

# BRIEF CASE

THE OHIO SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

Serving the public school leadership team



## Gahanna's Mark Lowrie is 2024 Ohio Teacher of the Year

The Ohio Department of Education has named its 2024 Teacher of the Year. **Mark Lowrie** teaches broadcast journalism at **Gahanna-Jefferson City's** Gahanna Lincoln High School and supervises the school's student newscast, "Lincoln Live." An experienced media professional prior to making the move to education, Lowrie earned his master's degree in education from the University of Akron. During his 18-year tenure at **Amherst EV's** Marion L. Steele High School and his four years at Gahanna Lincoln, he has spearheaded popular and award-winning student journalism programs. In 2022, Lowrie's students won three categories at the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences' annual Student Production Awards — the most of any school in the country. The Ohio Teacher of the Year is selected from 11 regional candidates and confirmed by the State Board of Education. They are then eligible to apply for the National Teacher of the Year award.

## Deadline approaching for Student Achievement Fair nominations

There's still space to showcase what your students are most proud of at the 2023 Capital Conference, but don't wait — the deadline for nominations is Oct. 27. The Student Achievement fair features 100 booths showcasing the best student programs Ohio has to offer. Examples of previous presentations include graphic design demonstrations; world languages; industrial technology projects; career center culinary arts programs; STEM initiatives; and outdoor education. The conference runs Nov. 12-14, with the fair set for Nov. 13. For details and to make nominations, visit <https://conference.ohioschoolboards.org/student-achievement-fair>.

## Celebrate public education at upcoming Fall Region Conferences

In September and October, OSBA's five regions host their annual Fall Conferences. These events feature networking, student entertainment, important legislative updates from OSBA staff, awards and inspirational messages from district and OSBA leaders. There's still time to register for the Northeast, Northwest and Southwest region conferences at [www.ohioschoolboards.org/events](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/events).

## UNESCO report highlights inequities of remote learning

A book-length publication by UNESCO, "An ed-tech tragedy? Educational technology and school closures in the time of COVID-19," examines the adverse effects of remote learning around the world in unprecedented detail. While the authors uphold technology's potential to facilitate inclusive education, they argue that a too-fast rollout and ignorance of the risks turned the narrative of technology-as-solution into a cautionary tale that education leaders everywhere should take to heart.

Sept. 25, 2023

Volume 55 Issue 18

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## Route workshop information to:

- Administrators
- Principals
- Communication specialists
- Transportation supervisors

Key problems highlighted include that ed-tech products were “oversold” in communities they were not a good fit for, monotonous digital tasks failed to engage students, disparities in outcomes for underprivileged students worsened and tech businesses, like Google, gained what some are calling “undue influence” in the education sphere. You can read the report at [www.unesco.org/en/digital-education/ed-tech-tragedy](http://www.unesco.org/en/digital-education/ed-tech-tragedy).

### Proposed tax change would let teachers deduct more classroom purchases

U.S. Sen. **Sherrod Brown** (D-Ohio) has introduced legislation that would quadruple teachers’ tax cut for out-of-pocket expenses. The average public school teacher spends \$800 a year on classroom supplies without reimbursement, according to the U.S. Department of Education. If passed, the new

### Fairview Park crossing guard nears 50 years of service

In September 1974, President **Richard Nixon** received a full pardon, and **Evil Knievel** pulled off his daring Snake River Canyon jump. It also was the month Fairview Park resident **Roberta “Bobbie” Wright**, armed with her “stop” sign, began ensuring that students would get to and from school safely.

Wright, now 76, is nearing 50 years of duty as a crossing guard for **Fairview Park City**.

While times have changed, some things remain constant about students, she told a local newspaper. “They’re still shy until they get to know you,” she said. “A lot of them will come back to me once they leave the elementary. Then, later in life, they’ll see me, come over and say: ‘I remember you. You used to cross me.’”

