

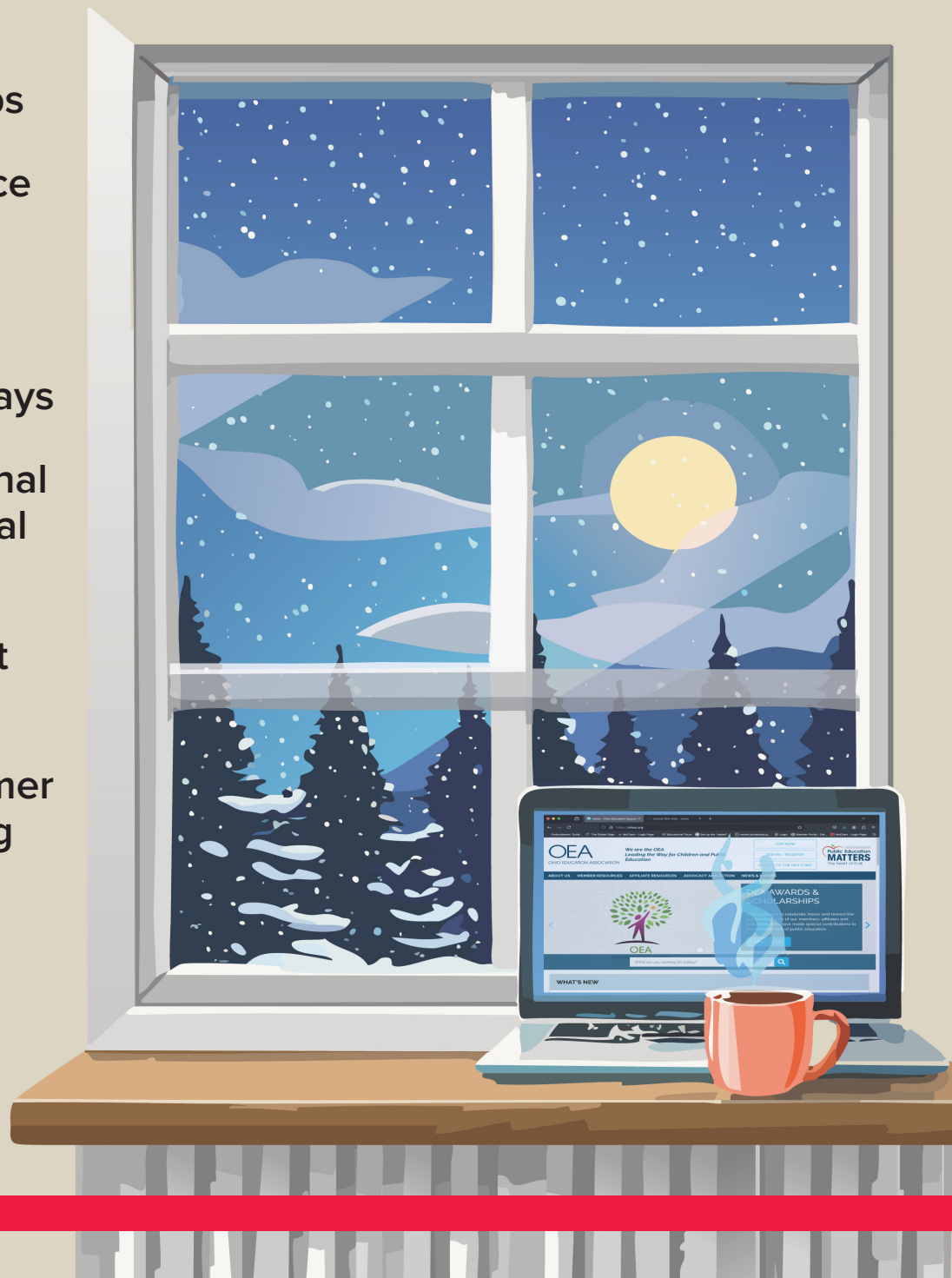
# COMMUNIQUE

Publication for Members of Central OEA/NEA • Jim Templeton, President



## Opportunities Abound in this Issue

- Central Scholarships
- Diversity Conference
- Power Up! Conference
- Wellness Wednesdays
- Nominate Exceptional Members for Central OEA/NEA Awards
- OEA New President Hour Series
- 2025 Central Summer Leadership Training



