Informal Meeting:

**Director of Legislative Services and Professional Relations Report**  Ann Brennan.

**Intern Funding:** We were successful in getting the $375,000 restored in the Senate version. **State Funds and Budget:** Looks like there is more money that will be available than was first thought. Priorities are state rainy day fund and school facilities (so they can get better bond ratings), restoration of funds for medical issues for people – Medicaid. They want to reduce the proposed tax on kilowatt hours, which will take about half the money. It is clear that they are not going to put more money into basic state foundation money for schools. The bill provides more than 400 million less for schools than the current law does. Some 198 school districts will receive no new money. Elimination of growth factors and phase out of cost of doing business factor will reduce money for some school districts. Current law holds districts harmless through 2011 because of loss of tangible personal property revenue. Districts that depend on that could stand to lose a lot after 2011. One of the worst budgets ever for K-12 education! The outlook for school funding does not look good – especially some of the urban districts, which often have tangible property.

**Autism Voucher:** The criteria for eligibility for the autism voucher states that the child must be identified as autistic by the school district. Some districts have parents of MH students coming back asking for re-identification as autistic so that they can get the voucher. The amount is increased to $20,000 in the new budget. Some parents in Cleveland are coming in with physician’s diagnoses and pushing for the school to identify.

**Vouchers for other disabilities:** There is a bill to extend to autism voucher to any child with a disability. No money for it, so it is currently not moving. Florida has a similar voucher. They have been getting fly-by-night companies opening up to serve the kids. Florida districts are losing a lot of money to this. The next TOSP has a summary of the outcomes report for the voucher program.

**CAFS** has not been restored. The budget took out the language that authorizes CAFS to be used for school purposes. This allows Jobs and Family Services to end CAFS for schools. The budget did not restore any of that funding to schools in any other way. The only thing left is the lawsuit. Ann has no idea how the lawsuit is progressing. The group pressing the
lawsuit was “promised” informally that the money would be restored somehow through the budget. That hasn’t happened as of this time.

The OREDS bill: came out of house education committee. It still has the whole senate to go through. Not as much support in the senate as in the house.

Teacher standards: There is a bill that reconciles teacher standards with content standards. It has passed the house. The teacher standards board has come up with a draft – it is on ODE website – they are pretty generic.

Proficiency test standards: were supposed to set the final cut scores for OGT and achievement tests – they are meeting today. OGT cut scores in Math, Citizenship, and Science hadn’t been finalized.

The Coalition for Ohio’s Future (OSPA is a member): This is the group that has formed to oppose Blackwell’s constitutional amendment to limit state budget increase for spending to 3.5% a year. Any increase over 3.5% would be placed in a special fund and redistributed to voters. The amendment will be on the ballot in November. The group is trying to get information out to inform voters. If not defeated, services will be devastated. Colorado has an amendment like this – it has devastated them, they are trying to get it repealed. Colorado went from the upper third in spending for education, health, etc. to the bottom five in each area. They have to go to voters to increase any area, but the money has to come from other areas. Higher education has taken a huge bite. Colorado state supported colleges are increasing tuition 28% next year just to stay even! The Coalition is raising money to put on a huge media campaign to urge others to vote no.

IDEA regulations are now online
The first 300 pages are directions on what they changed. It is double spaced and over 600 pages long. The NASP website will have a summary soon.

Discussion of NCSP as the credential for Ohio School Psychologist ODE license and renewal
The last time this was brought up with the state was pre-LPDC’s. All young school psychologists leaving our universities are eligible for NCSP. Some of our older members would not want NCSP to be a requirement. There are union issues as well. Having NCSP is helpful for us when we go to other states. 26 states will accept NCSP. Having NCSP as an alternative to being certified in Ohio would make it easier for people to come in from out of state. (At this point people coming from out of state need to have the out of state credential approved, pass the PRAXIS, provide transcripts…messy.)

Discussion of NCLB topic on listserv – reliability and validity of the tests the states are using for NCLB purposes.

- Ashland University did a study of reading level of the older proficiency tests and found that fourth grade reading proficiency was written at a sixth grade reading level. This year the 4th and 6th grade writing tests had the same prompts.
- Good thing about NCLB – For once our special education kids count and districts are paying attention.
- The current Alternate assessment is a teacher test, not a kid test.
- Lynn Brumfield has taken data in her school district for years – some years the special ed kids helped, some years they didn’t. She doesn’t like high stakes testing. Thinks it should be pass / fail – either you are proficient or not. They never defined “proficient” – every time the kids get close they raise the bar. Lynn has a low performing school where this year all but one third grader was proficient in reading. (Small school, good interventions, some kids drawn off by a community school).
- The increment increase you need for AYP gets harder to get each year.
- Each state has a different test. In Ohio, our test is difficult. If they want everyone to be the same, the tests should be the same.
- Lew Sarr called Roger Trent 12 years ago regarding reliability and validity of the Ohio Ninth Grade Proficiency Tests. Mr. Trent responded by e-mail. He had some reliability information. The only validity information given was content validity.
- NEA Today – January 2003 – looked at high stakes testing and outcomes for states that had high stakes and those that didn’t. Found no difference in college grades, jobs etc.
- Greg Jones believes the new achievement tests are more psychometrically sound than the old proficiency tests. He went to a meeting for district test coordinators. The people designing the tests were using very appropriate procedures to design the tests. There are some issues because the state doesn’t listen. The achievement tests are aligned with the standards, which should help.
- All of that aside, how do we get kids and teachers to present the curriculum and do interventions in an appropriate and effective way?
- There is a bell shaped curve. Some children have less innate ability. The powers that be expect that kids will plow through education at the same speed. Who says that high school must take four years? Why not some kids in two years? Others take six? We need to look at the education schedule – the whole nine month agrarian schedule. White middle class males make the rules!!!
- There is some talk of public high schools doing only intervention in basic skills, then community schools followed by college. Proms would be sophomore year.
- Juliette Madigan was involved early in the proficiency test process. The tests are supposed to say something – that this person is ready for the workforce or for higher learning. If you don’t get to that spot, what do you do? Juliette had suggested that they look at adult education – take a look at the parts the person doesn’t have, teach to those parts, then have the person take the parts they don’t have. The state group wasn’t interested in doing diagnostics. This is not what they wanted to do with the proficiency tests.
- The budget bill eliminated the requirement that the diagnostics continue beyond third grade due to financial concerns.
- The curriculum doesn’t teach reading decoding past third grade. We don’t have any real reliable diagnostic tests to determine what they need to learn. Some high schools are doing resource room for students who don’t read fluently.
- We have the standards. If people are keeping data on what kids know and don’t know, can’t we follow up? …but they don’t follow up for the whole group… ….triangle of interventions, required by NCLB, but…