Source: Sun Post Herald

bill will raise the maximum income tax deduction for these expenses from \$250 to \$1,000.

### Virtual Transportation Supervisor service provides expert guidance

Whether your district is hoping to update your buses or just wants

to stay informed about the latest safety, compliance and funding resources, OSBA’s Virtual Transportation Supervisor service could be the option for you. This subscription provides access to a full suite of training, data and informational services designed to support all areas of your district’s transportation operation. Visit <https://www.ohioschoolboards.org/transportation-services> to learn more.

### OSBA online

● [www.ohioschoolboards.org](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org)  
The 2023 Capital Conference, and some of them are guaranteed to be must-sees for your district. The list, available at <http://conference.ohioschoolboards.org>, can be displayed by date or focus area and includes session descriptions and presenter details. Register for the conference and start choosing your sessions today — a great conference experience begins with planning ahead.



## Briefcase

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Leading the way as the respected voice of Ohio public education.



# BULLETIN BOARD

compiled by Melanie Price, senior administrative assistant of communication services

## Ohio searches

Position	Location	Deadline	Contact
Treasurer	Ottoville Local (Putnam)	Sept. 29	Dr. Jan L. Osborn, superintendent, Putnam County ESC, (419) 523-5951

## Board changes

A-Tech JVSD appointed Eric Nesbitt to the board effective Aug. 21. He replaced Michael Kennedy, who resigned. ●●● Brooklyn City appointed Karam Hasrouni to the board effective Sept. 6. He replaced Richard J. Cyngier, who resigned in August. ●●● Buckeye Local (Jefferson) appointed Melissa Supanik to the board effective Aug. 21. She replaced Greg Glover, who resigned. ●●● Huber Heights City Board of Education member Robert Mullins announced his resignation effective Aug. 30. ●●● Tipp City EV Board of Education member Simon Patry announced his resignation effective immediately.

## Administrative changes

### Superintendent

Cedar Cliff Local (Greene) Superintendent Chad Mason announced resignation effective Dec. 31. He has taken the career connections coordinator position at Greene County ESC.

## Sympathies

Former Miamisburg City Board of Education member Joseph Paul “Zak” Idzakovich died Sept. 3. He was 72. ●●● Former Minster Local (Auglaize) Board of Education member John Ralph “Jack” Eiting died Aug. 27. He was 92. ●●● Former Ross Local (Butler) Board of Education member Jerry Tyra Johnson died Aug. 28. He was 88. ●●● Former Struthers City Board of Education member David A. Barone died Sept. 3. He was 72.



Ohio School Boards Association

**PLANNING FOR SUCCESS**



**What will your district look like two, five or eight years down the road?**

As leaders in your district, it’s important to look toward the future and anticipate opportunities and roadblocks in preparing students for school and lifetime success.

Let OSBA be your partner in developing an effective, aligned strategic plan to map your district’s future. Call OSBA’s Division of Board and Management Services at (800) 589-OSBA to get started today.



# COMMUNICATIONS

by Shannon Priem, APR

## Collaborate with key communicators to restore sanity and balance

Tapping into a network of trusted local leaders is an important communication practice. Having a network you communicate with regularly can keep you balanced and focused.

As a school leader, your job is running or governing the school or district. Find the calm, intelligent and respected leaders without an ax to grind and put them on your team. They'll respect you for asking.

There's no shortcut or instant trick to create or update your list — it takes time and personal contact with the right people at the right time.

### Use existing networks

Every district is unique, but most have similar networks of organizations and individuals, such as rotary clubs, chambers of commerce, city clubs, government leaders, police, clergy and, of course, your school-based site councils or parent clubs. If you have a college nearby, consider tapping into faculty, especially in the sciences.

Consider going to their events and meetings; don't just invite them to yours. For example, go to fundraisers for local charities.

