

## FROM YOUR AREA 2 DIRECTOR



Hello to all the 4CSBA members, I hope all is going well?

I wanted to start this note with a big THANK YOU, for all your work as School Board Members. I know that a few weeks back was officially School Board Recognition Week and on behalf of the children of NYS, their parents and the local communities that you represent; I wanted to say thank you, your time commitment and unselfish work that; often goes unheralded.

I know that we are currently bracing for the unknown, with all the talk about mid-year cuts and the potential effects they would pose on our districts and educational programs. I'd ask you to assist yourselves and NYSSBA by educating your local state lawmakers that these mid-year cuts will not serve their communities well as they will only raise local taxes if the communities wish to maintain their local schools program as currently set. Remember we have the most transparent and open budget process of any in government and if cuts are made let them concentrate on those less open and more prone to higher percentage reserves. Let's keep our fingers crossed that there are other ways to balance the budget.

There are a couple of training opportunities available in the next few weeks you may want to keep in mind; the first, on December 10, 2009 Policy Conference in Albany and the second December 15, 2009 the Winter Law Conference in Rochester. These always provide good information and they present a great chance to network with fellow school board members. You can find more information on these training opportunities or to register if interested on the NYSSBA web-site.

In closing, I hope that you and your Families had a wonderful and safe Thanksgiving Holiday, a truly American holiday allowing us an opportunity to reflect on all the wonderful things we have as a people and nation.

*Tom*

Area 2 Director, NYSSBA, Vice President

### LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE POSITION PAPER WORKSHOP – IV

Saturday, December 12, 2009

Phelps-Clifton Springs  
Middle School Library  
1505 Route 488  
Clifton Springs, New York

8:30 a.m. Coffee/Light Breakfast  
9:00 a.m. Discussion

Join us to continue work on the 2009-2010 State and Federal Papers and begin work on the Regulatory Paper.

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

# NEWS



**ADVOCACY AWARDS:** NYSSBA is seeking nominations for their "Advocate of the Year Award" which is presented to an individual school board member who has been an active advocate for public education. They have also created a new award, the "Board Advocacy Award" which will be presented to a governance team that has been active at the state and federal levels. Details available at [www.nyssba.org](http://www.nyssba.org).

### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES:

- **ECB Anti-Bullying Conference – Albany, December 10**
- **Winter School Law Conference – Rochester, December 15**

**ADVOCACY CONFERENCE:** State Issues Conference – March 15-16 Albany



SAVE THE DATE                      SAVE THE DATE  
SAVE THE DATE

**JANUARY 21, 2010**  
Mid-Year  
Board of Directors' Meeting & Legislative  
Committee Meeting  
General Membership Meeting  
*our popular*  
**WHAT WORKS!**  
*Watch for details!*

**Saturday, February 27, 2010**  
FCSBA LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST  
The Club 86  
*Details to follow!*

**SATURDAY, MAY 1, 2010**  
**FISCAL TRAINING**  
mandatory six hours  
(rescheduled from April 24 due to conflict with spring break)  
**WAYNE-FINGER LAKES BOCES**  
**REGIONAL SUPPORT CENTER**  
Newark, New York

## LEGISLATIVE HAPPENINGS



The last two months have been very busy with multiple meetings laying the foundation for our advocacy and lobbying efforts. We have a very strong group who has volunteered three Saturdays so far to work out the 4CSBA Position Papers.

The individuals participating in these meetings have come from the four corners of our counties – from Naples to Sodus, and from Geneva to Victor. Without those members sitting around the table we would not be able to complete the challenging work of laying out a position for our organization.

In addition to the Legislative Position Paper workshops, we have also continued our pursuit of two items that have been priority issues for the association and our member districts. The two issues which we are addressing are 3020-a, and Shared Services. There are two separate groups who are participating in these issues, again with good representation from across our region. In December we will be having our fourth meeting regarding 3020-a and will be very close to having a plan for moving forward with our advocacy efforts. Our Shared Services subcommittee will also meet in December in a round table discussion with all of the players including member districts, BOCES, and NYSUT.

Your feedback and engagement in the process is vital to our ongoing efforts to increase the strength of our voice. This is a challenging time for all of our districts and I am hopeful that this work will enhance our engage our relationship with the representation in Albany and Washington. Thank you to all who have participated in the process. I encourage you all to join us if you have the time. The dates of our upcoming meeting are listed on the calendar for your reference.

*Mike Ellis* - Legislative Committee Chair



[www.gse.harvard.edu/~ngt/](http://www.gse.harvard.edu/~ngt/) - this site contains information about the "Project on the Next Generation of Teachers" from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. This is a multi-year research project addressing critical questions regarding the future of our nation's teaching force. Since 1998, The Project has examined a range of issues related to attracting, supporting, and retaining quality teachers in U.S. public schools.

