

FROM YOUR AREA DIRECTOR



Happy New Year to all the FCSBA members, I hope all is going well as can be expected as we start 2009. As I reflected on the significant changes that took place in 2008, some more significant, (a new Governor in NYS, a newly elected US President), than others; that 2009 will provide us many challenges that affect our personal and professional lives and activities.

Just think about it, 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 as possible from the classroom.

All of us know of people affected by the current economies 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 being proposed by the Governor.

With that being stated as background the networking we do, the letters we write as local school board members are more important than ever. By networking to personally understand the issues and through our letter writing or personal conversations, regarding how we explain budget shortfall impacts to our Legislatures is very important.

That is why working with the FCSBA legislative committee, involving each district in this years NYSSBA SLN conference in Albany is very important so that we can get out the message. The consistent message that balancing the budget of the state through significant education cuts will not provide, in the long run, the long term results we truly need.

For some great background I'd ask you become familiar with the NYSSBA Task Force report on Maximizing School District Resources, which can be found on the lower right corner of the NYSSBA website.

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

Please feel to contact me should you have any questions or have some ideas.

My email addresses are: , or Telephone numbers are: home 585-671-7858, work 585-627-6425, 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.

Sincerely,

Tom

Area 2 Director
NYSSBA, Vice President

Website Spotlight

www.aasa.org - linked through 4csba.org offers a wealth of information about public education nationwide. Of particular interest are the publications that include surveys on such topics as the impact of the economic downturn on school districts, the effect of rising energy costs, and the state of the superintendency.

www.nypa.gov - provides the results of state-financed, first ever, side-by-side study of the performance of different hybrid school bus technologies. (Both are linked through www.4csba.org.)

NEWS

NYSSBA

Defend Your District

(NYSSBA's State Legislative Issues Conference)
March 1 – 3, 2009
Albany, New York

NYSSBA has waived the registration fee for all attendees.

And Four County will contribute to the remaining costs

All Boards should be represented at this event!

School District Auditing Workshop

February 27, 2009
1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Rochester, New York

Reminder

MID-YEAR MEETINGS

Thursday, January 15, 2009

5:45 p.m.

(Prior to General Membership Meeting)

The Club 86

BOARD OF DIRECTORS'

Establish Association Budget Parameters for 2009-2010
Adopt the Legislative and Regulatory Position Papers

and

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Approve Legislative and Regulatory Position Papers
Plan Advocacy Activities - including the
2009 Legislative Breakfast

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



ADVOCACY 2008 - 2009

The challenges presented in budget preparation for the 2009-2010 year demand active advocacy from all school board members. It is not enough to leave it to your representative to the Legislative Committee or your superintendent. Many voices speaking the same message are more likely to be heard. Legislators need to hear directly, with specific examples, how the Executive proposal and any decisions they make will impact the education of the students in your district. Your students must become real to them. To assist with that primary advocacy, the Association has been and will be engaged in many activities as well.

- The Legislative Committee has been hard at work on the FCSBA State, Federal, and Regents **Position Papers**. Four Saturday morning workshop sessions revised and updated the positions that will be communicated to area state and federal legislators, the NYS Board of Regents and the Commissioner of Education. They will be adopted at the Board of Directors meeting on January 15 and then sent to all board members and the appropriate legislators.
- Plans are underway for the Four County representatives to the National School Boards Association's **Federal Relations Network** to participate in the annual Legislative Conference and Lobby Day in Washington in early February. The Association assists with arrangements and the cost of your representatives' participation in this important event.
- Four County is urging all member boards to send at least one representative to NYSSBA's **State Legislative Issues Conference** in Albany in March. The funds formerly used to support the participation by representatives to the State Legislative Network will be used to assist with the cost. Exactly how is yet to be determined – a small bus to provide transportation? - a contribution to the cost of lodging and meals? We will let you know.
- Plans are underway for the FCSBA Annual **Legislative Breakfast** which is scheduled for March 21, 2009. Be sure your board is represented. A large representation underscores the importance for the legislators present. The Association will assist with Calls to Action, sample letters, data and other items when necessary and appropriate throughout the coming Legislative Session. Remember – **fax or letter** are more effective forms of communication than email – give legislators something to hold in their hands rather than a message that can easily be deleted. Better yet – use the **NYSSBA Capwiz** service available through their website which is linked through www.4csba.org.



Coming Attractions

PRESIDENTS'/VICE PRESIDENTS' DINNER

January 29, 2009

Jack Loveless Conference Room
W-FL BOCES Regional Support Center
Newark, New York

5:30 p.m. - Registration and Dinner available

6:00 p.m. – Focus Group with NYSSBA
Deputy Director **Rita Lashway**

(At NYSSBA's request regarding NYSSBA membership)

6:45 p.m. – Round-table Discussion



NEGOTIATORS' BREAKFAST

Friday, February 6, 2009

8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Vocational & Continuing Ed Conference Room
W-FL BOCES Regional Support Center
Newark, New York



SAVE THE DATES

SAVE THE DATES

FCSBA Legislative Breakfast

Saturday, March 21, 2009

8:15 – 10:45 a.m.