If you have a key

communicator program that has lapsed or become stale, rekindle it. If you haven't kept in touch lately with messages, calls or gatherings, consider a pulse-check with a quick online survey. SurveyMonkey is still a good tool. Or, start having lunch or coffee just to catch up.

Increase your connections before you need to and dovetail your networking into your personality. If you're not a gregarious person, don't try to be. Establish rapport quietly with a few key influencers.

### Find your strength

Don't try to be someone you're not. Find your strength, and use it naturally. If you love to read, share what you're reading with others. If you keep in touch with email or blog posts, use those tools. If you love sports, that's a natural — high school games are usually the biggest parties in a small town. Go to every one, and find opportunities to help.

You don't have to do a lot of public speaking or appearances. If that lands you out of your comfort zone, it will show.

Take advantage of your position to applaud others — give credit to those who impressed

you during the week with a special "kudos" at board meetings. Look for examples when people weren't trying to be noticed. That shows them you notice things that really matter to them and don't just single out those who want credit.

### Get creative and informal

Most people see attending events or virtual meetings as the only way to network. Get creative with how you meet up with people. Some superintendents host a popular "second cup" hour for parents to drop by in the late morning for their second cup of coffee to share rumors, ideas and concerns. Or, do that on Zoom.

Meet people at area restaurants, which also builds business connections and loyalty from your local food service industry.

Don't be selfish with your connections. Connect influential people to each other. If new parents moved into your district who love animals, suggest a good vet and make an introduction. They'll see you as an asset, which builds loyalty for your causes.

When connecting others, unless you know the parties, send separate private emails, giving

*Continued on page 9*

# Administrative Professionals Workshop



## Who should attend

For administrative assistants, building secretaries and office aides.

## Key takeaways

- Learn tips and tricks to save time with Google Forms.
- Shine light on confusing tasks like public records and policy development.
- Take a closer look at welcoming the community and improving difficult relationships.
- Grab a cup of coffee and network with your peers.

## Date and time

Friday, Oct. 6  
10 a.m.-2 p.m.

## Location

**Virtual or in person at:**  
Ohio School Boards Association  
8050 N. High St., Suite 100  
Columbus, OH 43235

## Cost

\$110

## Register

[www.ohioschoolboards.org/events](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/events)



**OHIO SCHOOL BOARDS  
ASSOCIATION**

[www.ohioschoolboards.org](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org)  
8050 N. High Street, Suite 100 | Columbus, Ohio 43235



# Fall Communications Workshop

## Why attend

This engaging, virtual workshop will include timely and useful discussions, information and demonstrations on:

- tips for engaging parents and keeping your community up-to-date on district initiatives;
- best practices for election campaign communications, including working with candidates for your school board and an overview of and practical applications for the Ohio auditor of state's levy guidance;
- how to shine a spotlight on the positive stories within your district.

## Date and time

Wednesday, Oct. 11  
9 a.m.-noon

## Location

Virtual

## Cost

\$70

## Register

[www.ohioschoolboards.org/events](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/events)



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# Master of Transportation Administrator Series



## Student transportation administrator training program

The safety, reliability and efficiency of a district's bus service are maximized when the school transportation manager has the specific knowledge and skills needed to manage the service effectively. The goal of the Master Transportation Administrator (MTA) program is to provide learning opportunities in the many key areas affecting transportation.

OSBA brings its depth of resources in safety practices, fleet management, federal regulations, and state codes for student transportation together to support this training curriculum. This program exceeds the requirement in Ohio Administrative Code for annual transportation in-service training.

### Curriculum

The complete curriculum includes classes in each of three proficiencies – compliance, operations management and governance (including policy and fiscal matters). Each year of the curriculum focuses on just one of these proficiencies.

Complete all three-modules and the district project framework question form, to be acknowledged as a Master Transportation Administrator by OSBA.