# Strategic Focus: Central OEA/NEA's Key Priorities for the Year Ahead

Jim Templeton (Northeastern EA), Central OEA/NEA President

Dear Members,

I am honored to write to you as the new President of Central OEA/NEA. Since being appointed to this role in August, I've spent time reflecting on our collective journey as a labor organization representing over 22,000 dedicated educators across central Ohio. I'm proud to lead an organization with a legacy of strength, advocacy, and commitment to the well-being of our members and the communities we serve.

Our mission remains steadfast: to enhance respect for educators and advance the cause of public education by supporting the goals of our state and local affiliates. Central OEA/NEA has long been a voice for teachers and education support professionals, fostering a future where quality education is accessible for all. We have achieved much together, but the work ahead demands even greater resolve and collaboration.

**This coming year, our focus will be on three key areas:**

## 1. Reflecting on Communication and Collaboration

Central OEA/NEA has consistently prioritized clear communication and meaningful collaboration with our members and local leadership. By working closely with educators and fostering connections within and beyond our organization, we have strengthened relationships and ensured our members' voices are heard and respected. This ongoing commitment has laid the groundwork for our shared success.

## 2. Empowering Members through Training and Development

Professional development is at the heart of supporting educators in their vital roles. Central OEA/NEA will expand opportunities for training that equip members with leadership skills, innovative practices, and tools for success. Whether you're an emerging leader or a retired educator, we are committed to helping you thrive.

## 3. Advocating for Political and Educational Change

As public education continues to face challenges, we must be unwavering in our advocacy for policies that support our students and communities. Our political action initiatives will focus on increasing member engagement in the legislative process and raising awareness of the critical role educators play in shaping the future.

I am inspired by the dedication and passion of our members every day. Your tireless efforts in classrooms, schools, and communities embody the very essence of what makes public education a cornerstone of our society. Together, let's continue to build on the strong foundation laid by those who came before us, ensuring Central OEA/NEA remains a force for good in education.

Thank you for trusting me to serve as your President. I look forward to working alongside each of you as we navigate the opportunities and challenges ahead.

In solidarity,  
Jim Templeton  
President, Central OEA/NEA



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# Central Conference Scholarships

As part of our mission, Central OEA/NEA offers members scholarships to attend Central, OEA, and NEA conferences and events that promote leadership, involvement, diversity, and building and supporting locals. Members must apply online. [www.centraloearnea.org/for-members/scholarships](http://www.centraloearnea.org/for-members/scholarships)

Scholarships are awarded as board-approved funds are available. The goal is to award scholarships to first-time applicants on a first-come, first-served basis.

The scholarship funds will typically not cover the entire cost of the conference. They are reimbursed on a reimbursement basis and can be used for conference registration, transportation, lodging, and meals not provided.

## **OAESP, State ESP Conference**

**Oct. 11-12, 2024**

Provides the opportunity for emerging and prospective leaders of the association to obtain practical knowledge and leadership skills for strengthening the local association.

## **OEA Advocacy & Organizing Institute**

**Feb 20-22, 2025**

Empowering training on the importance of negotiating and protecting and strengthening a collective bargaining agreement for local leaders and bargaining team members.

## **OEA Summer Academy**

**June 23-25, 2025**

Provides opportunities for emerging and prospective leaders of the association to obtain practical knowledge and leadership skills for strengthening the local association.

## **NEA ESP conference**

**March 21-23, 2025**

Enhance the skills and knowledge of ESP members to positively impact student achievement, build community relations, organize members, advocate for educators and build stronger locals.

## **NEA Minority Leadership & Women's Leadership Training**

**Jan. 24-26, 2025**

Training that aims to advance racial and social justice by preparing and supporting NEA members to be powerful leaders and advocates for their students, communities, profession, and Association.

