Report of the Secretary
Mary Hofer

“2020 Vision for Success” — that would have been the theme of OSEA’s 82nd Conference. I couldn’t have asked for a more perfect theme. The 2019-20 school year started off with a bang. The Oregon Legislature passed HB 2016 giving us all that needed encouragement after the Janus case passed in the Supreme Court. Oregon passed the Student Success Act for school districts across the state strategizing the best uses for that influx of funding. OSEA chapters were successfully bargaining some of the highest COLA percentages they’ve seen in years.

I myself took part in some of the most interesting and encouraging experiences of my time spent as your OSEA secretary with learning about Community Schools from AFT, taking part in the biennial Oregon AFL-CIO Convention, getting re-charged and educated on HB 2016 during our annual Leadership Summit and hosting my first AACSE Legislative Conference as AACSE president. All these experiences helped me grow as a member and as a leader.

That newfound strength has now been put to the test. With the closing of schools, communities and our state due to the coronavirus pandemic, I have found myself reaching out to members in a much different way than I had planned. Instead of helping my own chapter leaders strategize with district leaders on how to create positions funded by the Student Success Act, I am helping strategize how to weather one of the biggest budget crises in recent history. Instead of planning membership drives at schools, I’m hosting weekly information sessions over WebEx to keep all classified employees informed on the latest news and how it affects each of us. Instead of planning for Conference, I am planning for almost daily Zoom and WebEx meetings and updates from AFT, Oregon AFL-CIO and my local CLC.

Life is different to say the least, but, I tell you what, no one is more resilient, more hard working and more flexible than a classified employee. We tackle change and adversity head on. I’m proud to call myself a classified employee.

It has been a pleasure and an honor to serve as your OSEA secretary this year. Thank you for giving me that opportunity. I am sincerely grateful. And thank you to President Gourley, the Board and, most importantly, the OSEA staff. You are an amazing group of people to work with and without you I would never have survived this year.