The Club 86

Geneva, New York

Make sure your board is represented!



FCSBA Fiscal Training Seminar

(Fulfilling the mandatory 6 hours)

April 25, 2009

(Location tba)

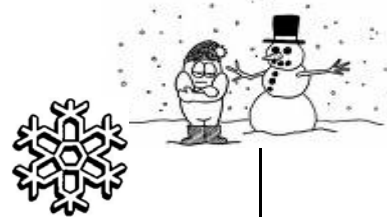
Required by June 30

for all school board members, newly elected or re-elected in May 2008.

(Member rate for entire 6 hours - \$90.00)

"We all live with the objective of being happy; our lives are all different and yet the same." Anne Frank

January	February	March	April	May
9 FCSBA Steering Committee	6 FCSBA Negotiators' Breakfast	5 W-FL BOCES Regional Budget Hearing	4-7 NSBA Conference	12 FCSBA Steering Committee
15 FCSBA Board of Directors'/Legislative/General Membership	9 FCSBA Steering Committee	10 FCSBA Steering Committee	13 Easter Holiday	19 Statewide Budget Vote and School Board Elections
19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday	16 Presidents' Day Holiday	21 FCSBA Legislative Breakfast	13-17 Spring Recess	25 Memorial Day Holiday
23 Statewide Finance Consortium	16-20 Winter Recess	28 FCSBA Prospective School Board Member Seminar	22 BOCES Admin. Budget Vote	
29 FCSBA Presidents'/Vice Presidents'	27 Statewide Finance Consortium		25 FCSBA Fiscal Training Seminar	
			27 FCSBA Board of Directors'/General Membership (tent.)	



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

January 2009

Thursday, January 15, 2009

The Club 86
 Geneva, New York

5:30 – Registration
 6:30 Dinner

5:45 - Directors' & Legislative Committee Mtgs.
 7:00 Program

MID-YEAR
BOARD OF DIRECTORS'
 &
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
 MEETINGS

Plus
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM
SOS

Sharing Our Strategies
(Or How to Cope in the Current Fiscal Climate)

- Tom Scherer
President
- Joyce Lyke
1st Vice President
- Nancy Scher
2nd Vice President
- Jeanne Durfee
Past President
- Anne Morgan
Legislative Committee Chair
- Jim Koehler
Legislative Committee Vice Chair
- Kathy Malone
Program Planning Chair
- Mike Ellis
Program Planning Vice Chair
- Sharon A. Sweeney
Executive Director
- Mary Tranelli
Administrative Assistant

President's Message



This letter is a follow-up to my November 2008 **"Unprecedented Challenges"** message. Since that time, we have all been made aware of the many "proposals" that our governor has set forth in his attempt close the large budget deficit that is facing New York State. His proposals include a laundry list of new and/or increases in taxes on items ranging from soft drinks to gym memberships, raising taxes on the rich, reducing Medicaid reimbursements, getting rid of pork barrel spending and of course reducing state aid to school districts for the 2009-2010 school year.

As school board members, each of us will be tackling this serious issue as we formulate our own school budgets for the coming school year. While many budgetary items will come under close scrutiny, I would seriously caution school board members about eliminating one very important line item. **That item is your membership in Four County School Boards Association and New York State School Boards Association.** If the cost of membership is one of the concerns, I would like to point out that the cost of membership to Four County SBA is much less than one percent of your total operating budgets. The cost of membership ranges from .000175 to .000449 of one percent. That's less than 5 ten thousandths of a percent for all of our districts!

This is not the time to even consider eliminating one of the very few line items which school board members have available to use. Now more than ever, we need to vigorously protect the very funding that enables us as board members to get our message across to our federal and state legislators on a face-to-face level. Both of these organizations provide the vehicle that is necessary to directly communicate our concerns about our students needs to our legislators. It is our obligation to spend a few hundred dollars now to protect hundreds of thousands of dollars in potential state aid later for our taxpayers. We cannot afford **"not"** to be there for our students!

Additionally, both of these organizations provide school board members from across the Wayne Finger Lakes area a "collective voice" in supporting our students, the efforts of our school superintendents and protection for our taxpayers. Of equal importance, are the benefits derived from learning from one another in the sharing of strategies to cope with the challenges presented during tight fiscal times.

I would again remind you that your active participation in attending the State Legislative Issues Conference to be held in Albany March 1 – March 3 is a very important step in this process. This year for the first time, NYSSBA is eliminating the registration fee for this conference. Instead of being appointed to participate, all school board members are encouraged to attend this important function.

It is exactly times like these when we need leaders to step forward on behalf of our students and taxpayers. As school board members, **"You"** are those leaders!

Hope to see you at our next General membership meeting to be held at Club 86 in Geneva on Thursday, January 15, 2009!

Oh – almost forgot

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

Tom

