

## What's Up With ESP?

By Tina Adams

The ESP State Conference sponsored by the Ohio Association of Education Support Professionals was held on October 24<sup>th</sup> at Mansfield Senior High School. It was a perfect opportunity for ESP members to gain very valuable and insightful information on several topics.

Registration for the NEA ESP Conference to be held in Las Vegas, March 12 – 15, 2010, will open soon. Are you going?

As ESP in the current economy we need to be aware and educated in the face of several challenges. Typically many of us work more than one job every day. Some of you may be working 3 or 4. Our education jobs are covered under SERS. Private sector jobs are covered under Social Security. The Government Social Security Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) will have severe impact on ESP. Odd how the government thinks it's ok for us to put in the time and effort at more than one job at the same time, contribute to both systems, but only wants us to collect from one after all of that time away from our families to make ends meet! How do we change it? Contact your Senators and Congressman and tell your personal story while urging them to support the repeal of these provisions. Your NCOEA officers or your Uniserv Office will be glad to provide you with contact information and updates. Donate to FCPE; this money supports OEA/NEA lobbyists acting on your behalf in Washington, D.C. NEA Director Becky Mayer, an NCOEA member, also travels to Washington to meet with senators and congressmen to deliver our message and support us. Contact her at [mayerb@ohea.org](mailto:mayerb@ohea.org) for local assistance in a letter writing campaign.

Privatization or subcontracting of ESP jobs becomes a scary reality as districts look at ways to trim their budgets. Just as charter and online schools have taken away students and jobs, the bottom line will take away ESP jobs. Districts will hire private sector companies to perform the basic functions of our jobs citing cost effectiveness. Ever feel like your contribution to public education is not acknowledged or respected? How do we change it? We must stand together to spread the message that our commitments to our kids, beliefs in and contributions to education are worth the money. Get involved in your local association, and take advantage of the opportunities, ideas, and support to showcase who you are and what you do. You can participate and influence changes at the district, state, and national levels. There are over 500,000 ESP in the USA who have ideas that work and are willing to help. Let's get together and address this concern before it happens to you. Please express your interest and willingness to get involved to [realorrumor@yahoo.com](mailto:realorrumor@yahoo.com).

## REAL or RUMOR

*(This column is meant to give members an opportunity to have issues or questions clarified about things associated with our association or current laws. The following is an example of the type of issue that may be clarified. Send your questions or rumors to [realorrumor@yahoo.com](mailto:realorrumor@yahoo.com).)*

**Rumor:** NEA and OEA are more concerned with teachers than with students.

**Real:** Both NEA and OEA exist to improve the quality of public education and serve the needs of its members.

Helping students and helping teachers go hand-in-hand. The Association knows that the quality of education and teachers' working conditions are linked. NEA and OEA seek to enhance the professionalism of education employees by providing them with opportunities to improve their teaching techniques. NEA and OEA also advocate for the kind of employment rights, economic benefits, and working conditions that they as professionals deserve. NEA and OEA advocate for qualified teachers in every classroom, improving reading skills, promoting school construction and modernization, building bipartisan support for public education, and advocating for safe and orderly schools.

### 2010 NEA Mid-Atlantic Regional Leadership Conference

The theme for the Mid-Atlantic is Today's NEA... Hope, Innovation, Transformation.

The conference will be held in Cincinnati on January 22-24, 2010. The registration fee is \$150.00 and must be postmarked by December 21, 2009. Keynote speakers will be: NEA President, Dennis Van Roekel; NEA Vice President, Lily Eskelsen; NEA Secretary-Treasurer, Becky Pringle. Detailed conference, hotel and online registration information is available at [www.nea.org/members/marlc.html](http://www.nea.org/members/marlc.html).

NCOEA is offering scholarships for members. Forms are available from your president, at [www.northcentraloea.org](http://www.northcentraloea.org), or from [cswank44@embarqmail.com](mailto:cswank44@embarqmail.com), and should be submitted by November 27, 2009.

### OEA Collective Bargaining Conference February 4-6, 2010

The Collective Bargaining Conference is scheduled to be held at the Hyatt Regency in Columbus. Registration is \$100.00 and the deadline is January 5, 2010. NCOEA scholarship forms are available at [www.northcentraloea.org](http://www.northcentraloea.org), or from [cswank44@embarqmail.com](mailto:cswank44@embarqmail.com), and should be submitted by January 2, 2010. (See October 2009 Ohio Schools for more info.)