## Notes from the Director



As in past years, I attended the **NYSSBA Convention and Business Meeting** in New York City. All-in-all, it was a good event offering many opportunities to catch-up with Four County members and colleagues from around the state. A large part of my activities fall into the category of support, including logistics for the **Upstate/Downstate Hospitality Suite and their Resolutions Discussion** and serving as a "Teller" for the Business Meeting. I did attend the interview with **Regents' Chancellor Tisch and Commissioner Steiner**, and like **Joyce**, (see President's Message, October Newsletter) am hopeful that the "winds of change" are a blowin'. I also listened to **Senator Schumer** and **Mike Resnick** from NSBA provide an update on Federal Legislative Issues. Their comments provide compelling reasons for all school board members to get involved in the advocacy effort on behalf of public education. Early Saturday morning I had the privilege of presiding" at a workshop on "Aligning Policy with Sound Assessment and Grading Practices" presented by **Nicole atapano**, Coordinator for Data Analysis Services at the Washington, Saratoga, Warren, Hamilton, Essex BOCES. She addressed the questions - "How confident am I that the grades students get in my classroom...are consistent, accurate, and meaningful, and that they support learning?" And "How confident am I that the grades I assign students accurately reflect my school's... published content standards and learning outcomes?" **Dr. Catapano** referenced the work of **Ken O'Connor** and his book entitled *How to Grade for Learning*. (Book review available at <http://staff.lib.msu.edu/corby/reviews/posted/oconnor.htm>) She talked about the importance of tracking student achievement and behavior separately, something we seem to be able to report better in the elementary grades than at the secondary level. Does your board policy on grading and assessment make the connection to your standards? Are you confident that your practices allow students, parents, and teachers to know what a student really can or cannot do? Perhaps a worthy subject for further exploration!

Keep up the good work -

*Sharon*

As this is the last newsletter of 2009...




### Happy Holidays

May this special season be filled with the warmth of family and friends!

from  
Four County Staff – **Mary & Sharon**  
&

The Steering Committee - **Joyce, Nancy, Anne, Jeanne, Kathy, Mike, Jim, Donna and Bill**

**'You can't force commitment, what you can do... You nudge a little here, inspire a little there, and provide a role model. Your primary influence is the environment you create.' Peter Senge**

December	January	February
<b>1 FCSBA 3020-a Sub-Committee Meeting</b> <b>3 FCSBA Legislative Shared Service Sub-Committee Mtg.</b> <b>7 FCSBA General Membership Meeting</b> 10 ECB Bullying Conference <b>11 FCSBA Negotiators' Breakfast</b> <b>12 FCSBA Legislative Position Paper Workshop</b> 15 NYSSBA Winter Law Conference (Rochester) 24-25 Christmas Holiday	1 New Year's Day <b>7 FCSBA Presidents'/Vice Presidents' Dinner</b> 7 Statewide School Finance Consortium 10-11 NYSCOSS Mid-Winter Conference 18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday <b>21 FCSBA Legislative Committee Meeting</b> <b>21 FCSBA Board of Directors' Meeting</b> <b>21 FCSBA General Membership Meeting</b> 30-31 FRN Conference, Washington, DC	1-2 FRN Conference, Washington, DC. <b>4 FCSBA General Membership Meeting</b> 5 Statewide School Finance Consortium 12 FCSBA Negotiators' Breakfast (tent.) 15 Presidents' Day Holiday 26 Statewide School Finance Consortium <b>27 FCSBA Legislative Breakfast</b>
		



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

## November 2009

### General Membership Meeting

Monday, December 7, 2009

**Torrey Park Grill\***

89 Avenue E, Geneva, NY  
 (formerly Pronti's) across from Club 86



5:30 – Registration/Conversation

6:30 – Dinner

7:30 – Program

#### OPTIMIZING OPPORTUNITY ∞ MAXIMIZING RESOURCES

Join us for a discussion that will:

- Outline the real consequences of the declining enrollment/resource phenomenon in Four County member districts - what programs and services are most at risk!
- Describe the actions that have already been taken to save critical programs and find efficiencies in the delivery of services.
- Identify other strategies and opportunities for efficiencies and collaboration.
- Recognize existing barriers to some of those strategies.
- Consider actions to address those barriers.

**\*Please note location**

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

Kathy Malone  
 Steering Committee Member

Sharon A. Sweeney  
 Executive Director

Mary Roth  
 Administrative Assistant

### President's Message



I have been reading the NYSSBA -clips and the NSBA's "American School" today. We are in an exciting time of change! Our State legislators may not be aware of it or up to it but our children are. How many schools no longer stress the teaching of cursive writing, logarithms, finding square roots by algorithm, or using a slide rule? I did have a class set of slide rules when I taught middle school. My principal at one point told me I would have calculators in the classroom over his dead body. (I did get them and he is still alive.) Now book reports at the elementary level may include power point presentations on the smart board. Many of our school districts are teaching foreign language starting at the primary level. Williamsville School system near Buffalo has been hearing from parents who want their child to learn Mandarin Chinese. Rochester is starting a new High school where students will receive college credit for accelerated courses. They will graduate with a minimum of 20 credits. Is this a charter school? I am not sure.

During the next few years we will be bombarded with many new ways to teach our students. We can't stick our heads in the sand or plant our feet firmly where we are. Things will change regardless. We must be in charged of this journey. Our students will not learn everything that we did nor should they. They certainly will not receive instruction in the same manner. As caretakers of the educational system we need to anticipate the needs of our future students. Do we have curriculum specific high schools? Do we have virtual classrooms at all levels? What would be the role of the teacher in the classroom? What would our classrooms look like? Will each student be given a Kindle rather than a text book? I know I have more questions about the future than answers. But isn't it exciting?

We have a new commissioner and chancellor that seem to be open to change. Through your efforts on our legislative committee, our shared services committee, and our many productive discussions at General Membership meetings we will be ready for the future. Hope to see you all at our General Membership program on the 7th.

*Joyce*