

Hello to all the 4CSBA members.

The NYSSBA Annual Convention and Business Meeting is almost here, actually this newsletter will probably arrive while we are at the convention. My understanding is that the convention should be great, there will be more vendors participating than in recent years and the number of NYSSBA boards being represented at the convention, is up significantly, around 80%. This is wonderful news.

I've heard from several Area 2 districts that their Boards are being represented at this year's Convention and Annual Meeting; however the costs are up significantly from previous years. I've had conversations with a couple of NYSSBA Area Directors and have sent to the entire NYSSBA Board of Directors the letter, wonderfully constructed which was recently sent to Carl Onken, NYSSBA President, explaining the financial concern if NYC becomes the permanent location for this annual event. I'm sure there will be some post convention discussion and I'll bring this concern up.

Please keep in mind that the convention has not been held in NYC for over 40 years according to a conversation I had with Tim Kremer. The purpose of NYSSBA Convention and Annual Meeting is to network with its membership in a location that is both educational and informative and can host representation from a majority of its member districts, every year. I would hope that the future venue selections will keep a location rotation in mind and in fairness to all areas of the state we can "share the wealth", so to speak, of hosting the convention.

I hope I will have seen many of you at the convention, try to make sure your Board is represented. It was great to see several of you at the recent 4CSBA General Meeting held on October 3rd and I hope that you take advantage of the networking and educational opportunities provided by 4CSBA.

My email addresses are: tnespeca@rochester.rr.com, or Thomas.Nespeca@Kodak.com. Telephone numbers are: home 585-671-7858, Work 585-724-6252, Cell 585-747-9922 feel free to use any of them and they all have voice mail so leave a message and I'll do my best to get back to you ASAP.

SAVE THE DATE! SAVE THE DATE!

The Four County School Boards Association is set to again offer the mandated **6 hours of Fiscal Training** for newly elected school board members. It will be held on **Saturday, April 29, 2007** at a cost of \$90.00 for Association members. Details and registration information will be sent to all members.

SAVE THE DATE!

NYSSBA NEWS

FOUR COUNTY PARTICIPATES IN NYSSBA CONVENTION

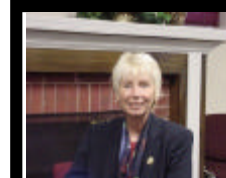
The Four County SBA is again participating in NYSSBA's Annual Convention and Business Meeting.

?? On October 7 the Association co-sponsored the annual **Area 2 Discussion of the Proposed Resolutions**. Twenty voting delegates from the Four County, Genesee Valley, and Monroe County School Boards Associations engaged in a spirited review of the issues. The event was hosted by Area 2 Director **Tom Nespeca** (Webster BOE) and facilitated by Area 2 Resolutions Committee Representative **Scott MacDonnel** (Phelps-Clifton Springs).

?? The Annual **Upstate/Downstate Discussion of Proposed Resolutions** will be held on Friday afternoon of the Convention to offer board representatives yet another opportunity to consider the issues that will come before the delegates on Saturday afternoon.

The **Upstate/Downstate Hospitality Suite** will again be available to provide convention goers a place to meet and mingle with their colleagues. To assist with the cost of providing this service to their members, the sponsoring Associations have accepted the support of business sponsors **Hodgson Russ LLP Attorneys** and **Turner Construction**. The Nassau-Suffolk SBA will also make an additional contribution to the event.

Sponsoring associations for the Upstate/Downstate events are Erie County, Four County, Genesee Valley, Monroe County, Nassau-Suffolk, Niagara-Orleans, Rockland County, and Westchester-Putnam.



LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE PLANS 2006-2007 ACTIVITIES Anne Morgan Committee Chair

The Four County Legislative Committee met on October 3, 2006 prior to the General Membership Meeting. Twenty committee representatives and alternates, representing fourteen member districts were in attendance. In addition to planning activities, the 2006-2007 Legislative Calendar was set. Committee members will once again develop the State and Federal Position Papers participate in the State Legislative and Federal Relations Networks, and host the annual Legislative Breakfast. In addition, they will complete work on paper outlining the Association's positions regarding Regents' and regulatory issues. Position paper workshops have been set for November 4 and December 9, with a tentative third session on November 18. Make sure your board is represented for these important discussions.



PROGRAM PLANNING COMMITTEE Kathy Malone Committee Chair

The Program Planning Committee joined together on September 21 for its first meeting of the 2006-2007 school year. Our agenda included a discussion and analysis of the Member Interest Survey that was conducted this past summer with our member boards. The Committee noted that 41 members, representing 16 school boards, had responded to the survey.

An interpretation of the responses compared the "ranking of program suggestions" against the "issues that consume the majority of board time," and it was interesting and useful to the Committee to note that there was an overlap of three specific areas: *Cost of Education/Financial Issues/Budget Concerns, School Policy, Labor/Unions/Negotiations*

The respondents' identification of these areas provided a springboard for the Program Planning Committee's focus for the membership meeting programs for this upcoming year. During the brainstorming discussion, other ideas were generated which included the following potential programs: *Pension Reform/Retirement Benefits/Merit Pay, Creative and Innovative Revenue Sources, Successful Local Math and Science Programs, Increasing Community Involvement, Speakers from Private Industry and Local Colleges.*

Our first general membership meeting this year was held on October 3 in Geneva. In citing the critical need for board member involvement at the local, regional, and state levels, guest speaker **David Little**, NYSSBA Director of Government Relations, emphasized, "Your district cannot afford to keep you home ---- it's the largest return on investment any district can make." Please try to join your fellow area board members at one or two of these Four County School Boards Association meetings this school year. We believe you will come away energized, revitalized, and more informed to take on the ever-changing challenges of your role as a school board member!