We haven’t even touched communication and social skills.
- A lot of times, kids lose jobs after high school due to poor communication and poor social skills – we don’t teach that.
- We used to spend kindergarten in play. Kids are coming through school not knowing how to get along or how to play.

Many of school problems are adult to adult problems that get taken out on kids. Politics interfere – NCLB has good ideas, but it is imposed onto schools, so we get defensive, resistant and upset. People need to listen to each other and look for valid points. We don’t give up. We keep writing letters, encouraging adults to listen to one another.

It’s an adult problem. We are putting a lot of pressure on kids and parents due to school report card. Some school districts are playing “Texas Hold ‘Em”. They’ll keep the kids in ninth grade until they are ready to pass the OGT. Positive – they are putting intensive intervention classes in place.

There will be pressure on the legislature if the passing percentages aren’t too high. NASP was very pro-active during NCLB bill’s passage through congress. Ann Brennan has suggestions for OSPA being proactive when the OGT comes to our legislature. We need to have alternatives to offer for high school graduation besides OGT.
It was suggested the state use criterion / curriculum based measures – checking off the standards the student has achieved. A continuous process of checking off skills mastered. A few years back the legislature talked (as a joke) about a reading test for preschoolers. Well we have it. It’s called “Get it, got it, go!”

Krista Hickman speechifies about the stupidity of American high school. They don’t serve most kids well. Many kids should be in vocational programming by age 14 or 15. Others should be off to college at 16.

The K-16 initiative is to address these issues and another group made recommendations along those lines. They are hoping to restructure the system. There is a bill in legislature now to allow schools to count hours instead of days.

Every thing is electronic now. A fellow teaches at four universities at one time from where ever he is. And we are building buildings.

If the buildings become community hubs, where education has no age, other services are there, then the walls of education…If we invented the current system, we can change the structure of education.

“Studies show that a 17 year old, expelled for two years, almost never returns to finish the sixth grade.” Tongue in cheek quote by a board member.

The Drivers exam model – you take the test when you are ready, take it until you pass.

Ann Brennan says to make sure the Blackwell bill doesn’t pass or none of these utopia ideas will come to pass.

Lynn Brumfield tutored a kid who is 22 and hasn’t passed Science Proficiency. This young lady can’t get many jobs because she doesn’t have a high school diploma. She worked hard with Lynn, and passed with 222. She wasn’t motivated when she was younger. The world finally told her what we had been telling her. Eventually they will come back. We need to help kids to be responsible and not feel if they are a failure if they don’t pass at the “right” time. Lynn talks about “Basic school” – a concept from a few years back. Every one stays in basic until they master basic reading and math and then move on to secondary. Today such a school would be pushed by high achieving parents, whose kids can move quickly and violently opposed by most.

Some high school kids who requested accommodations for ACT were denied because they didn’t meet ADA guidelines for disability. The school did not get a response back.

ETS has their own policies about what an individual with disabilities is, based on ADA ETS is using DSM-IV or discrepancy to determine.

Two kids who were denied were ADHD, both had 504s when younger, IEP in high school. They asked extended time, which they get all through the school year. The other kid was a move-in LD kid. ETS didn’t agree with the tests used to identify him in the previous district and wanted all new testing using specific tests.

IAT members can get LPDC credits for serving on the IAT teams – as an equivalent activity. In his district the psychologists sign off for credit. Good idea to check out with your district.

Maumee Valley president asked Scott Gill to ask a question: How is OSPA protecting school psychology jobs from erosion to psychologists in private practice?

• IUC looks at that when looking at the number of psychologists coming into the programs.

• Is the crux of the issue the shortage? OSPA has actively addressed the shortage issue (Shawnee State program, a new program at Youngstown State is in
development). OSPA has tried to retain the ratio in the law – it hasn’t been decreased, but it is still there. There is a provision that allows for licensed psychologists to administer IQ tests. The best advocacy is to be sure that school psychologists are being presented as the best person for the job, rather than someone from outside the profession.

- Some of the concern was using RTI – with less testing required, will we become obsolete?
- The issue now is money. If a district can find someone cheaper, they’ll do it.
- In the long run, if RTI is the model, the best trained people will be school psychologists.
- Cleveland laid off many people last year and this year – all school psychologists laid off last year were re-assigned to (parochial schools). None of the layoffs this year were school psychologists.
- Kent State University had/has a one year program for clinical psychologists to be re-trained as school psychologists. Most universities require the whole program.
- Ann says the credentialing review board the state is creating will review other licensing boards to see if some should be cross credentialed. We will have to keep an eye on this.