### MTA Module 1

Routing and technology  
Sept. 20, 2023



### MTA Module 2

Personnel management  
Oct. 25, 2023



### MTA Module 3

Transportation rules and regulations  
Nov. 29, 2023



### MTA Module 4

The transportation handbook  
Jan. 24, 2024



### MTA Module 5

Public relations and working with the media  
Feb. 21, 2024



### MTA Module 6

Designing your operational plan, and building keys for success  
March 20, 2024







# WORKSHOP REGISTRATION

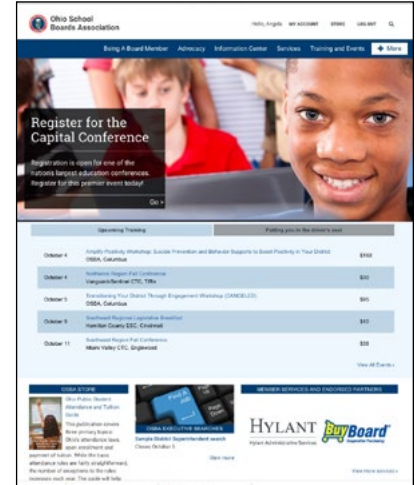
Register at [www.ohioschoolboards.org/workshops](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/workshops)

OSBA members can access member-only information, including workshop registration, by logging in to the OSBA website.

## How to log in

Click on “Log in to your account” on the top right of the website. Log in using your email address on file and your password. Click “Reset your password” if needed.

If it says “We could not find your email address,” or if this is your first time logging in to the site, click “Create new account.” At the username prompt, enter your email address, select your affiliation and school district, and click “Submit.” Create a password and add your job title on the next screen. An email with a link to activate your account will be sent to you. Click on the link to activate your account, and you will be directed to a home screen.



OSBA 2023

# COFFEE - CHAT -

## ARMING YOUR PEOPLE ON THE FRONT LINES: CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS BEST PRACTICES

Oct. 17 | 8:30 a.m.-9 a.m.

### Key takeaways:

- Discuss how the fundamental best practices of crisis communications apply.
- Learn how a building communications process can help.
- Cover the value of prepared scripts.

### Speaker:

Thom Fladung, Hennes Communications

For more information and to register: [www.ohioschoolboards.org/events](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/events)



Communications, continued from page 4

them the chance to “opt out” before exposing them both.

**Make friends with the gatekeepers**

Who are the air traffic controllers of any organization? The executive assistants and office managers. They hold the quiet power of access to other leaders. Always loop them in. If you have assistants, ask them to create this peer-to-peer information loop.

**Do your homework**

Before meeting or reconnecting with people, learn about their passions, such as causes or

charities they support. Remember how, when and where you meet people. When you recall something about that person later, it shows them they matter to you.

**Final tips**

- **No phony events:** Don’t set up “relationship building” events like monthly lunches, then not attend or let them dwindle. This will backfire. Go every time, even if you don’t have an issue to discuss. Get to know each other and talk about the little things, like parking problems or how much you liked the school play.
- **Stay positive:** Regardless of the

issue, make every interaction positive, especially when dealing with polarizing opinions. Listen rather than judge or argue, and thank them for sharing. Build on what’s going right, not wrong.

- **Keep in touch quickly:** Don’t just focus on the latest social media technology to keep in touch. Stay simple with timely calls or emails. Even if you don’t have all the answers, reply quickly and keep it short. That tells them you know they’re important.

Source: Washington State School Directors’ Association

# OSBA CAPITAL CONFERENCE

JOIN US FOR OHIO’S PREMIER EDUCATION CONFERENCE!

**INSPIRING  
KEYNOTE  
SPEAKERS**



**CHUCK UNDERWOOD**  
First General Session



**MARY STEENBURGEN**  
Second General Session



**SAM GLENN**  
Monday Conference Luncheon



**STUDENT PERSPECTIVES**  
OSBA Black Caucus Dinner

NOV. | 12-14 | 2023 CONFERENCE.OHIOSCHOOLBOARDS.ORG



# LEGISLATIVE REPORT

by Nicole Piscitani, lobbyist

## Legislature back after summer recess

The General Assembly returned to the statehouse after a two month recess following the passage of the biennial budget. While it remains to be seen how busy the legislature will be this fall, a few bills were amended and could move out of committee in the next few weeks.

