

**"Only the mediocre are always at their best." ~Jean Giraudoux**

**FROM YOUR AREA DIRECTOR**

Hello to all the 4CSBA Members:  
The NYSSBA Annual Convention and Business Meeting that was recently held in NYC was well attended and I want to take a moment to thank the Districts that were able to attend, I appreciate the extra time and money you spent to do so. I also appreciate all the letters and emails that I've received providing input about the convention and that the future conventions be held in cities using a rotational approach when choosing a location.  
I also want to apologize for the recent Area 2 Newsletter that was recently received, on or about 11/17/06. Under the section on Convention Post Mortem, the NYSSBA staff held a post mortem discussion on 11/2/06 without input from the Board of Director's. That will take place on December 2, 2006 and I'm sure there will be some very lively discussion about the convention and I'll bring up the concerns mentioned in your communications to me. If you wish to send me anything based on your convention experiences or anything else.  
My email addresses are: [tnespeca@rochester.rr.com](mailto:tnespeca@rochester.rr.com), or [Thomas.Nespeca@Kodak.com](mailto: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.  
In closing I want to wish you all the best of the Holiday Season, enjoy the time you spend with your Family and Friends, please travel safe. **Tom**

**FOUR COUNTY MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN NYSSBA CONVENTION**

The Annual NYSSBA Convention and Business Meeting was held in New York City October 26 through 29. While registration was reported up from previous years, there were many fewer Four County members in attendance than in the past. Among those who participated, a number served as workshop presiders, while others shared their knowledge and experience as presenters. Those presiding were board members **Nancy Scher** (Penn Yan/Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES), **Tarry Shipley** (Canandaigua/NYSSBA Past President), and **Sharon Sweeney** (FCSBA Executive Director). Presentations were offered by the Victor CSD and Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES. Representing Victor were Superintendent **Timothy McElheran** and Director of Special Programs **Dawn Santiago-Marullo** whose topic was "Competing in a Flat World". Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES staff members **Amy Perry-Del Corvo** (Director of Strategic Initiatives) and **Jeremiah Frink** (Coordinator for On-Line Academic Content) discussed "On-Line Learning for Everyone".

The **Upstate/Downstate Hospitality Suite** was a very busy place with members from the eight sponsoring associations enjoying a place to relax, chat with colleagues from across the state, enjoy the refreshments and take in the unique view. The host associations are most grateful to **Hodgson Russ, LLP and Turner Construction** for their sponsorship.

# NYSSBA News

**DELEGATES ELECT 2007 LEADERSHIP**

In addition to deliberating over the proposed resolutions, delegates to NYSSBA's Annual Business Meeting elected officers for 2007. Re-elected to a second term were: **President Carl Onken** (Orange-Ulster BOCES), **Vice Presidents Florence Johnson** (Big 5/Bufalo City) and **Wayne Schlifke** (Erie 1 BOCES), and **Treasurer Michael J. Masse** (Fayetteville-Manlius). Rounding out the leadership will be **Immediate Past President Anne M. Byrne** (Nanuet) who also represents the Northeast Region on the National School Boards Association's Board of Directors. Congratulations to all!

**FOUR COUNTY MEMBERS SERVE ON NYSSBA COMMITTEES**

Appointed by NYSSBA Board of Directors member **Tom Nespeca** (Webster), a number of Four County members have represented Area 2 on NYSSBA Committees and Task Forces during 2006. **Scott Mac Donell** (Phelps-Clifton Springs) deliberated with the **Resolutions Committee** while **Kathy Malone** (Clyde-Savannah) was instrumental in selecting the Everett R. Dyer Award recipient as a member of the **Distinguished Service Committee**. **Jeanne Durfee** (Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES) was a member of the **Task Force on Retirement Benefits**, and **Tom Scherer** (Geneva) was appointed to the **Committee on Property Tax Reform**. **Nancy Scher** (Penn Yan/W-FL BOCES) continues to serve as a member of the **NYSSBA Ambassador Program**. The Ambassador Program was created to let New Yorkers know the good things the state's schools are doing and increase the awareness of the role of the local school boards in public education. School board members from around the state carry messages to the public, through media interviews or speaking engagements at civic organizations and community groups.



