

Summary: NEOEA Representative Assembly
April 9, 2022
Virtual

The North Eastern Ohio Education Association held the spring meeting of its Representative Assembly virtually on Saturday, April 9.

The Representative Assembly (RA) is the top governing body of NEOEA, following a governance structure similar to the National Education Association and the Ohio Education Association, with which NEOEA is affiliated. Representation is proportional: each local is allotted at least two delegates at NEOEA's RA, and larger locals are allotted more delegates.

The 204 delegates and 16 guests present were greeted by Rob McFee, President of NEOEA.

Presiding at the last of the RAs in his fourth year of office, NEOEA President Rob McFee reflected on being a new teacher, how he was invited into his local by a colleague, and eventually asked to be a building rep. In time, he was asked to be a UniServ representative, and that led to his deeper involvement in NEOEA on the Legislative Committee, Board of Directors, and NEOEA President. He then quoted Dr. Seuss from *Oh, The Places You'll Go*. President McFee continued by reviewing his four years as NEOEA President. He thanked Executive Director Mary Alice Conkey, his wife Karen, and NEOEA President-elect Melanie Hameed.

President McFee announced our Friend of Education Award recipient—Mandy Jablonski. Mandy is a fierce social media advocate and lobbyist for public education. Mandy founded Lorain County Supporting Our Students and Teachers. She was a leader in lobbying for minimizing state testing and ending the Third Grade Guarantee. She also advocated for increased Pathways of Graduation for seniors. Mandy resides in Elyria with her husband, Matt, a teacher at Elyria High School, and son, James, a student at Elyria High School. James was her inspiration for advocating for students across the state.

In a fundraiser conducted during the Legislative Committee's report at the Representative Assembly, delegates donated \$3,400 to the OEA Fund.

After the motion passed unanimously, STRS candidates Rob McFee, Jeff Rhodes, and Rita Walters, spoke on their history with the STRS Board and why they wish to continue to serve on the Board.

The Constitution and Bylaws Committee presented several amendments to the NEOEA Constitution. Amendment 1 makes three changes in language to recognize current practice. These changes do not alter NEOEA practice. Amendment 2 changes

the method of taking a secret ballot so that the ballot can be conducted outside the time and place that the Representative Assembly is in session. During our voting break, delegates were able to vote through Simply Voting. Both amendments were adopted: the vote for Amendment 1 was 166 for the amendment and 1 against the amendment, and the vote for Amendment 2 was 162 for the amendment and 5 against the amendment.

Positions for representatives on the Board of Directors were filled by acclamation. Sue Messinger (Parma EA) will be the NEOEA President-elect. The following Directors were re-elected: Barbara Armour (Brunswick ESP Assn.) as NEOEA ESP Representative at-large, Andrew Smith (Sheffield-Sheffield Lake TA) as NEOEA Unit 1 Representative, Stephani Itibrou (Medina City TA) as NEOEA Unit 4 Representative, Meaghan Coe (Warren EA) as OEA/NEOEA Unit 5 Representative, Jason Scherer as OEA/NEOEA Unit 8 Representative, and Jen Hein (Brunswick ESP Assn.) as NEOEA Unit 9 West Representative. Lauren Stanislaw (Bay TA) will be the new OEA/NEOEA Unit 2 Representative. The NEOEA Unit 7 position remains vacant.

Delegates endorsed candidates for statewide positions to be elected by the OEA Representative Assembly on May 7:

- Scott DiMauro for OEA President; and
- Deborah Jackson for OEA Director-at-large.

The 2022-23 Budget was presented and was adopted by unanimous consent.

Delegates honored the winners of the Positive Image Awards for 2021-22:

- Euclid Teachers' Association for their Holiday Food Drive
- Chris Forgacs and Libby Frato-Sweeney from Garfield EA for Military Wall of Honor
- Hubbard Education Association for Hubbard Teachers Christmas Gifts
- Peter Orr from Lakeland Faculty Assn. for Lake County Pop-Up Covid Testing Site
- Niles Students for the Environment from Niles EA for Baby Drive
- Parma Education Association for Thanksgiving Food Drive

Northeastern Ohio delegates to the Ohio Representative Assembly met in caucus to review procedures before the OEA RA when it meets on May 7.

Delegates received reports from OEA President Scott DiMauro, OEA Vice President Jeff Wensing, and OEA Secretary-Treasurer Mark Hill.

The Representative Assemblies for 2022-23 will meet on November 12, 2022, and April 22, 2023.