording Secretary



Anna Drake-Kotz (Sylvania) taught for one year in the Toledo Public Schools before coming to the Sylvania Schools where she is currently teaching 8th

grade science. During her five years at Arbor Hills Junior High she has been a building representative for the Sylvania Education Association. Anna has also served her local as a member of the OTES Committee and the Organizing Committee and as the Treasurer for the Sylvania EA PAC.

February 1, 2018
Deadline for Election
of NWOEA Delegates
& Alternates

February 10, 2018
Deadline to Submit
NWOEA Election
Results to NWOEA Center

April 12, 2018
NWOEA RA
Bowling Green
High School

May 11-12, 2018
OEA Spring RA
Greater Columbus
Convention Center



Preparing for the Future

*Notes from
NWOEA
President
Jennifer Long*

Now that 2017 has come to a close, we can reflect on our blessings and be thankful for our friends, family, students and fellow educators. After twenty-six years in public education I am thankful each day for the students I teach and the challenges and inspiration they give me each day. Just as we face challenges in our own classrooms each day with an attitude of perseverance, we will need to keep the same attitude as we face the loss of Fair Share Fee as a result of the Janus vs. AFSCME case that will go before the United States Supreme Court in 2018. The Janus case is a US Supreme Court

case that addresses the right of public sector unions to collect fair share fees from non-members. This is an organized attack to weaken the association. We must remember that a strong union provides better working and learning conditions. A strong union allows us to advocate for our students and exercise our collective power to influence change and the future of public education.

In the coming months it will be vital to the future of our association to build visibility and relevancy with our members. Local leaders are encouraged to engage with members and listen to their members through one-on-one conversations. We must communicate who we are, what we do and what is at stake. Engaged members will remain members whether fair share fees exist or not. I encourage local leaders to enlist the help of the local executive committee, board of directors or fellow officers to create a culture of relevance

and visibility at the local level. As I prepare for my Executive Committee meetings in my local, I will pose these three questions.

1. What did we do last month to be more relevant and visible to our members?
2. What are we going to do next month to be more relevant and visible to our members?
3. What can we do to support our members as a professional resource and to support student learning and achievement?

I challenge each local in NWOEA to engage more members, identify their strengths and nurture and develop new leaders as we prepare for the challenges of the New Year. The strength of the Ohio Education Association was built before fair share fee and to quote OEA President Becky Higgins, "We existed before fair share fee and we will still be here when there is no fair share fee."

As we begin the New Year may we be blessed and recognize that together we are stronger and together we will meet the challenges of the future. ■

2017 OEA Fall RA

The 2017 Ohio Education Association Fall Representative Assembly (OEA RA) was held December 2 at Cardinal Hall on the Ohio State Fairgrounds. Of the 816 registered delegates in attendance, 54 were from NWOEA, representing 19 locals and the NWOEA-Retired. Contributions to the Fund for Children and Public Education (FCPE) totaled \$30,937.99. Delegates voted to adopt the proposed 2017-2018 Legislative Policies for Achieving Excellence in Education as amended. They also passed the following New Business Items:

- New Business Item #1: OEA will request information on the number of seniors who are on track to graduate, given their specific guidelines, from local presidents by the end of February and share the information with members through existing communication channels.
- New Business Item #2: Create an OEA Special Education Work Group to develop recommendations for professional development programs, sample contract language, OEA Resolutions, and OEA Legislative Policies that would address the needs of OEA members involved in or supporting education programs for students with special needs.

All candidates running for Ohio Governor were invited to address the delegates. The following candidates accepted the invitation and were warmly greeted: Connie Pillich, Joe Schiavoni, Betty Sutton, and Nan Whaley. However, it was Senator Sherrod Brown who received the loudest, biggest positive reaction from the RA floor. ■



Left: Brenda Ames (Elida) and Amanda Dyer (Kenton) had the opportunity to meet Senator Sherrod Brown at the OEA RA.

NWOEA Offers \$1,000 Graduate Scholarship

Applications for the \$1,000 NWOEA Graduate Memorial Scholarship are available to NWOEA members pursuing graduate study in the education field, **excluding administration**. This scholarship provides Northwestern Ohio Education Association the opportunity to assist members who are involved in their local and district associations and are pursuing their education goals in the field of teaching.