## **NEA Retired Conference**

**March 9-11, 2025**

The NEA-Retired Organizing Conference is devoted to training retired members to organize their communities to advance the cause of public education.

## **NEA Leadership Summit**

**March 7-9, 2025**

Leaders will receive holistic content focused on national and Association-wide issues as well as individual and organizational needs. The Summit will support a competency-based model of developing great leaders.

## **NEA Racial & Social Justice Conference**

**June 29-July 1, 2025**

Provides a unique space for educators, students, parents and families, organizers, community members and leaders to unite for the advancement of Justice in Education.

## **NEA Representative Assembly**

**July 2-6, 2025**

Central will provide funding to members elected as a delegate to the NEA Annual Representative Assembly. NEA RA Delegate Scholarships are available on a first come basis as funds are available.

## **Individual Education Scholarships**

Central offers two \$1000 Education Scholarships: one for current college students pursuing a degree in education and one for a current Central member enrolled in a course of study that supports their professional role.

Information and application requirements are found on Central's website. [www.centraloearnea.org](http://www.centraloearnea.org)





# Central OEA/NEA

Presents the 2025 Diversity Conference



Grab your passport, bring a colleague and come along with us on a journey to gain knowledge and understanding of an alternative lifestyle, mental health needs and culture comfort food.

**February 15**

9 am. - 12:30 p.m.

VIRTUAL  
Register @

[www.centraloeanea.org](http://www.centraloeanea.org)

## **1st Stop** (Session One)

### **The Gender Unicorn**

Let's explore and review the components of gender, including gender identity, gender expression, and sex assigned at birth, along with sexuality and the LGBTQIA+ acronym. Learn how to use personal gender pronouns correctly (and why that matters!) and what words to avoid.

## **2nd Stop** (Session Two)

### **Cultivating Affirmation and Belonging for LGBTQ+ Youth**

We will examine statistics related to discrimination within schools and risks that LGBTQ+ youth face on a day-to-day basis, then discuss ways that we can improve school climate through various strategies from simple word choice to school/district/organizational policy change.

## **3rd Stop** (Session Three)

### **Culinary Alley**

Here we will experience the cuisine of another culture either from another state, city or continent. There will also be a recipe to share.

# Power Up! Conference

Jeff Caivano (Springfield-Clark Career Technical Center EA), Membership Development Chair

Education is currently going through a challenging time. More and more people are leaving the profession, while less and less meaningful support tends to find its way into the schools. As educators and support professionals, I know that inconsistencies and misunderstandings have been a long road.

That is why Central's Membership Development Committee is excited to present this year's Power Up Conference and try to allow all educators and support professionals to get a more robust understanding of the issues facing us all in our district and give us the tools to navigate these challenges as we shape the rest of our school year and beyond.

The following sessions have come from feedback from our members as some of the biggest challenges and needs that our schools need to address.

## **Positive Behavioral and Intervention Supports (PBIS)**—

This session will discuss how PBIS is more than points and parties, how it plays a part in special education, how it works with MTSS, and how it impacts all people who work in the school system. Led by OEA's Education Policy and Practice Consultant Daria DeNoia, these sessions will focus on how effective implementation of PBIS can positively change a school's culture while also showing how districts are doing it wrong.

**Student Discipline:** Looking at the benefits of school resource officers and how they should be utilized in a school district, as well as the legal implications of student discipline, assault leave, and emergency removal, these sessions will give a better understanding of how to collaborate with your School Resource Officer (SRO) as well as your rights as a school employee when it comes to student discipline. These sessions will be led by the Director of Safety and Security for Westerville City Schools, Steve McElroy, and Labor Relation Consultant Diana Watson-Urban.

Additional Sessions will include the **Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES)** and the changes that the state has implemented, an **Education Support Professional (ESP) Roundtable** to discuss the current issues facing our support professionals (including new dues structures and election processes), and implications and state mandates surrounding the Science of Reading. Sessions will be led by OEA's Education Policy and Practice Consultant Ellen Adornetto and local ESP leadership.

