

# Alliance *News Flash*

November 26, 2014

ALLIANCE for High Quality Education

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## *Need Your Vote for Next Year!*

# Annual Meeting is Another Success

By all measures, the November 11, 2014 Alliance Annual Meeting, celebrating the group's 23rd year advocating for adequate funding and high quality education, was a success.

More than 200 representatives – second only to last year's 220 – of Alliance member districts filled the Columbus Hilton Downtown Bellows Room for a sumptuous breakfast buffet, brief business meeting and a series of quality presentations.

First, Executive Director Tony Podojil provided the membership with an overview of the past year that included the deliberations on the Mid-Biennium Budget Review (MBR), OTEs, College Credit Plus and the first release of the "Quality Profile" statewide. He then summarized the Alliance's most recent statewide survey which reinforced the notion that taxpayers are truly interested in their schools and get their information about them from a variety of sources: word-of-mouth from teachers and other

staff members, school publications, newspapers, websites, social media, etc. So, in order to get the word out, districts need to utilize a variety of methods if they hope to effectively reach their residents.

Keith Kelly, Superintendent of Mayfield City Schools, then described the process his district followed in developing its 2014 edition of a "Quality Profile." Dr. Kelly provided a PowerPoint presentation depicting various pages of the profile template and how his staff had made a concerted effort to report on subjects of interest to district residents, even if those reports were not altogether positive.

Next came the Alliance's now traditional panel discussion featuring State Senator Peggy Lehner, Chair of the Senate Education Committee, and Alliance member district superintendents Gail Kist-Kline of Mason City Schools and Brian Poe of Copley-Fairlawn.

Sen. Lehner wasted little time in making

known her opposition to H. B. 597, which would reject the Common Core standards and PARCC assessments. However, she would not speculate regarding the fate of H. B. 597 should it reach the Senate. She also stated her belief that the PARCC assessments should “be given a chance” because a lot of highly qualified people had contributed to the effort to craft assessments that would fairly test student mastery of the new standards.

Gail and Brian expressed their support of Common Core as well, but effectively articulated their concern about the increasing emphasis on testing and the burden it places on teachers and students.

Sen. Lehner spoke about her ongoing efforts to generate more state funding for preschool programs and described her goal of guaranteeing full, high quality, preschool services for all students at risk, those from homes with incomes less than two times the federal designated poverty level. She also indicated that no concerted effort had yet begun in the legislature regarding next year’s budget, and that funding levels, including guarantees, caps, and TPP reimbursements, are not yet on legislators’ radar screens.

Brian and Gail offered pertinent comments regarding a number of issues of concern, including the investment that had been made by their respective districts in preparation for the Common Core and the disruption that would occur if those standards were abandoned. They also expressed their support for early childhood education, and the need for consistency in both funding and policy programs.

The meeting concluded with a touching tribute by Paul Imhoff, chair of the Alliance Executive Committee, to Dr. Homer Mincy, co-founder of the Alliance when he, also, was superintendent of Upper Arlington schools.

And, fittingly, Frank DePalma, superintendent of the ESC of Montgomery County, and long-time friend of Senator Lehner, presented her with the *Homer Mincy Leadership in Education Award* for her extraordinary commitment to K-12 education during her six years of service in the House and Senate.

Finally, both last year’s annual meeting, a Monday luncheon, and this year’s breakfast meet-



## CALENDAR

<b>Wednesday, January 14th</b>	<b>Legislative / System Improvements Committee</b> 10:00 a.m., BASA
<b>Wednesday, January 21st</b>	<b>Accountability Task Group</b> 9:30 a.m. ( <i>place TBD</i> )
<b>Wednesday, January 28th</b>	<b>Executive Committee</b> 9:30 a.m., BASA Conference Room

ing were well attended and we have asked members to indicate their preference. However, we have received only a smattering of votes and want your input. If you have not already done so, please select one for the choices below and send your selection to Barb Adams at [barb@ahqe.org](mailto:barb@ahqe.org) **NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 5th:**

- 1) *Monday of the Capital Conference at noon;***
- 2) *Tuesday of the Capital Conference for breakfast; or***
- 3) *Alternate the date***

We thank you for your input and wish you a warm holiday season.