To obtain a copy of the application form, contact the NWOEA Center at 1-800-366-9632 or nwoea_center@sbcglobal.net or visit the NWOEA web site at www.nwoea.org. The deadline to submit the completed application to the Center is Monday, January 22, 2018. Finalists will be interviewed on Thursday, March 8, 2018, and the recipient will be recognized at the NWOEA Representative Assembly on Thursday, April 12, 2018, at the High School in Bowling Green, Ohio. ■

STRS Ohio Makes Funding Progress



By *Tim Myers, STRS Board Member and Past Chair*

Each year, STRS Ohio’s actuarial consultant prepares a report that measures the financial condition of the pension fund. The annual pension valuation report provides a “snapshot” of the fund at the end of each fiscal year. Segal Consulting shared its report with the Retirement Board in October, and results show the system’s funding improved during fiscal year 2017. The most common ways to express the financial condition of the fund are through the funded ratio and the funding period. The funded ratio is the value of assets compared to the benefits earned by members of the system (the actuarial accrued liabilities in actuary-speak). This year’s report showed the funded ratio improved to 75.1% from 69.6% last year. The funding period is a projection of the amount of time it would take to reach 100% funded status under current assumptions and benefit levels. STRS Ohio’s funding period also improved, dropping to 18.4 years from 26.6 last year.

The two primary reasons for the funding improvement were the COLA reduction and strong investment returns. In the fall issue of this newsletter, I shared that STRS Ohio’s investment return topped 14% in fiscal 2017 and ranked in the top 20% of public funds. The positive returns leave the pension fund with a net \$155 million in deferred investment gains that will be recognized over the next three years. The fund uses a common actuarial technique called “smoothing” to spread investment gains and losses over a four-year period rather than a one-year “spike” each year.

The board’s decision to reduce the COLA to 0% had a substantial impact on the system’s funded status. Segal shared that without this change, STRS Ohio’s funded ratio would be just 66.6% and the funding period would have increased to 50.4 years. The state of Ohio wants pension funds to have a funding period of no more than 30 years. Other important points from the report include:

- STRS Ohio’s Defined Benefit and Combined Plans paid more than \$7 billion in benefits during the fiscal year.
- The retirement system’s unfunded actuarial accrued liability decreased to \$23.9 billion from \$30.6 billion.
- Total covered payroll increased by 4.1%, exceeding STRS Ohio’s payroll growth assumption of 3%.

While the funding improvement is good news for the system, we still need to focus on increasing the funded ratio. The current ratio of 75.1% is the highest level we have reached since the great recession, but still leaves STRS Ohio vulnerable to the negative effects of a stock market correction. Staff notes that, because of the volatility around investment returns, STRS Ohio faces about a 30% chance that the pension fund drops below a 50% funded ratio in the next 10 years. The board and staff will continue to work together to monitor STRS Ohio’s financial strength and are committed to open and honest communication with you about your pension fund. You can keep up to date on the latest news about STRS Ohio by signing up to receive an eUPDATE following each Retirement Board meeting. You can register for these emails by logging into your personal account via the STRS Ohio website and updating your communication preferences. You can also receive regular updates by following STRS Ohio on Facebook and Twitter, or visit the News section on the STRS Ohio website at www.strsoh.org. ■

FCPE Contributions Acknowledged at OEA Fall RA

The following NWOEA members were recognized for their continued donations to the OEA Fund for Children and Public Education (FCPE):

Executive Club

(\$500 in 5 years)

Angela Dittman - Findlay EA
Tiffany Fries - Bellevue EA

Presidents Club

(\$1000 in 8 years)

Rebecca Conklin - Evergreen EA
Dan Greenberg - Sylvania EA
Marsha Hawley - Sylvania EA
Christopher Hodnicki - TA of Washington Local

Lifetime Achievement

(\$3,000 total)

Jennifer Long - McComb TEA
Rhea Young - TA of Washington Local

The following NWOEA local associations were recognized for contributions made by their members in 2016-2017. Awards are based on per capita contributions:

Locals with 5-75 members

McComb TEA - \$14.34 per member
Pandora-Gilboa EA - \$10.36 per member
Seneca East EA - \$9.56 per member

Local with 76-200 members

Liberty Center CTA - \$23.96 per member

Congratulations to All!

