



Central News

March 2022 – News of the Ohio School Boards Association Central Region

DOUG UTE, SPRING CONFERENCE SPEAKER – MARCH 9

Doug Ute, executive director of the Ohio High School Athletic Association will be the keynote speaker at the March 9 Central Region Spring Conference. Ute is no stranger to the region as a former superintendent in **Elgin Local (Marion)** and **Newark City Schools**. Throughout his career, his focus has always been on helping students become better people.



At Newark, Ute helped create the Social, Emotional and Academic Success (SEAS) program that included counselors, teachers and staff to discuss ways to help students succeed in life. He expanded the free lunch program, made free breakfast available to all students and put a strong emphasis on student and

family social and emotional health. The school district responded with its highest-ever graduation rate and a renewed sense of pride in the city and school district.

A standout student-athlete at Clear Fork High School, Ute graduated in 1980 and played basketball at Ashland University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in business administration and marketing. He would later return to Ashland to earn a master's degree in school administration, graduate teaching degree in business, principal's license and superintendent's license.

Ute and his wife, **Kory**, have four children and eight grandchildren.

We look forward to Doug's comments about social and emotional health as a key to student success.

REGISTER FOR THE CENTRAL REGION SPRING CONFERENCE

Reserve your seat today for the OSBA Central Region Spring Conference on Wednesday, March 9. The registration link is <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/crspring2022>. Online reservations allow districts to pay with a credit card, check or be invoiced after the conference if a purchase order number is provided. The cost to attend is \$40.

The region will recognize its outstanding programs, outstanding schools, veteran board members, STAR Award winners for Service and Training and the Master Board Member.

This conference entitles board members to five STAR Awards Training credits.



SCHNEIDER LEADS CENTRAL REGION

Leslie Schneider, board president, **Marion City**, was elected to serve as the 2022 Central Region president.

A resident of Marion, Schneider lives with her husband, **Todd**, and their two daughters **Layla** and **Ellie**.

She has served on the Marion City School Board for six years. Additionally, Schneider serves on the OSBA Board of Trustees, Legislative Platform Committee and Capital Conference Planning Task Force.

As the resource development director for United Way of North Central Ohio, Schneider has a passion for connecting and collaborating with individuals and organizations to leverage their qualities and strengths to make a greater impact in the community.

Schneider looks forward to serving with other Central Region board members to advocate for public schools and keeping the interest of our students, staff and community in mind for our collective futures.

CENTRAL REGION LEGISLATIVE OPEN HOUSE – SAVE THE DATE

Plan to join us on Aug. 23 for the region's summer legislative open house. A legislative update for school leaders will be presented by one of the members of OSBA's legislative services team.

This session provides board members an opportunity to learn about legislative issues that impact their school districts. Time is set aside for questions and answers.

Tolles Career and Technical Center will host the event. Tolles is located at 7877 US 42 S, Plain City, Ohio, 43064.

The **free event** begins with social time at 6:30 p.m. followed by the presentation at 7 p.m. Registration information will be available at a later date.

The open house is a great kickoff for the new school year and an opportunity to hear the latest important legislative news while networking with fellow board members. We hope to see you there.



BOARD MEMBERS RECOGNIZED

Exemplary School Employees and Friends of Public Education were honored at the region's fall conference on Sept. 22. Award recipients are nominated by their respective Central Region school boards. The nomination requires the signatures of three board members. Once submitted, the nomination is evaluated, and a decision is made by the Central Region executive committee to confer the award.

Exemplary Employees: **Robin Chapman, Columbus City; Sarah McGraw-Thimmes, Lancaster City; Jared Evans, North Union Local (Union); Jennifer Furey, Olentangy Local (Delaware); and Sharon Lawrence, Walnut Township Local (Fairfield).**

Friends of Public Education: **Dr. Mysheika Roberts, Columbus City; Jessica Coleman, Marion City; Chad Hoffman, North Union Local; Sharon Jurawitz, Olentangy Local; and Bob Weldon, Walnut Township Local.**

OSBA and the Central Region recognize the milestone service of members reaching 10, 15 and 20 years of service at the spring conference. Members with 30, 35 and more years of service (recognized in increments of five years) are recognized at the Central Region Fall Conference.

One board member, **Carolyn Addair, Danville Local (Knox),** was honored and recognized for her 30 years of service.



OSBA president, **Robert M. Heard**; 30-year recipient, Carolyn Addair; 2021 Central Region president, **Kevin Archer**; and OSBA Chief Executive Officer **Rick Lewis**.



Conference attendees getting ready to enjoy the experience.



