

Winter 2024

COMMUNIQUE

Publication for Members of Central OEA/NEA • Adrienne M. Bowden, President



**Conferences, Workshops and Scholarships
– Designed for YOU**

ESP Conversations (January & April)

**Central Wellness
Wednesdays
(February & April)**

**POWER UP!
Central OEA/NEA
Professional
Development
Conference
(March)**

**Continuing
Education
Scholarship
for Members
(Apply Now!)**

**Central OEA/NEA
Diversity Conference
How to Hurdle Cultural and
Language Barriers (February)**

**Central OEA/NEA
Vivian Brown Educational Scholarship
for College Students (Apply Now!)**



Educator Mental Health In the New Year: Recharge, Refresh... Take Care of You!

Adrienne M. Bowden (Pickerington EA VP), Central President & NEA Director

We as educators know that teaching is one of the most stressful professions, especially since COVID-19. Post-COVID, there have been many changes and increased stressors in our profession. Classrooms, worksites, and students have become more isolated. Students tend to come to school unprepared to learn. Student behaviors have increased in intensity. The load work most educators are asked to complete cannot be accomplished in a single workday.

Our health is often neglected. Many of us prioritize the health and well-being of others, particularly our students, and when we try to assist them, we forget to take care of ourselves in the process. Yet during these times, it is more important than ever that our local school district administrators and policymakers take meaningful action to support educator mental health (i.e., smaller class sizes, better wages, better work-life balance, and sufficient work resources). These supports are needed to assist our current workforce, encourage college students to major in education, and stop the growing teacher and support professional shortage.

We need to remember that burnout is real. Burnout can have serious personal effects and impact student learning. As we enter the new year, we must remember that we cannot pour from an empty cup. We need to find ways to practice self-care and set healthy boundaries. If we are healthier, we can provide a better learning environment where our students can flourish as learners.

Central and OEA are working to provide opportunities to assist members with their wellness.

OEA Wellness Events: Wellness Wednesday
The OEA Wellness Cadre is a member-led group that mobilizes health and wellness experts around the state and cultivates the individual talents of a diverse group of educators, building on valuable professional skill sets and creating accessible, engaging opportunities to continuously improve support services for students and staff in all Ohio schools. To learn more, see page 3 or visit: <https://ohea.org/wellness>



Central Wellness Wednesdays

Join Central OEA/NEA for Wellness Wednesdays at 2760 Airport Dr. Suite 120B. Columbus OH 43219

Hearth Health

February 28th. 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Grab your brushes for a guided Paint 'n' Sip and enjoy some chocolate with us!

Spring Renewal

April 10th. 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
It is time for a Spring renewal! Join us for some yoga and meditation to refresh our minds and bodies

To register:

login to the Central website
(create an account if you don't have one)

Scroll down to the event you are wanting to register for and click "Going"
Wait a short moment for it to register. That's it!



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Member Spotlight

Janet Carter
(S.C.O.P.E)



Tell Central a little about yourself:

Job - I currently teach for the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections. All of my teaching has been in the field of correctional Education. I teach the Business Office Support Systems (B.O.S.S.) program.
Local - SCOPE
Year experience – 25 years

Hobbies/interests - My hobbies and interests are varied! I'm not locked into any one thing – always open to try new things. I do love to travel and do so whenever I can! I love spending time with my grandchildren and great-grandson as well.

What drew you to be active in Central OEA/NEA?

-I always listened to other members of our local talk about their experiences with Central OEA/NEA. I decided to run for the position of OEA Rep for our local so I could see firsthand what it was all about. I have since been elected numerous times to be an OEA Representative.

What committees or programs through Central OEA/NEA have you joined or completed?

- I was on the training and development committee last year and have chosen to stay on that committee. I just finished the emerging leaders' program for this past year.

What are some ways central members can be involved with central?

– I would urge other central members to join a committee. Not only does being on a committee provide insight into how decisions are made and implemented, but it provides the opportunity to meet and collaborate with new people.

What do you enjoy most about Central OEA/NEA?

This organization is very “user” friendly! Everybody is so willing to help and guide us all to having the most updated information available about Ohio Education. Since all of my teaching has been in correctional education it's always interesting to hear of the different successes or trials that public school teachers face.

