

# ECASB Update

Member Districts: Akron, Alden, Amherst, BOCES 1, BOCES 2, Buffalo, Cheektowaga, Cheektowaga-Sloan, Clarence, Cleveland Hill, Depew, East Aurora, Eden, Frontier, Grand Island, Hamburg, Holland, Hopevale, Iroquois, Ken-Ton, Lackawanna, Lake Shore, Lancaster, Maryvale, North Collins, Orchard Park, Springville GI, Sweet Home, Tonawanda, West Seneca, Williamsville

## Back-to-School Update 2006 Vol. 2, Issue 1

### Record Turnout for Education Law Conference

More than 200 school board members, administrators, school attorneys and others interested in education law attended the 28th Annual Western New York Education Law Conference co-sponsored by the Erie County Association of School Boards and the WNY Educational Service Council.



Jay Worona, from NYSSBA, always an audience favorite, reviewed current “hot” legal topics.



Legal Crossfire panelists included, from left: Peter Godfrey, Hank Sobota, Dave Farmelo, Jay Worona, Phil Brothman, Bob Feldman and Thomas DeBoy. And, here’s a scan of the audience:



## Sherman Honored for 25 Years of Service



Photo courtesy of Candice Hobel, Erie 1 BOCES.

John Sherman has been honored for 25 years of service on the Erie 1 BOCES Board of Education. John, who teaches biology at ECC, is a recent recipient of a Pathfinder's Award and chairs the board of the Tonawanda Boys and Girls Club. He is a member of the Niagara Frontier Industry Education Council, a community board member for DeGraff Memorial Hospital and he co-chairs the annual Wyatt's Walk.

Pictured, front, from left, are: E1B Board members Janet McGregor Plarr, John Sherman (Vice President), Judith Katz (President), and Wayne Schlifke. Back, from left, are Richard D'Arcy and District Superintendent Donald A. Ogilvie

## Reality Check: ECASB Supports Tobacco-Free Magazine Editions for Schools

The Erie County Association of School Boards has gone on record in support of the efforts of Reality Check, a youth anti-tobacco movement coordinated in Erie County through the Erie 1 BOCES division of Community Youth Development.

Reality Check is asking school boards and parent teacher groups to pass resolutions to eliminate tobacco ads from magazines used in school libraries. The North Tonawanda Board of Education was one of the districts passing such a resolution. The movement gained momentum with the help of Eliot Spitzer, who championed an agreement with *Time*, *People*, *Sports Illustrated* and *Newsweek* to eliminate advertising in the editions sent to school libraries.

This is NOT an effort to ban or restrict publications from school libraries; it is a concerted effort to have *tobacco-free editions* provided for schools.

Reality Check is now pressing to have tobacco-free editions of *Ebony*, *Jet*, *Rolling Stone*, *ESPN*, *Car and Driver* and *Field and Stream*, and the group is working to gather more support from school boards.

Detailed information packets were distributed to all representatives attending the May Delegate Assembly meeting. If your Board is interested in getting more information, please contact Alan Rubeck, Reality Check coordinator, at 821-7578.

## Events Coming Up:

**Leaders' Forum for School Board Presidents and Vice Presidents:** 5:30-8:30 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 5, Room B-2b. This is your opportunity to meet fellow school board leaders in our area and focus on these key topics leaders should know: Effectively Fulfilling Your Leadership Role, Leading Through Controversy, and Listening & Building Relationships.

**Discussion with Erie County Budget Director James Hartman:** 7 to 9 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 12, Room B-2b. The Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority's thumbs down to the county's 4-year financial plan does not mean the end of the initiative to replace county sales tax revenue to schools with a combination of State STAR funds and a county school tax credit. That plan continues to move forward. If you plan to attend this discussion, **please call to register so we have a count: 821-7297 or e-mail snowak@e1b.org.** Thank you!

**Leadership & Decision-Making Academy:** 8:30-noon, Saturday, Oct. 14. Featuring East Aurora Superintendent James Bodziak with Board President Daniel Brunson and Vice President Kathyann Lorka speaking on, "Creating A High Performance Board"; Karl Kristoff, Hodgson and Russ, speaking on "Your Role As A Policy Maker"; and Mr. Kristoff and Dr. Charles Stoddart, former Orchard Park Central School District Superintendent and now Assistant Professor of Education at Fredonia State College, speaking on "Board Ethics, Citizen Complaints and Pressure Groups."

*This is the second part of the three-part ECASB Budget and Leadership Series for School Board Members.*

### **Fiscal Oversight & Responsibility Training:**

#### **Complete your mandatory FORT in two evenings:**

Part 1: 6-9 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 8 (Registration: 5:45 p.m.)

Part 2: 6-9 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 9 (Registration: 5:45 p.m.)

#### **Or finish it up in a single day!**

Parts 1 and 2: 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 20  
(Registration: 8:30-9 a.m.)

**Legislative Breakfast:** Saturday, Nov. 18, Michael's, Southwestern Blvd., Hamburg  
Registration & Breakfast: 8:30-9 a.m./Program: 9-11 a.m.