Engage Grant Funding to Attend 2018 OEA Spring RA

The NWOEA Local Delegate Assistance to OEA Spring RA Engage Grant helps locals to become involved in the Association at the state level by providing funding to a local that has not sent delegates to an OEA RA in the previous two school years. One delegate from an eligible local can receive reimbursement of up to \$250 for overnight lodging and mileage to the 2018 OEA Spring RA. Itemized receipts are required for reimbursement of up to \$250. Any delegate interested in applying for this grant should submit a letter of interest including delegate contact information and local association president’s signature. Letters should be sent by March 30, 2018, to the NWOEA Center, 101 W. Sandusky Street, Suite 302, Findlay, Ohio 45840. ■

To learn more about NWOEA, upcoming events, scholarships and grants

Visit the NWOEA Website www.nwoea.org



Find us on Facebook

facebook.com/NorthwesternOEA

Run for Seat on the NWOEA Board of Directors

Get to know other leaders in the district, learn what is going on in other locals, and find out about opportunities at the state level. Below is the list of positions that are up for election at the NWOEA Representative Assembly on April 12, 2018. The OEA Constitution & Bylaws was recently amended to modify the beginning and ending dates of the terms of the OEA Officers and Board of Directors. Since the NWOEA Constitution states the all officers and members of the Board of Directors elected at the RA shall assume office concurrently with the officers and members of the Board of Directors of the OEA, NWOEA will also be using the July 15 and July 14 as the beginning and ending dates and will be phasing in these dates as reflected in the terms of the offices below.

1. President, two-year term 7/15/2018-7/14/2020
 - * 2. Vice President, term effective immediately and ending 7/14/2018
 - * 3. Vice President, two-year term 7/15/2018-7/14/2020
 4. Recording Secretary, term effective immediately and ending 7/14/2019
 5. Board of Directors, Unit I, three-year term 9/1/2018-7/14/2021
 6. Board of Directors, Unit II, term effective immediately and ending 8/31/2019
 7. Board of Directors, Unit II, term effective immediately and ending 7/14/2020
 8. Board of Directors, Unit II, three-year term 9/1/2018-7/14/2021
 9. Board of Directors, Unit III, three-year term 9/1/2018-7/14/2021
 10. At-Large Education Support Professionals Representative, term effective immediately and ending 8/31/2019
 11. OEA Board of Directors, Unit III, three-year term 9/1/2018-7/14/2021
- * A candidate may run for either or both of the two Vice President positions.

If you are interested in running for any of the NWOEA offices (1-10), send a letter of intent stating the position(s) for which you are declaring yourself a candidate to the NWOEA Center at 101 W. Sandusky St., Suite 302, Findlay, OH 45840 or nwoea_wisebaker@sbcglobal.net. The deadline for filing letters of intent is February 11, 2018.

If you are interested in the OEA Board of Directors position (11), contact your local president or Carol Price at OEA Headquarters (1-800-282-1500 ext. 3169 or pricec@ohea.org) to request a Declaration of Candidacy Form. The OEA form must be received in Columbus no later than January 27, 2018. You must also send a copy of the completed form to the NWOEA Center.

The NWOEA Board of Directors meets approximately three times a year at the NWOEA Center in Findlay and has a year-end review and planning meeting in June. Members of the board serve on NWOEA committees, attend UniServ meetings, and communicate with local presidents about NWOEA activities. Board members are also encouraged to attend such NWOEA events as workshops, RA's, and the Awards Banquet. When attending district activities and meetings, NWOEA Board members are reimbursed for mileage at the IRS rate, provided meals, and furnished lodging when necessary.

If you have questions, please contact the NWOEA Center at 1-800-366-9632 or nwoea_center@sbcglobal.net. ■

NWOEA Hosts Pre-Retirement Workshop

NWOEA is hosting a Pre-Retirement Workshop to be held March 21, 2018. Valuable information will be presented for members planning to retire within the next ten years. The workshop will be held in the Lindamood Room (lower level) of the Findlay Hancock County Public Library, 206 Broadway Street, Findlay, Ohio 45840. Registration opens at 5:00 p.m. and a light meal will be available. The workshop runs from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Plenty of parking is available, and attendees should enter through the main entrance (east side of the library).

There is no cost but registration is required. To register, please contact the NWOEA Center by calling 1-800-366-9632 or email nwoea_center@sbcglobal.net by March 12, 2018 and give your name and a contact phone number. ■

Represent Your Local at the 2018 NWOEA RA

The 71st annual NWOEA Representative Assembly (RA) will be held on Thursday, April 12, 2018 in the cafeteria of Bowling Green High School. Local associations must hold elections for NWOEA delegates and alternates by Thursday, February 1, 2018. Election results must be submitted to the NWOEA Center by Saturday, February 10, 2018.

Delegates will elect NWOEA Officers and members of the Board of Directors, adopt the 2018-2019 budget, endorse candidates for statewide positions, and approve proposals to amend the Constitution and Bylaws, resolutions, and new business items. Addressing the delegates will be OEA Officers, NEA Directors, and any statewide or district candidates running in contested races. Delegates will have

the opportunity to donate to the Fund for Children and Public Education (FCPE) and to participate in many drawings.