ESP Advisory Committee and ESP Conversations

**Joie Moore (Pickerington SSA President),
ESP Committee Chair**

Central OEA/NEA has reinstated the ESP advisory committee this year, comprised of ESPs from the Central OEA/NEA area. The committee's objective is to address issues impacting our ESP members and explore ways in which Central can offer support.

One of the committee's initiatives is Virtual ESP Conversations.

In October, the inaugural conversation was tailored for our local ESP officers, emphasizing the significance of electing delegates for the Central OEA/NEA delegate briefing/all-area meeting and the Central Representative Assembly in the spring, as well as Delegates for the OEA Fall and Spring Representative Assemblies. The session featured insights from past delegates with extensive RA experience and a first-time delegate from the previous year, sharing their perspectives.

The upcoming Virtual ESP Conversations are scheduled for January 16, 2024, at 6:30 pm and April 23, 2024, at 6:30 pm, both on Zoom.

In January, we aim to gather input from YOU, our ESP members. The committee plans to facilitate small breakout rooms, providing ESPs with a platform to discuss key issues within their local associations or schools. These breakout sessions will foster collaboration and dialogue among participants.

Committee members will be present to guide the discussions, ensuring a smooth flow and offering recommendations on Central OEA/NEA resources that may be beneficial.

So, if you are an ESP, you can register for the ESP Conversations by visiting the Central OEA/NEA website www.centraloaneane.org and click on the “Going” button under the events page for January 16, 2024. We look forward to your participation!



Diversity Conference

How to Hurdle Cultural and Language Barriers

Tammy Shelton (SCOPE), Diversity Committee Chair

How easy would it be for you to navigate through an environment barely speaking and understanding the English language, and how comfortable would you feel knowing that not many understand your culture and your cultural needs? Well, bring a friend or a colleague and join us on February 3, 2024, at 9:00 am at our annual Central OEA/ NEA Diversity Conference, where this issue will be discussed from two points of view.

This virtual conference will consist of two sessions and a keynote speaker.

Session One -You will be introduced to a panel of youth who will openly discuss the challenges they face as a minority in their school environment and the challenges they face with communicating with others who don't understand their language and cultural barriers.

The facilitator for this session will be Marjorie Hill Langston. The students will answer questions prepared by the committee and those the attendees may have.

Session Two will be introduced to a panel of teachers, parents, and community persons who will share the challenges they face trying to communicate with those in the schools who do not, cannot, or refuse to understand their culture and language struggles.

Meaghan Coe will be the facilitator for this session. The adult panel will also take on questions prepared by the committee and those from the attendees.

We will conclude this incredible conference with our very own Linna Jordan, our keynote speaker, sharing her knowledge and wisdom on this topic. The conference will be over Zoom. Registered attendees will be sent the Zoom information two days before the conference.

Central OEA/NEA offers professional development and CEUs for the conference, which can be used toward license renewal. Registration is free to all Central OEA/NEA members, as is the case with all of Central's conferences.



Agenda

9:00 a.m. - 10:10 a.m.

Session 1 "Student Forum"

How to Hurdle Cultural and Language Barriers

A panel of students of various ethnicities will share their experience and explain the hurdles and barriers they face as a student. There will be time for Q&A during this Forum.

10:20 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Session 2 "Adult Forum"

How to Hurdle Cultural and Language Barriers

A panel of adults of various ethnicities will share their experience and explain the hurdles and barriers they face as a parent or community. There will be time for Q&A during this Forum.

11:40 a.m. - 12:10 p.m. - Keynote Speaker

12:10 p.m.

Closing Evaluation and awarding of CEU certificates.

To register

1. Log in to your Central account (or create an account if you don't have one)
2. Scroll down to "Central Diversity Conference" and click "Going"
3. Wait a short moment for it to register. That's it.

Registration for this conference is now open.

Central OEA/NEA Professional Development Conference

POWER UP!

Linna Jordan (Hilliard EA President), Membership Development Chair

Our Power Up! conference allows educators to come together in a learning-focused environment to learn techniques and share ideas and experiences with other Central OEA/NEA members. Each year, we offer relevant and timely sessions related to issues you all see in your buildings daily. As always, we intend for you to have concrete information, skills, or techniques that you can use immediately. We encourage questions for the presenters and sharing among participants.