Robert M. Heard, OSBA president and board member Cleveland Municipal Schools.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT FAIR

The Student Achievement Fair is one of the most rewarding exhibitions at the Capital Conference. The event showcases many innovative programs districts have created to boost student achievement and engage students in their learning. The exhibition offers excellent opportunities to learn about new programs, share ideas and celebrate what Ohio's public education is all about — helping students achieve.

One of the most important aspects of the show is that students explain their work and skills learned to OSBA participants as they visit each booth. Often, a healthy conversation occurs as programs are highlighted.

Nominations for digital art, performing groups and innovative programs are open.

We urge you to nominate a program from your district. For more on the student achievement fair, please visit <http://conference.ohioschoolboards.org/student-achievement-fair>



London Unlimited — **London City** students sharing the highlights of their innovative program

OHIO BOARDS OF DISTINCTION AWARD

The Ohio Boards of Distinction Award honors school boards that have engaged in activities and modeled behaviors that lead to excellence in local school district governance in support of quality education. The qualifications include requirements for each member of the board to participate in training or service as well as a commitment by the full board to engage in activities such as strategic planning and board self-assessment to help guide the direction of the district.

The cycle for the Ohio Boards of Distinction Award begins every two years in January immediately following board of education elections as school boards form new leadership teams. The current cycle begins in January 2022 and culminates at the 2023 OSBA Capital Conference. The award will be presented at the end of the cycle and districts may receive the award only once during the period.

To view specific requirements, please visit the following webpage:

www.ohioschoolboards.org/ohio-board-distinction

Central Region's **Marysville EV Schools** were one of two boards in the state to earn this prestigious award in 2021. Congratulations to **Sue Devine, Dick Smith, Nan Savidge**, and former members **Brian Luke** and **Amy Powers**. To earn this award members attended OSBA Capital Conference and other trainings throughout the year, conducted a board workshop for planning and professional development, created a new board orientation process and board handbook and participated in implementing the districts strategic plan and the STAR Award program.



Brian Luke, Nan Savidge, Amy Powers, Sue Devine, Dick Smith

WHITNEY AWARDED CHAMPION OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

2016 marked the creation of the Central Region's Champion of Public Education Award. The Central Region Executive Committee established the award to recognize public servants who have a demonstrated career history of supporting and advocating for public education. This award marks our region's third recognition honoring individuals.



A practicing criminal law attorney, **Robert Whitney** is the board president of **Lexington Local (Richland)**. Appointed to the board of education in April 1964, Whitney has served on the board for 58 consecutive years, and his influence on the district has been significant. He has proven to be a fierce advocate for students during this tenure. Whitney serves with passion for the Lexington community.

While his time on the board has been a long journey, he says it's also been a great one. Most proud of the district's success and its improvement over the years, Whitney attributes this success to students and families, staff and administration, and board members who serve for the right reasons.

Whitney said, "It's been fun – especially when you have good board companions and leaders." Through the years, he's had the occasion to serve with his older son for several terms and now with his grandson. He's served with the former superintendent of Lexington who was the superintendent of schools when he graduated from high school and his high school history teacher.

Whitney says, he enjoys getting to know the students and follows them from grade school to high school. "It's a great feeling to run into them later in the community as adults and talk with them."

Whitney ran for reelection in November 2021 and was elected to another term. The OSBA Central Region extends our deepest gratitude to Ohio's longest serving board member for his significant leadership, dedication, service and devotion to Ohio's public schools and the students they serve.

CENTRAL REGION OUTSTANDING TEACHERS



Amber Harris



Allison Tomlin

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) initiated the Ohio Teacher of the Year program in 1969 to honor, promote and celebrate excellence in teaching and the teaching profession. **Amber Harris, Bloom-Carroll Local (Fairfield)** and **Allison Tomlin, Upper Arlington City**, were selected as their ODE region's Ohio Teacher of the Year. These teachers serve as models for their colleagues, an inspiration to their communities, and are true leaders in education.

We thank them for their ability to help our students reach their full potential. Harris and Tomlin represent the thousands of dedicated teachers who work in our schools.

CENTRAL REGION STARS

OSBA STAR Award Winners

Each year the Ohio School Boards Association presents awards to board members across the state who demonstrate dedication to self-improvement, service to their association and work on behalf of their own board. 2021 marked the first year that OSBA recognized board members who earned points towards service and training in our new STAR Awards Program—**Service, Training, Aptitude and Recognition.**



The OSBA Service Award was presented to a very select group. Of the more than 3,400 board members in Ohio, only 28 received the honor in 2021 and six of those recipients were from the Central Region. The following members received their Aptitude Award: **Lee Schreiner, South-Western City; Dick Smith, Sue Devine and Nan Savidge, Marysville EV; and former board member Rick Weininger, Dublin City.**

Only five members in the state received the STAR Recognition award in 2021 and two of these members hail from the Central Region: **Lee Schreiner, South-Western City, and Dick Smith, Marysville EV.**

Congratulations!