Please save the date for this in-demand conference. It will be held at the Gahanna-Lincoln Clark Hall on **Saturday, March 22, 2025**. Registration starts at 8:00 a.m., and the conference concludes at 2:00 p.m. Attending this conference will earn you CEUs. Feel free to encourage a colleague or a new member to join you for this opportunity.

Additionally, we will host a social function after the conference at the Rusty Bucket near the school. We look forward to seeing you in March.



## To register:

1. Log in to your Central account (or create an account if you don't have one)
2. Scroll down to the "2025 Power Up! Conference" event and click "Going"
3. Wait a short moment for it to register. That's it.

Central OEA/NEA offers professional development and CEUs for all our conferences, which can be used toward license renewal. As with all of Central's conferences, registration is free to all Central OEA/NEA members. Registration for this, and all our other conferences and workshops is now open.



# It's Not Too Late to Nominate Exceptional Members for Central OEA/NEA Awards

Denise Hermetz (Northwestern TA), Awards Committee Chair

Did you know the Central Board voted to create a third award for members beginning this year? Each year at the Central RA in April, Central likes to award members who go above and beyond for their locals and the Association. This year, you can nominate members for three awards, and there is still time!

Last year, Central recognized Kelly Stocker of Westerville EA by presenting her with the Outstanding Grassroots Activist Award. Kelly is a building rep from Westerville South High School who took over as legislative chair, and she coordinated Westerville's school board election activities.

Central also recognized Southwestern EA's Jack O'Brien with the Outstanding Education Advocate Award. Jack is a Pleasant View Middle School teacher who has gotten involved with SWEA over the last few years. He is currently the local Delegate at Large, has attended Lobby Days, and was a leader in last year's School Board Election process.

This year, in addition to the Outstanding Grassroots Activist and the Outstanding Education Advocate Awards, Central will be awarded the Distinguished Local Leader Award. This Award recognizes contributions from members who have demonstrated exemplary leadership in promoting their local Association's mission and vision. It is open to any Central member and differs from the Outstanding Education Advocate Award in that it can be awarded to a member serving as an elected officer of your local.

Do you know someone like Kelly or Jack? The nomination forms are on Central's website at

<https://centraloaneane.org/for-members/awards>.

All nominations must be received by January 31, 2025.

**The Outstanding Local Grassroots Activist Award** recognizes the contributions of individuals who have demonstrated exemplary service to their Local Association and fellow members at the building or site level. A Local Association must nominate an individual to receive the Award. This Award is open to any local representative not serving as an elected officer and not a Central or OEA committee member.

**The Outstanding Education Advocate Award** recognizes the contributions of individuals and groups who have demonstrated exemplary advocacy for public education. To receive the Award, an individual or group can be nominated by a local leader or Central Executive Board member. This Award is open to any Central member. Strong consideration would be given to Award nominees who have participated in lobbying efforts, educational fundraisers, levy and bond issues, local board races, pro-public education group activities, and organizing activities (not an exclusive list).

**The Distinguished Local Leader Award** recognizes the contributions of members who have demonstrated exemplary leadership in promoting their local Association's mission and vision. An individual can be nominated by a local officer or Central Executive Board member, but the Award is open to any Central member. Strong consideration will be given to Award nominees who have had a profound impact on their local Association as a whole.

## Wellness Wednesdays



The OEA Wellness Cadre is a member network that promotes mental health and physical wellness through member engagement, education, and advocacy. The group hosts fun and interactive state-wide virtual events that connect, inspire, and encourage OEA members to engage in self-care practices. The Wellness Cadre supports OEA Districts and locals by hosting wellness workshops, tables, and activities at professional development conferences and showcasing the OEA Wellness Grants.

Local leaders can apply for an OEA Wellness Grant (through their Labor Relations Consultant) and be eligible to receive a reimbursement of up to \$5 per member towards a wellness initiative. Many locals use their resources to coordinate special events like Coffee Breaks, "Wellness Kits" giveaways, Paint N Sips, Yoga, Bowling Nights, Book Studies, and much more.

For more information and to register for events, visit [www.ohea.org/wellness](http://www.ohea.org/wellness). Be sure also to register and join Central/OEA NEA's quarterly Wellness Wednesdays!