### House Bill (HB) 187

The Ohio Department of Taxation, as part of the three-year cycle of property reassessment, performs studies that analyze a county's property values and recent sales data. Some counties that are scheduled to complete a reappraisal are seeing very high valuation increases, which would increase the amount of taxes property owners pay to various tax levying entities. Legislators are focused on providing tax relief due to these increases. HB 187 would create a temporary fix while legislators study the issue more deeply and develop a more permanent solution. The introduced version of HB 187 would require the use of a three-year average for re-evaluating property values, resulting in real property valuations based equally on the past three years. Otherwise, valuations would be

based on a 3-year lookback on sales, with an emphasis placed on the most recent year's sales occurring closest to the tax lien date.

The House Ways and Means Committee amended the bill to include agriculture property and thus would require a similar three-year averaging for current agricultural use value (CAUV) for farmland in counties that undergo a property tax reappraisal or triennial update. However, it is important to note that the current formula for calculating CAUV would remain the same. The committee also included a provision to apply these changes to property tax reappraisals or triennial updates in 2023, 2024 or 2025, after which the changes would sunset.

HB 187 is likely to pass out of the House Ways and Means committee before the end of September. Meanwhile, over in the Ohio Senate, Senate Bill (SB) 153, a companion bill to HB 187, was introduced on Sept. 12. The introduction of SB 153 signals that the Ohio Senate will likely hold hearings at the same time that HB 187 is working its way out of committee. This ensures that both legislative chambers have

discussed and worked through any potential issues in order to pass the bill quickly.

### SB 49

When SB 49 first came to the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee, the bill if enacted would have created the Religious Expression Days "R.E.D." Act and required school boards to adopt a policy providing students with religious accommodations for up to three days. Also in the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee was HB 135, a bill that would require school districts to grant students excused absences from school for participation in 4-H and FFA programs and activities. Since both bills impact excused absence policies, House Primary and Secondary Education Chair **Adam C. Bird** (R-New Richmond) had a substitute bill drafted that would address the law regarding excused absences while incorporating absences for religious purposes, 4-H and FFA. The substitute bill would do the following:

- Prohibit a school district, community school, or STEM school from counting the first

*Continued on page 11*



# PUBLIC SCHOOLS WORK!

compiled by Scott Gerfen, assistant editor

## Freshmen can now explore their community's rich history

Students at the **Hamilton City's** Hamilton High School Freshman Campus have a unique learning opportunity – one that delves into the rich history of their hometown.

Local historian **Chris Maraschiello** led the effort to develop the class.

With the city undergoing an economic and cultural revitalization in recent years, the new school year was a good time to also revive youth learning about Hamilton, he told a local

newspaper.

"Hamilton is experiencing a modern-day gold rush," Maraschiello said. "The very visible changes are just the beginning of what is going to happen here. I want this class to inform and inspire and become a training ground for the future leaders of Hamilton. We want our students to stay in Hamilton and to make it a better place."

The elective course for the current semester not only delves

into the political history of Hamilton but also explores the city's culture, arts, industry, government, local businesses, education, current events and, importantly, the 17 distinct neighborhoods that comprise the city infrastructure and local businesses.

The hope is to promote unity and inspire students to take an active role in shaping the future of their community.