STAR AWARDS

To recognize school board members for the time they spend improving their boardmanship and leadership skills, the STAR recognition program was developed.

Four awards comprise the program: service, training, aptitude and recognition. Previously, points for activities related to service and training were used for the Award of Achievement and Master Board Member honors. Now, the Service and Training awards have been separated based on the type of activity.

Service: Points for the Service Award accrue from local school board, district, region and state leadership, including service on OSBA committees and local board offices and committees. The Service Award requires 150 points to be earned within a three-year period. This award does not require an application; the board member will be notified when he or she has earned the requisite points.

Training: Points for the Training Award are earned from professional development events and activities delivered by OSBA or the National School Boards Association (NSBA). The Training Award requires 200 points earned over a three-year period. This award does not require an application; the board member will be notified when he or she has earned the requisite points.

Aptitude: A new category, the Aptitude Award, requires a board member to demonstrate an understanding and comprehension of a variety of board governance skills based on six leadership areas: vision, accountability, policy, community engagement, relationships and advocacy. To receive this award, board members must receive an 80% passing score on an online assessment. The assessment will be offered in June and July and may be taken multiple times by a board member who does not receive an 80% score and wants to try again during the annual assessment period.

Recognition: A board member may be nominated for the Recognition Award by his or her own school board by a majority vote of the board. This award replaces the previous Outstanding Board Member Award and honors board members most dedicated to the craft of being a model board member.

THE CENTRAL REGION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Lee Schreiner
South-Western City, OSBA immediate past president

Leslie Schneider
Marion City, president

Dr. Tina D. Pierce
Columbus City, president-elect

Renda M. Cline
Mansfield City, immediate past president

Jennifer Adair, Columbus City
Board of Trustee

Dr. Marguerite Bennett, Mount Vernon City
Knox County Career Center
Board of Trustee

Kevin W. Butler, Canal Winchester Local (Franklin)

Anthony Caldwell, South-Western City
Board of Trustee

Sue Devine, Marysville EV
Whitney Duemmel, Jefferson Local (Madison)

Amy Eyman, Lancaster City

Dr. Robert Haas, Tri-Rivers Career Center

Dennis E. Long, Galion City and Pioneer CTC

Ted M. McKinniss, Marion City
Tri-Rivers Career Center

Richard McLarnan, Knox County ESC
Knox County Career Center

Mindy Patrick, Olentangy Local (Delaware)
Delaware Area Career Center
Board of Trustee

Ray Storts, Union Scioto Local (Ross)

Charlie Wilson, Worthington City

Dr. LaKesha Wyse, Olentangy Local (Delaware)

Roger Zeune, Southwest Licking Local (Licking)

Kim Miller-Smith, regional manager

IN MEMORIAM

Chris Pokorny

Chris Pokorny passed away suddenly on Nov. 5, 2021. He was an active school board member of **Northridge Local (Licking)** at the time of his death.

Pokorny served the Northridge board for over 10 years, after being appointed in 2011 to fill a vacant seat.

In addition to his board service, he was active in Troop 25 BSA, a soccer coach and referee, active in the Hartford community and an active presence at the Hartford Fair.

Pokorny attended West Point and served on active duty for 10 years before retiring with the rank of captain in 1993. He joined the U.S. Army Reserves in 1994 and was promoted to the rank of major in the Army Reserves.



Robert Ragland Sr.

Robert Ragland Sr. passed away Dec. 23, 2021. An advocate for family and community, Robert was serving as the vice president of South-Western City Schools Board of Education, Ohio School Boards Association Central Region Executive Committee and an OSBA trustee at the time of his death. Previously, Ragland served as the assistant director of education and the assistant director of diversity and inclusion for the Ohio PTA.

Known as a champion for students, Ragland's board colleagues reflected that Robert was a humble community servant and his leadership strengthened the community and the district academically and financially.

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BOARD LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

OSBA's Board Leadership Institute is a two-day professional development event designed by and for board members. Sessions cover a range of topics, including general board governance, student achievement, leadership, finance, policy, critical issues, school law matters and hot topics.

BLI 2022 will be held May 6-7 at the Hilton Columbus/Polaris. Registration for this two-day event is \$290. Register at www.ohioschoolboards.org/events



OSBA PODCASTS: LEADING THE WAY

Listen to OSBA's podcast to stay informed about association news and the issues impacting public education. Subscribe on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify or your favorite podcasting app.

The last episode – A Conversation with OSBA President Robert M. Heard Sr was recently posted. Other topics include schools adapting to provide nutritious meals; Ohio public education: Looking back and ahead; OLAC wants to help you become an effective leader; and Congratulations! You've been elected to the school board. What now?