Doors to the RA open at 5:00 PM, and sandwiches and snacks will be available at this time. The tentative start time for the Delegate Orientation is 5:15 PM. The first RA session begins at 5:45 PM and registration closes at 6:00 PM. Deadline for submission of New Business Items and Resolutions is 6:30 PM.

First-time delegates attending the NWOEA RA are encouraged to attend a brief orientation session prior to the RA. Local presidents are asked to mark first-time attendees on the NWOEA delegate certification form so that the new delegates will receive notification of the orientation session. This session is also open to veteran delegates who wish to attend. ■

2017 NWOEA FALL WORKSHOP

Sixty-six members representing twenty-one locals plus NWOEA-R attended the NWOEA Fall Workshop at the Perrysburg Junior High School on October 24. During the dinner OEA Vice President Scott DiMauro gave a report as to current legislation that would impact public education and a Campaign 2017 update stressing the importance of the November elections. Following the meal, members attended one of the following break-out sessions:

 **Google for Educators**
Dolores Swineford
TAWLS

 **Using Digital Instruction to Individualize and Differentiate Learning for All Students**
David Budas and Kathleen Pollock
Sylvania EA

 **Take the Lead and Succeed**
Becky Biesiada, Angela Dittman,
and Ryan Lindahl
Findlay EA

 **STRS Update**
Mark Hill
STRS Board Chair

 **Ohio's New Educators (O.N.E.)**
Peter Witzler
NEA Organizational Specialist



Members network with one another prior to dinner at the Fall Workshop held this year at Perrysburg Junior High School.



Members attending the session Google for Educators consider how they can enhance classroom instruction and become paperless.



During the breakout session Using Digital Instruction to Individualize and Differentiate Learning for All Students members learn how to use technology to meet the needs of all students.



From left: Congratulations to Shane Bergman (McComb), winner of the gift card door prize, and to Peter Witzler (NEA presenter), winner of the Share of the Wealth Drawing.



From left: Joe Bihn (McComb), Karen Schroeder (Miller City – New Cleveland), and Tom Przybylski (Perrysburg) display gifts they won from the Fund Raising Drawing.



From left: Shannon Kuhlman (Kenton), Don Jones (Carey), Karen Schroeder (Miller City – New Cleveland), and Don Traxler (NWOEA-R) were the winners of the Fund Raising Drawing for gift cards.

Looking for News about Members

If you or someone in your local has recently been honored or has done something significant in the education field, please contact the NWOEA Office at **1-800-366-9632** or e-mail **nwoea_center@sbcglobal.net** for possible publication in the NWOEA newsletter, website (**www.nwoea.org**), or Facebook (**facebook.com/NorthwesternOEA**).

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Fund Raising Committee Member Sue Cramer (left) presents the \$75 worth of gift cards to Karen Plott (Kenton) who was the winner of the Christmas Shopping Spree Drawing held at the OEA Fall RA. Thanks go to Sue for obtaining the gift cards for the drawing.

34th ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET

Come celebrate with NWOEA at the 34th Annual Awards Recognition Program as we honor individuals nominated by their local for their contributions to their association either on the local or district level. NWOEA will also present certificates to locals that have increased membership by at least 5% or have 100% membership.



- DATE:** Tuesday, March 6, 2018
- PLACE:** Findlay Country Club, 1500 Country Club Drive
- TIME:** Cash Bar: 6:00 – 6:30 PM Dinner: 6:30 –7:30 PM Presentations: 7:30 PM
- MENU:** Yankee Pot Roast (please call the NWOEA Center if you special dietary needs)
- COST:** \$15.00 NWOEA members/\$25.00 non-members



Attendance at the Awards Banquet will count as one of the two attendance requirements for a 2017-2018 PR Grant.

Please complete the reservation form below and return with check payable to NWOEA to NWOEA Center, 101 W. Sandusky Street, Suite 302, Findlay, OH 45840 by Monday, February 26, 2018.

I would like to make _____ reservation(s) at a cost of \$15.00 per member/\$25.00 per non-member.

I have enclosed a check payable to NWOEA in the amount of \$ _____.

*Name _____

Local Association _____ Phone _____
No Abbreviations

Address _____
Street City State Zip

Email to Confirm Registration _____

**Please attach a list of other names included in this registration.*

The deadline for the submission of award nomination forms is January 16, 2018. If you need a nomination form, please call 1-800-366-9632 or go online to www.nwoea.org