Please mark your calendars and join us in person on Saturday, March 9, 2024, for Central OEA/NEA's Power Up! conference. This year, our focus will be on student behaviors and responding appropriately. Be an active participant while you network with colleagues and learn concrete strategies to take back to your workspace. Central OEA/NEA offers professional development and CEUs through this conference, which can be used toward license renewal. Lunch will be provided so that you have time to eat while networking. Registration is free to all Central OEA/NEA members, as is the case with all of Central's conferences.

Whether you are a classroom teacher, school counselor, paraprofessional, secretary, etc., this conference will be appropriate for your personal or professional growth. We are planning various sessions which will help ease your load. We'll start the morning with two short sessions to get us going: Shopping with NEA Member Benefits- how to use this resource to save money on purchases and Legislative Update: What's coming next in the education world? – what do we need to know about the legislative landscape in 2024? Then, we'll get into the weightier issues affecting our sites: Being proactive about student behaviors – what can we work on with kiddos ahead of issues? Helping Students Regulate – concrete strategies to use with students. PBIS- what is it, and how should it be working- many locals say they're using PBIS, but are they really?

We hope you will join us on March 9, 2024, at the Central OEA/NEA office for the Power Up Conference. Encourage your colleagues to attend this event along with you. Bring a buddy, whether a newer member to start them on the right track, a mid-career pro who needs that reassurance, or that near-retirement icon with the experience to share. Registration is required and open at www.centraloearnea.org.

The 2024 Central Power Up! Conference will take place on March 9, 2024 at the Central office, 2760 Airport Dr. Suite 120B, Columbus OH 43219.

Registration will begin at 9 a.m. and a continental breakfast will be provided.

Agenda

9:15 - 9:50 a.m.

Shopping with Your Member Benefits

9:55 - 10:30 a.m.

Policy Update: What's Coming in Education?

10:35 - 11:25 a.m.

Being Proactive About Potential Behavior Issues

Lunch (will be provided)

12:05 - 12:55 p.m.

Regulation Strategies

1:00 - 1:50 p.m.

PBIS - How it Should work

To register

- 1.** Log in to your Central account (or create an account if you don't have one)
- 2.** Scroll down to "Power Up! Conference" and click "Going"
- 3.** Wait a short moment for it to register. That's it.

POWER UP
With Central OEA/NEA PD

Central OEA/NEA Vivian Brown Educational Scholarship for College Students

The Central OEA/NEA Vivian Brown Educational Scholarship for College Students was created in memory of thirty-three-year teacher and Central OEA/NEA member Vivian Brown, who dedicated her life to the purpose of public education and the mentoring of future educators.

The purpose of the Central OEA/NEA Vivian Brown Educational Scholarship for College Students is to provide \$1,000 scholarships to students pursuing degrees in education at an Ohio university or college. This scholarship will be awarded each spring to the child of a Central OEA/NEA member.

Criteria & Eligibility

- Each applicant must be a child of a member of Central OEA/NEA district.
- Each applicant must be accepted and enrolled in a course of study leading to a degree in education at a degree-awarding university or college.
- Applications will be received beginning January 1, 2024 and no later than February 28, 2024.
- Each applicant must include two (2) recommendation letters with the application, with one (1) being from a current professor/teacher.
- The total amount of the scholarship must be used during the school year immediately following the presentation.
- Previous recipients of the Central OEA/NEA Vivian Brown Educational Scholarship for College Students are not eligible.
- Download an application at:
www.centraloearnea.org/documents/VivianBrownscholarship.pdf
- Applications and recommendation letters must be returned to:

**Central OEA/NEA
Vivian Brown
Educational
Scholarship for
College Students
2760 Airport Drive
Suite 120B
Columbus, OH 43219**



Continuing Education Scholarship for Members

The Continuing Education Scholarship for Members will be awarded each spring to a Central OEA/NEA member who is enrolled in a course of study supporting their professional role. The requirements are listed below:

One \$1000.00 scholarship will be awarded based upon the following criteria:

- The applicant must be a Central OEA/NEA member.
- The member shall be taking classes or coursework related to education.
- If the member withdraws from the class or coursework prior to completion, they must return/refund the unused portion to Central OEA/NEA.
- Deadline for application is April 1st. Selection of the winner shall be completed by the Central finance committee and approved by the Executive Board prior to the Central Representative Assembly.
- Central will send the check directly to the college or university to be applied to the members' account.
- A scholarship winner shall not be ineligible to participate in any future Continuing Education Scholarships.
- The total amount of the scholarship must be used in the fiscal year (Sept - Aug.) following the presentation.
- Each applicant must include two (2) recommendation letters with the application, with one (1) being from a Local Association Officer.
- To print an application, go to:
www.centraloearnea.org/documents/ContinuingEdScholarship.pdf