**Nuts and Bolts of Dollars and Cents Academy:** 9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Jan. 6  
*This is the third part of the three-part ECASB Budget and Leadership Series for School Board Members.*

*(Note: Events are at 355 Harlem Road, West Seneca, unless otherwise noted.)  
Registration and Information: 821-7297 or snowak@e1b.org*

# **“The Survey Says ...”**

## **CPR Survey Results**

Twenty-eight ECASB school districts responded to a recent survey asking if they offered CPR training to their high school students. Eight districts said they offered CPR to these students. Of those who did not offer it, seven said they would like more information. ECASB Vice President Mary Busse will be spearheading the effort to get additional information to these districts.

## **ECASB Member Survey Results**

Some 50 people responded to the recent Program and PR Committee survey of the 231 members of the ECASB. Here's who you are and what you said:

Most respondents (28%) had been Board members for more than six years, followed by 2-3 years (22%) and one year or less (also 22%), while 18% had been members for 4-6 years. Six percent said they would not be returning to office in 06-07.

Almost half (42%) had no school-age children, while 30% had children in 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade, 32% in 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade, 12% in K-4<sup>th</sup> grade and 4% had children not yet in school. Kids or no kids, it's children and community that keep you coming back to the Board table. Nearly 90% cited the most rewarding aspects of being a school board member as working for the benefit of children, schools and community. It seems that seeing students excel, helping children, improving education and giving back to the community make all those meetings worthwhile!

The greatest challenges were cited as maintaining taxpayer satisfaction and providing quality, and addressing the issues associated with budgets, taxes, mandates and contracts. Trying to maintain a heavy reading load; manage time; explain issues, laws and standards; and satisfying the media and citizens also were challenges. As one respondent said, the most challenging aspect of being a board member is, “keeping up with the changes, communicating effectively to a community and keeping everything in its proper perspective.”

Most respondents felt the top issues in their districts were financially-related: tax increases, budgets and spending; increased costs, including those of retirement and insurance; unfunded mandates and State Aid – followed by curricular and learning issues.

How much time does school boarding take? For some, it was difficult to assess because they're just beginning their board service. But, on average, the time spent each week on school board meetings and related activities was reported as: 1-2 hours (10%), 3-5 hours (36%), 6-9 hours (16%), 10-15 hours (16%), 16-20 hours (6%), more than 20 hours (2%). One respondent reported spending 25 hours a week “at least” on school board work.

To all of our members: a salute and a thank you for all you do for our children! *Note: Responses do not always total 100%, due to responses in multiple categories, or No Response entries.*

## **PPPE Collaboration Survey Results**

We're holding off reporting on the results of the PPPE Collaboration Survey pending responses from a handful of districts. The survey responses will give us a quick scan on collaboration topics and activities that occurred in school year '05-06 ... giving us an idea of collaboration trends, as well as a wealth of ideas to share with our member districts!

## **End Notes:**

- **Town Hall Meeting:** Citizen Action of New York, the Alliance for Quality Education and the Coalition for After-School Funding are hosting a **Town Hall Meeting on September 18, 2006 from 6:30–8:30 p.m.** at the Olmsted Center for the Visually Impaired, 1170 Main Street (between Summer and Barker) in Buffalo. The purpose is to raise awareness about the quality of education and access to quality after-school programs in our region. County legislators have been invited to speak to citizens concerned about public education and after school programs.

Related info: Public Policy and Education Fund ([www.ppefny.org](http://www.ppefny.org)) May 2006, "New York State's Dual Crises: Low Graduation Rates and Rising School Taxes."

Please call Fabiola Friot or Amy Melton at 855-1522 to confirm your attendance.

- ***Demystifying Dyslexia:*** WNED and The Gow School host the local premiere of WNED's new national documentary, *Demystifying Dyslexia*, from 9 a.m. to noon on Friday, Oct. 6 at the Gow School, followed by a special panel discussion about educational best practices and current scientific brain research.

Register by calling 845-7000, ext. 344. *Demystifying Dyslexia* also will be aired on WNED at 10 p.m. on Oct. 17 and on ThinkBright at 9 p.m. on Oct. 22.

- ***Interested in learning more about the national security challenges facing America today?*** The New York Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve will hold a symposium from 1100-1300 hours on Thursday, Sept. 28 at the Rochester Airport. The session also will cover the importance of America's men and women as members of the National Guard and Reserves.

Information and registration: 1-315-253-6658 or 1-716-861-5413 or e-mail [twostargen@hotmail.com](mailto:twostargen@hotmail.com).

## 2006-07 ECASB Executive Board

Officers:	Richard D'Arcy (Erie 1 BOCES), President Mary Busse (West Seneca) Vice President Kate Riedel (Eden), Treasurer
At-large members:	Ray Carr (Cheektowaga) Linda Hoffman (Erie 2 BOCES) Laura Monte (Iroquois) Will Thiel (Orchard Park) Richard Vogan (Lake Shore)
Buffalo Representative:	Dr. Catherine Collins
Superintendent Representative:	James Bodziak (East Aurora)
NYSSBA Area 1 Representative:	Wayne Schlifke
Immediate Past President:	Jack Semler

***Have a news items you would like to share? Send to  
[jburzynski@e1b.org](mailto:jburzynski@e1b.org)  
for the next ECASB Update!***