

FROM YOUR AREA 2 DIRECTOR



Happy New Year to all the FCSBA members, I hope all is going as well as can be expected as we start 2010.

As I reflected on the significant changes that took place in 2009, some were more significant than others; the big one was the mid-year budget Delay in payment/possible cut, (if never repaid), this will provide us many challenges that effect our individual district's programs and the possible staffing level of professionals we may be able to retain in the future.

Just think about it, going forward we have a "\$700 Million school funding" dilemma facing us in NYS that has all of us looking at our budgets and weighing options earlier than normal. Many of these options are not choices we want to make, as we all try to keep the cuts as far away from the classrooms as possible. One possible assist is for NYS to gain its share of the RTTT (Race To The Top), funds which could once again place a temporary band-aid on the economic storm that continues to brew in Albany.

One positive change that came about this past year was the passage and implementation of a Tier V in the NYS retirement program. Tier V will start to provide some assistance in the future but that relief is about ten years away; however it is long overdue and a step in the right direction.

We all know of people affected by the current economic downturn and the resulting job losses and we all understand how this ripple effect is just adding to the revenue problem in the state's public coffers; which in turn is reflected in the cuts, current and future being considered by the Governor. With that being stated the networking we do, the letters we write as local school board members are more important than ever. The week of January 11 there will be a video released, produced by the NYSSBA, Task Force on School Efficiency called "Be the Change for Kids"; give this a look and do your best to get involved.

Some of the ways to get involved would be to participate at the FCSBA legislative committee, the FCSBA legislative breakfast and by having each FCSBA district represented at this year's NYSSBA "State Legislative Issues Conference" in Albany (March 14 & 15), these are very important ways to get the message across. The consistent message we share, that balancing the budget of NY State through significant education cuts will not provide the educational results we truly need to sustain our state or society in the future.

We have much to do for our districts this year and together we can.

Sincerely,

Tom

Area 2 Director, NYSSBA, Vice President

Website Spotlight

www.bethechangeforkids.org link to NYSSBA's new information and advocacy campaign.

[Http://www.4ba.org](http://www.4ba.org)

NEWS

NYSSBA

New On-line Courses and Webinars

some free - some for a fee – visit www.nyssba.org which is linked through www.4csba.org to review the selections.

"Be the Change for Kids"

a new information and advocacy campaign designed to help lead New York's education system through the most difficult fiscal climate it has ever faced. A video and other information are available at the website www.bethechangeforkids.org also linked through www.4csba.org



FAREWELL & THANK YOU

Farewell and thanks to retiring superintendents
Cindy Miner
North Rose-Wolcott CSD since 2006 with a prior stint at Sodus CSD.

Nancy Zimar
Dundee Central School District after 20 years as Dundee Superintendent.

Each has been an active participant and good friend to Four County. Good health and much enjoyment in all retirement endeavors. You will be very much missed!

Farewell also to **Kathy Malone**, retiring from the Clyde-Savannah BOE after 14 years of service. Kathy has been chair of the Four County Program Planning Committee and a member of the Steering Committee. We will miss her very much as well! Enjoy Kathy!!

LEGISLATIVE HAPPENINGS



The Legislative Committee and our two sub-committees on 3020-a and Shared Services have been busy this year. The Legislative Committee has completed our work on the State, Federal and Regents Position Papers, which will be presented to the Four County SBA Board of Directors at the meeting on January 21st. The 3020-a Sub-Committee has completed the work on this topic and have developed recommendations which will also be presented to the Board of Directs on the 21st. We will hopefully be rolling out a campaign for change with 3020-a and will present this information to our member boards. The Shared Services Sub-Committee is working hard in collaborations with other entities to identify opportunities and recommendations from Four County SBA. More news on this front to follow in the month ahead.

There is a small contingent of representatives from Four County SBA who will be traveling to Washington D.C. to meet with our representatives. As one of the individuals I will be contacting each of the member districts about issues for our region and will ask for your assistance in compiling some information that will better help us to advocate for our needs in the Finger Lakes. We will be reporting back to you in the next newsletter about what we learn during our trip.

Over the course of the next several months I will ask for your assistance with the our advocacy efforts regarding 3020-a. This may entail writing letters to or calling your representatives in Albany. In addition it will be vital that we all have the ability to talk about the costs of 3020-a for our region and our individual districts. If we can educate the public we may be able to roar with a louder voice. We will also be talking with the local media in an attempt to get the word out to the larger community. I look forward to this challenge and hope that we can make enough noise about this costly issue to ensure that Albany not only hears our concern, but acts on it.

Lastly I would like to thank the folks who spent four Saturday mornings working on the Position Papers. I know that you all spent more time than the cumulative 12+ hours of Saturday mornings on the issues and it is evident in the work that you produced. Without your efforts we could not have completed the mission.