**WELCOME**  
Four County welcomes **Tom Nicholson**, who was appointed to fill a vacancy on the Wayne Central Board of Education. Congratulations Tom – we look forward to seeing you at Association events.



**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT  
Anne Morgan, Committee Chair**

The Legislative Committee is hard at work. After a successful, well attended, planning meeting in early October, a core group has come together twice to review and revise the Association's Legislative Position Papers. The State and Federal Papers are being updated to reflect issues of current concern to Four County members. Draft two will be reviewed at the next Position Paper Workshop that has been scheduled for December 9, 2006 (See notice). We were fortunate to welcome **David Little** (NYSSBA Director of Governmental Relations) and **Joe Marinelli** (W-FL BOCES District Superintendent) to our first meeting on November 3. What great resources they were for the deliberations! Committee representatives are also engaged in drafting the first edition of a "regulatory" paper addressing issues that come before the Board of Regents. That discussion will also continue on December 9<sup>th</sup>. Please make sure your board is represented. The debate is always lively and the discussion enlightening. Those who attend become very familiar with the issues!

**FCSBA LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE  
POSITION PAPER WORKSHOP**

**Saturday, December 9, 2006  
8:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon**

**FCSBA LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE  
POSITION PAPER WORKSHOP**

**Saturday, December 9, 2006  
8:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon**

*North Street Elementary School Library  
Geneva, New York*

**(Notice will be sent to all Committee Reps, Alternates and Superintendents)**

**A safe and happy  
Thanksgiving From Four County  
Officers and Staff**



**FINAL RULING IN CFE CASE ISSUED**

On Nov 20, 2006) The NYS Court of Appeals issued a final ruling in the **Campaign for Fiscal Equity** (CFE) lawsuit, ordering the State to spend more than \$1.93 billion in additional operating aid for New York City Schools. The Court accepted the minimum amount identified by the 2004 Zarb Commission and ordered that it be "appropriately updated". According to the **Statewide School Finance Consortium** (SSFC), while this is less than the plaintiffs sought, it is extremely significant that the State's highest court has intervened, ordering the Governor and Legislature to increase spending by a specific minimum dollar amount. (The State's lawyers had argued the Courts did not have such authority.) The decision lends itself well to a statewide solution, which we have all sought. It is also generally consistent with the Statewide School Finance Consortium's proposal, which would provide just over 1.1 billion to NYC, and 3.6 billion in total to nearly 500 school districts statewide. It's important to note that the 1.93 billion dollars the Court has called for is in additional money from the State. Even the plaintiffs in the CFE case have argued that New York City must also provide additional funding for its schools. The SSFC calls for a minimum local effort for each school district. If the Legislature will now determine the minimum amount that New York City must provide in support for its schools, it should also determine what the minimum local effort should be in every school district in the State. Now that New York's highest court has issued a final ruling in this case, a comprehensive statewide resolution of school funding should be attainable. The excessive property tax burden in New York State is directly related to the current inequitable school funding system. By adopting a proposal such as that advanced by the Statewide School Finance Consortium the Legislature and the Governor can provide fairness for both children and taxpayers across the State. **Four County** school districts are and have been members of the Statewide School Finance Consortium (formerly known as Midstate) since it's founding in the early 90's.