Join Central OEA/NEA for this year's Wellness Wednesdays!

- **February 12** - Chocolate Paint N Sip - Grab your brushes for a guided Paint N Sip and enjoy some chocolate with us!
- **April 2** - Restorative Yoga - It is time for a Spring renewal! Join us for some yoga and meditation to refresh our minds and bodies!

**They all take place at the Central office from 5:30 - 7 p.m.**

### To register:

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

## 2025 Central Summer Leadership Training

Central is offering Association Leaders and Building/Faculty Reps in-person training on June 5th at the Central office (2760 Airport Dr. Suite 120B. Columbus OH 43219).

### Association Rep Training

June 5, 2025. 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

This training will cover the role of being a rep, communicating with members and administration, and representing members in difficult meetings. Local officers welcome to attend.

### President's Training/Local Leader Think Tank

June 5, 2025. 12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

This training for local officers will include the nuts and bolts of the OEA President's manual including election procedures, Constitution & Bylaws compliance, the OEA Local Development Tool, the grant application process, engaging your members, and more. It will also allow time for networking and sharing of best practices among locals. Open to new and experienced presidents and other officers with the hope that we will learn from each other.

We will have food and beverages available at these training sessions

### 2025 Central Treasurers' Workshops

Attending a Treasurer's Workshop is a requirement to qualify for the OEA fiscal fitness award. We also recommend that Newer Local Presidents and Local Membership Chairs attend the New Treasurers' Workshop.

The Central Treasurers workshop(s) will be VIRTUAL via Zoom

### New Treasurers' Workshop

June 5, 2025. 9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Our traditional annual offering of training for Local Treasurers with limited experience

### Experienced Treasurers' Workshop

June 5, 2025. 10:45 a.m. - Noon

Our traditional annual offering of training for Local Treasurers with experience.

You may choose to attend either or both.

#### To register for any/all of these training opportunities simply:

- Login to your Central account (or create one if you don't have one)
- Scroll down to the session you wish to attend and click "going."
- Wait a moment for your selection to register. That's it.

## OEA New President Hour Series

Marlisse R. Hardamon (Springfield E.A. - Clark)

As a first-year co-president, I have a mountain of obligations and a few tools in my toolkit to climb the hill effectively. Recently, I registered for the **New President Hour Series**, a valuable resource designed for presidents in their first three years. This series, which consists of six virtual professional development sessions, is sponsored by OEA, highlighting their commitment to supporting local presidents with essential techniques and strategies.

The first session, "How will I lead?" was on October 15, 2024, from 5 to 6 p.m., and was titled "How will I lead?" A key takeaway was that an effective union president must foster strong relationships at every level of the organization. The session emphasized that building these relationships requires focusing on worksite presence, information exchange, and engagement with membership at all levels. Techniques discussed included the Worksite Check-up and utilizing meeting feedback from post-executive committee meetings to guide future actions.

The series includes several additional training sessions for new presidents.

**On November 19, 2024**, a discussion was had that examined how presidents can become effective advocates for union membership by examining the grievance and disciplinary process.

**On January 21, 2025**, the focus will be on the essentials of successful negotiation, offering vital advice for navigating challenges at the table.

**The February 18, 2025**, session will address the crucial role of internal and external communication in gaining support.

**On March 18, 2025**, we will explore the OEA's democratic structure and how it is designed to ensure membership voices are heard. The series will culminate with the April 15, 2025, final session, focusing on collaborating with other presidents to problem-solve effectively.



# 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.

Jim & Linna  
Central Leadership

## Association Benefits

Free CEUs  
Liability Protection  
Improving Professional Practice  
Professional Networking



## Upcoming Events

- 2/5/25 ESP Conversations
- 2/12/25 Wellness Wednesdays  
– Chocolate Paint N' Sip
- 2/15/25 Diversity Conference
- 3/15/25 OEA-Pre-retired Workshop
- 3/22/25 Power Up Conference
- 4/2/25 Wellness Wednesdays – Restorative Yoga
- 4/25/25 Central RA
- 5/9 -10 OEA RA