Mike Ellis - Legislative Committee Chair

WELCOME

Four County extends a warm welcome and congratulations to newly appointed superintendents-
Dr. Theresa Pulos – Clyde- Savannah
Ms Kathy Ring – Dundee

We look forward to seeing you at Four County events.

JOIN US FOR

MID-YEAR MEETINGS

January 21, 2010
5:45 p.m.
(Prior to the General Membership Meeting)
The Club 86

BOARD OF DIRECTORS'
Establish Association budget parameters for 2009-2010, adopt the legislative and regulatory position papers, and plan for spring programs.

And

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
Approve legislative and regulatory position papers, and plan advocacy activities.

MAKE SURE YOUR BOARD IS REPRESENTED

Future Events

SAVE THE DATE SAVE THE DATE

LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST
Saturday, February 27, 2010
8:15 – 10:30
The Club 86

PRESIDENTS' / VICE PRESIDENTS' / DINNER AND ROUND-TABLE
Tuesday, March 30, 2010
5:45 p.m.

Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES Regional Support Center

FISCAL TRAINING
(Mandated 6 hour course)
Saturday, May 1, 2010
7:30 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES Regional Support Center

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

"Education is a social process. Education is growth. Education is, not a preparation for life; education is life itself." John Dewey

January	February	March
15 FCSBA Steering Committee Meeting 18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday 21 FCSBA Legislative Committee Meeting 21 FCSBA Board of Directors' Meeting 21 FCSBA General Membership Meeting 30-31 FRN Conference, Washington, DC	1-2 FRN Conference, Washington, DC. 5 FCSBA Negotiators' Breakfast 12 FCSBA Board Clerks' Workshop 15 Presidents' Day Holiday 24 Statewide School Finance Consortium 27 FCSBA Legislative Breakfast	14-15 NYSSBA Legislative Conference 25 Statewide School Finance Consortium 27 FCSBA Prospective School Board Member Seminar 30 FCSBA Presidents'/Vice Presidents' Roundtable Meeting



Four County School Boards Association
 131 Drumlin Court
 Newark, NY 14513

**January
2010**

General Membership Meeting

*Thursday, January 21, 2010
 The Club 86, Geneva, New York*

5:30 – Registration/Conversation 5:45 - Board of Directors' & Legislative Committee Meetings
 6:45 Dinner 7:30 Program

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

“WHAT WORKS”

Featuring Programs from Lyons and Penn Yan



From Lyons - the Elementary School “Learning Circles” – a staff development initiative

From Penn Yan – a three-year mentoring program & their “Young Entrepreneurs Academy”

Plus

Mid Year Board of Directors' and Legislative Committee Meetings

- Joyce Lyke
President
- Nancy Scher
1st Vice President
- Anne Morgan
2nd Vice President
- Jeanne Durfee
Past President
- Mike Ellis
Legislative Committee Chair
- Jim Koehler
Program Planning Chair
- Bill Gowan
Legislative Committee Vice Chair
- Donna Cotter
Program Planning Vice Chair
- Sharon A. Sweeney
Executive Director
- Mary Roth
Administrative Assistant

President's Message



Have you made your New Year's Resolutions? I am hoping some of our law makers have made “New Resolutions”. With the budget process starting, we will all be facing monumental decisions that affect our school districts now and in the future. Should we add that new program that we may not be able to support next year? If we cut a position will it have ramifications in other areas? Do we go a head with building projects, trusting that the state will still stand by their commitment? How do we keep a cap on wage increases?

I feel strongly that this is the time for us to “think out of the box”. As educators we have been doing the same thing for decades. Our classrooms may have more electronic equipment but we primarily operate in the same way to provide education to our students. Can we do away with the grade structure and allow students to truly learn at their own rate? Can we be more flexible with the daily/yearly structure? Can we use virtual learning to create a more dynamic learning environment? Could some of the answers to these questions allow us to be more cost effective in the long run?

I think we can all see the value in consolidating services within our area with other municipalities. But I think we must look more carefully at our delivery systems to children as well and initiate 21st century methods to instruct our students. There are pilot projects around the country experimenting with virtual learning, extended days, and longer school years. I would encourage you to share new initiatives that you read or hear about in your travels. I often find out about new methods from friends who have move away. Question your friends and relatives in other states and countries about education in their area. There could be initiatives we do not want to repeat but also some that we could expand upon and make our own.

While we are consumed with our monetary problems let us not forget the reason we exist, “to educate our children”. We need to be inventive and use our moneys in a different way. This time in our journey has the potential for renewal. We need to be prepared to take advantage of the opportunity. Have a great new year!

Joyce