Source: Journal-News

*Legislative Report, continued from page 10*

cumulative 60 hours a student is absent from school with a nonmedical legitimate excuse in a school year from determinations regarding whether the district or school must notify the student's parent that the student is excessively absent;

- Require a district or school to count the 61st hour, and subsequent hours, a student is absent with a nonmedical legitimate excuse as an hour for the purposes of whether a student is excessively absent;
- Require a district or school to permit a student who is absent from school for a religious expression day to participate in

interscholastic athletics on that day, but otherwise permit a district or school to determine whether a student who is absent with a legitimate excuse may participate in athletics;

- Specify that the first cumulative 60 hours a student is absent with a legitimate excuse must be considered excused absences and not factored into habitual truancy determinations;
- Define which absences are considered legitimate to excuse;
- Prohibit the Department of Education and Workforce (DEW), when it calculates the state report card's chronic absenteeism indicator for a school district or

school building, from including absences for which a student has a legitimate excuse; and

- Exclude from the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate students with individualized education programs (IEPs) who have satisfied the conditions for a high school diploma, but opted not to receive a diploma and are still receiving education services.

The House Primary and Secondary Education Committee will likely move the bill out of committee and may vote to pass it; however, since the bill originated in the Senate, it will need a concurrence vote in the Senate in order to be enacted.

**September 2023**

- 26 OSBA Forum ..... Virtual
- 26 Public Schools Cybersecurity Symposium.....Westerville
- 28 Southeast Region Fall Conference ..... Albany
- 29 Sports Law Module 4..... Virtual
- 30 *Last day to file business advisory council plan with the Ohio Department of Education — RC 3313.821.*

**October 2023**

- 1 *Last day for board to adopt annual appropriation measure — RC 5705.38(B).*
- 4 Northeast Region Fall Conference .....Wadsworth
- 6 Administrative Professionals Workshop ..... Columbus and virtual
- 10 *Last day for voter registration for November election — RC 3503.01, 3503.19(A) (30 days prior to election).*
- 11 Fall Communications Workshop ..... Virtual
- 12 Southwest Region Fall Conference ..... Wilmington
- 15 *Last day for certification of licensed employees to State Board of Education — RC 3317.061; last day to provide immunization status reports to the Ohio Department of Health — RC 3313.67(D).*

- 17 Coffee Chat: Arming Your People on the Front Lines: Crisis Communications Best Practices ..... Virtual
- 23 Auditorium Stage Equipment Maintenance 101, Public Schools Edition ..... Virtual
- 24 OSBA Forum ..... Virtual
- 25 MTA 2023-24 Module 2: Personnel Management.....Columbus and Virtual
- 26 Northwest Region Fall Conference ..... Fostoria
- 26 Auditorium Stage Equipment Safety 101, Public Schools Edition..... Virtual
- 26 *Pre-general election campaign finance reports must be filed by certain candidates appearing on the ballot (by 4 p.m.) detailing contributions and expenditures made from the last day reflected in the previous report to the close of business on Oct. 18, 2023 (12 days before election) — RC 3517.10(A)(1).*
- 31 *End of first ADM reporting period — RC 3317.03(A).*

**November 2023**

- 2 Capital Conference Business Briefing ..... Virtual
- 7 *General Election Day; Special Election Day — RC 3501.01 (first Tuesday after the first Monday).*

- 12-14 OSBA Capital Conferene ..... Columbus
- 12 Northeast Region Executive Committee Meeting ..... Columbus
- 12 Northwest Region Executive Committee Meeting ..... Columbus
- 12 Southeast Region Executive Committee Meeting ..... Columbus
- 13 Central Region Executive Committee Meeting ..... Columbus
- 29 MTA 2023-24 Module 3: Transportation Rules & Regulations .....Columbus and Virtual
- 30 *Deadline to file consolidated school mandate report — RC 3301.68; last day for the board of education to submit its five-year projection of operational revenues and expenditures for the current fiscal year and the ensuing four fiscal years to the Ohio Department of Education — RC 5705.391.*

**December 2023**

- 1 Winter School Finance Workshop .....Westerville
- 10 *Last day to submit certification for income tax levy to Ohio Department of Taxation for March election — RC 5748.02(A) (100 days prior to election).*