SAVE THE DATE

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FOUR COUNTY SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

**Mandatory Fiscal Training Seminar**

*April 28, 2009  
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
DiPacific's*

*(Corner of Routes 332 & 96 in Farmington)*

SAVE THE DATE

November	December	January	February
3 FCSBA Negotiators' Breakfast	5 NYSSBA Negotiations Impasse Seminar (Albany)	18 W-FL School-to-Career Steering Committee Meeting	2 FCSBA Negotiators' Breakfast
4 FCSBA Legislative Position Paper Workshop	5 FCSBA General Membership Meeting	18 FCSBA General Membership Meeting	6 FCSBA General Membership Meeting
7 FCSBA Steering Committee Meeting	5 FCSBA Board of Directors Meeting	18 FCSBA Legislative Committee Meeting	6 Board of Directors
7 Election Day	7 NYSSBA Negotiations Impasse Seminar (Batavia)	18 FCSBA Board of Directors Meeting	19-23 Mid Winter Recess
10 Holiday—Veterans' Day	9 FCSBA Position Paper Workshop	21-23 NYSCOSS Midwinter Conference	
12-18 American Education Week	25 Holiday-Christmas	27 GVSBA Fiscal Training Seminar	
18 FCSBA Position Paper Workshop	25-29 Holiday Recess	28-30 NSBA Federal Relations Network	
23 Holiday-Thanksgiving			



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

## NOVEMBER 2006

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING Tuesday, December 5, 2006

The Club 86  
 Avenue E, Geneva, NY

5:30 – Registration/Conversation      5:45 – Board of Directors' Meeting  
 6:30 – Dinner      7:15 – Program

### *“A Reasoned Approach in a Culture of Accountability”*

**Wayne A. Vander Byl, Esq.**  
*Attorney at Law*

*“How do school boards function in a culture of overwhelming governmental regulation and mistrust? How do they find a balance between the right amount of trust and the right amount of skepticism – skepticism that demands accountability, but does not micromanage or find petty fault?” Wayne will use case studies from completed school districts audits to illustrate his recommendations.*

- TOM SCHERER  
President
- NANCY SCHER  
1st Vice President
- JOYCE LYKE  
2nd Vice President &
- KATHY MALONE  
Program Planning Chair
- ANNE MORGAN  
Legislative Committee  
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- STEVE WYCKOFF  
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President &  
Legislative
- JEANNE DURFEE  
Past President
- SHARON A. SWEENEY  
Executive Director
- MARY TRANELLI  
Administrative Assistant



## President's Message



It was both a privilege and an honor to be able to represent Four County School Boards Association and the Geneva City School District at NYSSBA's 87<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention and Trade Show in New York City October 26-29. Along with being able to attend a number of informative workshops, it was especially enlightening to participate as a voting delegate at the Annual Business meeting where delegates passed 16 of 30 resolutions that will form the legislative agenda for NYSSBA in 2007. I would like to highlight three or four of them in this message.

Delegates passed a resolution directing NYSSBA to seek legislation to relieve the state's excessive reliance on the real property tax to fund education. Rather than recommending one single revenue-raising option, the resolution called for NYSSBA to work with the legislature to make improvements. Additionally, delegates passed a resolution supporting much needed reform to the state education funding system, one that would be characterized by five principles: adequacy, equity, flexibility, predictability and clarity. Delegates also passed four resolutions affecting pension reform, one that would authorize school districts to establish pension reserve funds for all employees. Interestingly, delegates also passed a resolution that would support better funding of the State Education Department to improve its effectiveness and ensure more prompt delivery of services to school districts.

As a school board member, I found that the workshops and seminars offered at the convention were equally informative and beneficial. Just a few examples of the sessions being offered included a full day School Law Seminar, NCLB Accountability – The Changing Picture, a session on Negotiation Challenges, School Board Institute Courses, Auditing Ethics and Procedures, the State of Student Achievement and many, many more.

Overall, I found the convention to be a very positive learning experience. I would strongly recommend that Superintendents encourage at least one board member to represent your district at similar conventions in the future if at all possible. There is much to be gained from attending the informative seminars that are offered as well the sharing of ideas and concerns with fellow board members from around the state!

*Have a Safe & Happy Holiday Season!*

*Tom*