AD HOC BUDGET AND DUES COMMITTEE APPROVED

The FCSBA Board of Directors met on September to plan for the coming year. They reappointed **Sharon Sweeney** as Executive Director, approved depositories for Association funds, and established the 2006-2007 Action Plan. They also approved the appointment of an Ad Hoc Committee to review the Association's dues formula and budget guidelines. To assure demographically diverse representation, a number of member boards have been specifically identified to receive invitations. However, all boards are welcome to participate. If you are interested but do not receive an invitation, please call or email the Association office.

SCHOOL FINANCE CONSORTIUM CONTINUES TO ADVOCATE

The Midstate School Finance Consortium is now the Statewide School Finance Consortium to more accurately reflect the state-wide make-up of its members. The group continues to advocate for a change in the state aid formula and a state-wide solution to the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) court case. Appointed in September upon the resignation of **Brandon Gordon** (who left for a position with the Syracuse Chapter of the American Red Cross), retired Erie 2, Chautauqua, Cattaraugus BOCES District Superintendent, Rick Timbs serves as the part-time Executive Director. Four County representatives to the Consortium are Romulus board member **Anne Morgan** and FCSBA Executive Director **Sharon Sweeney**.

It's School Board Recognition Week...Celebrate you! Thanks for your commitment to our children's future...

WEBSITE SPOTLIGHT

www.brook.edu/index/reports.htm: This will take you to the Brookings Institute reports page. Select the report:

The Brown Center Report on American Education **"How Well Are American Students Learning?"** With special sections on the nation's achievement, the happiness factor in learning, and honesty in state test scores.

WELCOME NEW FCSBA ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT MARY TRANELLI

On September 11, **Mary Tranelli** began as the Four County Administrative Assistant. She will assist in planning and preparation for all meetings, projects, and publications; attending general membership events to help with registration and set-up. In addition, Mary will assume responsibility for maintaining the Association's website, which is currently under construction. Her background provides Mary with a unique set of skills and knowledge for the position. She is eager to get to know the members and become familiar with their issues. Mary and her son Luke live in Newark.

October		November		December		January	
22-28	School Board Member Recognition Week	3	FCSBA Negotiators' Breakfast	5	NYSSBA Legal Conference (Albany)	18	FCSBA General Membership Meeting
26-29	NYSSBA Annual Convention	4	FCSBA Legislative Position Paper Workshop	5	FCSBA General Membership Meeting	18	FCSBA Legislative Committee Meeting
26-28	Upstate/Downstate Hospitality Suite	7	FCSBA Steering Committee Meeting	5	FCSBA Board of Directors Meeting	18	FCSBA Board of Directors Meeting
27	COLSBA Meeting	7	Election Day	25	Holiday-Christmas	21-23	NYSCOSS Midwinter Conference
27	Upstate/Downstate Resolutions Discussion	7	Holiday—Veterans' Day	29	FCSBA Position Paper Workshop	28-30	NSBA Federal Relations Network
31	Halloween	10	12-18 American Education Week				
		18	Tentative FCSBA Position Paper Workshop				
		23	Holiday-Thanksgiving				

OCTOBER 2006

TOM SCHERER
President

NANCY SCHER
1st Vice President

JOYCE LYKE
2nd Vice President &

KATHY MALONE
Program Planning Chair

ANNE MORGAN
Legislative Committee Co-Chair

STEVE WYCKOFF
Immediate Past President & Legislative

TOM NESPECA
NYSSBA Area 2 Director

SHARON A. SWEENEY
Executive Director

MARY TRANELLI
Administrative Assistant

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE 2006 POSITION PAPER WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Saturday, November 4, 2006

Saturday, December 9, 2006

(Tentatively - Saturday November 18, 2006 - if necessary)

8:30 am – 12:00 Noon

North Street Elementary School Library

Geneva City School District

400 W. North Street, Geneva, NY

[On W. North Street which runs between Preemption Road and Route 14 (Exchange Street), West of the Hospital.]

Make sure your board is represented!

President's Message



At our opening General Membership meeting held on October 3rd, we were privileged to hear from David Little, NYSSBA Director of Government Relations. His topic "A Season of Change Will Board Members Be Left Out in the Cold?" was both insightful and informative. Based on your feedback from the evaluation forms from that evening, the program was very successful and we appreciate your attendance and participation.

One of the services that Four County School Boards provides for its members is training for new school board members. The service is usually provided once or twice a year depending on the needs and desires of the group. This past June the training was offered at the Flint BOCES site and was very well received. Seventeen new board members and a few veteran members attended the training as well. At this meeting, Midlakes Superintendent Michael Ford graciously accepted our invitation to provide his perspectives relating to board member service. With his permission, I would like to share some helpful thoughts that Mike passed along to new board members that evening.

Ask Questions: Whether you are a new or veteran board member, you have to listen to discussions and ask questions. Asking for information leads to an understanding about important issues and shows other board members, community and staff that you are serious about becoming an informed and committed member.

Be Humanistic: In your work as a board member, if you want to be treated well, treat others well. Be respectful in your relationships as well.

Do Your Homework: Keep your self up-to-date by reading your weekly and/or monthly packets. Again, if there are questions – ask.

Keep Confidential Matters Confidential: As a board member you will often be privy to information that others do not know. In order to build trust among other board members you must keep confidential information confidential.

One final thought – we often get so caught up in district decisions that we forget about our real reason for being a board member. It isn't for the big bucks, power or recognition.

It's to do the best for all the children in our district!

Tom



Four County School Boards Association

131 Drumlin Court
Newark, NY 14513