The member shall be taking classes or coursework related to education

- Initial professional educator license
- Renewal of an existing license/certificate
- Upgrade an existing license/certificate
- Earn additional licenses/certificates

Applications and recommendation letters must be returned to:

**Central OEA/NEA
Continuing Education Scholarship for Members
2760 Airport Dr. Suite 120B
Columbus OH 43219**

Demystifying OEA's Endorsement Process

Brittany Alexander (Hilliard EA)

If you've ever wondered about OEA's endorsement process for Statehouse elections, then this article aims to answer some basic questions for you.

What is a screening?

Screening refers to the process of interviewing candidates for the purpose of potential endorsement. A screening committee consists of OEA members who live and/or work within the Statehouse district's boundary, OEA Government Relations Department staff members, and the candidates who choose to participate. All certified candidates are invited to attend a screening, though not all do. The interview focuses on issues that are or could be before the legislature as they relate to education and unions.

Who can participate?

Candidate screening is open to all OEA members. If you're receiving this Communique, you can join a screening for Statehouse candidates in your area!

Why would I want to participate?

Without presuming, I'll explain why I want to participate in screenings whenever possible. First, the endorsement process is essential to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the candidates. The interview affords more detail than you would hear in a candidate's advertisement or stump speech. I believe it's also essential for potential state legislators to visually see that OEA is not limited to its officers and lobbyists. We, the members, are OEA. And we have a voice in deciding who earns our endorsement. What brings me back is the discussion following the candidates' interviews. Because every single time I screened candidates, whether we were close in consensus or far apart, I gained new perspectives from my Union siblings. Whether it ultimately changed my vote or not, it has changed me, and I'm grateful for fellow educators who added their voices to this process. It matters.

How do I get involved?

If you are interested in participating in screening candidates, it is best to contact your local president.

Triumphs in the Battle for Education

Denise Hermetz (Northwestern TA - Clark)

Elections stand as the bedrock of our democratic system, wielding the power to shape the future. In August, the OEA demonstrated the formidable influence we can wielded during the special election on Issue 1. But our impact resonates far beyond that singular event, as exemplified in the recent November elections.

A resounding victory unfolded across Ohio, with How Things Work at the Ohio Statehouse reporting a staggering defeat for "at least 70 extremist school board candidates."

OEA members stood at the forefront, hosting Meet the Candidate nights, endorsing education-friendly candidates, disseminating literature on school levies, and actively engaging with communities. The outcome? A triumph that reverberated with eleven out of sixteen school levies, spanning renewals, additions, and substitutes, securing approval in Central alone.

Our members became the architects of change, toppling extreme candidates in districts like Dublin, Gahanna-Jefferson, Worthington, and Upper Arlington schools. The ripple effect continued as one extreme candidate fell in each of Hilliard, Westerville, and Pickerington. These victories aren't just about electoral success; they shield our districts from the distracting, damaging fights often fueled by national agendas.

The significance of community-focused boards cannot be overstated. They serve as guardians, ensuring that our schools remain focused on the needs of our students and educators.

It's a testament to the power of our collective voice and the tangible impact we can achieve when we channel our efforts. As we bask in the glory of recent wins, let's not lose sight of the momentum we've built. Together, we can forge ahead, securing more victories for our schools and students in the elections that lie ahead. Our voices can and will be heard.

 COMMUNIQUE
Winter 2024



THANK YOU

**for being a member of
Central OEA/NEA**

You are the true expert in education!

You deserve a voice
in how best to educate our students.

We are here to support you.

Adrienne & Jim,
Central Leadership

**Association
Benefits**

- Free CEUs
- Liability Protection
- Improving Professional Practice
- Professional Networking



Upcoming Events

- 1/16/24 ESP Conversations
- 2/3/24 Diversity Conference
- 2/28/24 Central Wellness Wednesday
- 3/9/24 Power Up Conference
- 4/10/24 Central Wellness Wednesday
- 4/19/24 Central RA
- 4/23/24 ESP Conversations
- 5/10/24 OEA RA