

# 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

## ***Almost Spring Update 2008 Vol. 3, Issue 5***

"Education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another." – *G. K. Chesterton*

### **ECASB Goes to Washington!**

Several ECASB members recently returned from Washington, D.C., where they spent three days in training and advocacy activities with the National School Board Association's Federal Relations Network.

FRN provided the ECASB team, and other school board members from across the country, extensive background research on education issues and funding, and opportunities to develop skills to effectively present education's positions to elected officials. The ECASB contingent participated in two days of discussions on key issues and meetings with congressional leaders. The final day was spent on Capitol Hill in meetings with congressional representatives. Key issues this year included reform and reauthorization of No Child Left Behind, federal funding for Title 1 and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and the Medicaid reimbursement crisis. A heads up also was given on emerging issues such as teacher compensation, green schools, Pre-Kindergarten, national standards and extra learning time.

Next Stop: Albany, March 2-4, for State Legislative Network activities!



**The ECASB contingent participating in the Federal Relations Network advocacy activities included, from left:**

**Row 1: Vivian Evans and Mary Ruth Kapsiak (Buffalo), Lorie Sabo (Erie 2 CC BOCES), Jane Burzynski (ECASB), Joanne Martin (Erie 2CC BOCES)**

**Row 2: Thomas Kulaszewski (Cleve Hill), Florence Johnson (Buffalo), Richard Hegmann (Akron), Wayne Schlifke (Erie 1 BOCES). Not pictured: Lou Reuter (Ken Ton)**

### **Can't Travel to Washington? Here's What You Can Do ...**

**Write a letter, make a phone call, send an e-mail. Contact info is at [ecasb.org/teams](http://ecasb.org/teams)**

Contact your elected officials in Congress.  
Ask your state legislators to help keep federal officials informed of issues back home!



## The 'Nuts & Bolts' Of Minding the Money

Board members from across Erie and Niagara counties attended ECASB's annual "Nuts & Bolts of \$ and Cents Academy" on School Finance, Budgeting, Purchasing and Related Bargaining/Personnel Matters.

Speakers included (standing) Dennis Kane, Cheektowaga Schools' Assistant Superintendent, on *NYS School Financing and What to Look for in Budget Development*, and Michael Roberts (seated, far left), Warsaw Schools' Director of Operations and Finance, on *How to Maximize Your District's Purchasing Power*.

Also speaking were Karl Kristoff, Esq., from Hodgson Russ, and Jane Burzynski, ECASB Executive Director.

Program participants included (second from left and continuing to right) : Peter Michaelsen, Tonawanda Schools' Assistant Superintendent; Dawn Cerra, Williamsville; Scott Johnson, Sweet Home.

Also attending 'Nuts & Bolts' were:



### **SNAPSHOT: Upstate New York At-A-Glance Report from the Federal Reserve Bank of NY, Buffalo Branch/Dec. 2007 Metro Area Performance Employment Trends:**

"Employment in the Buffalo area, which had been flat or slightly declining from 2000-2006, expanded modestly in the first half of 2007, despite the area's continuing job losses in manufacturing. Recently, a number of service sectors have enjoyed increased job growth, led by private education and finance – the latter sector expanding close to 3.0 percent in the first half of the year. Wholesale trade jobs also expanded sharply in 2007, posting about a 1.5 percent gain over last year, possibly buoyed by the strong Canadian dollar."



## **Introducing Dave Smaczniak, New Area 1 Director**

Dave Smaczniak, recently-elected NYSSBA Area 1 Director, has been active in school board service for nearly a decade. Here's some background:

Dave has served on the West Seneca Central School Board for nine years, serving as an officer for five of those years. He also served as a trustee on the Erie 1 BOCES Board of Education, until taking the position of assistant principal at Frontier Central High School.

He has been active in the Erie County Association of School Boards, serving on the Delegate Assembly, Nominating Team, Awards Review Team, and the Emerging Issues, Program, and Public Relations Team. This year, he also joined the Legislative Team and was instrumental in the planning and success of the ECASB ArtScapades event.

He has been an educator for eleven years, working as a substitute teacher, teacher aide, classroom teacher, GED coordinator and, for the last four years, as a building administrator.

He also is a member of the board of directors of Promoting Partnerships in Public Education, Inc., and a WNED ThinkBright Advisory Board member.

He has been honored with the *Business First* Under 40 Award, the *Business First* Pathfinders Award, the Town of Cheektowaga Service to Youth Award and the Riverside Institute of Technology Teacher of the Year Award. You can reach him by phone (716/ 677-4192) or at [dgsmaczniak@westseneca.wnyric.org](mailto:dgsmaczniak@westseneca.wnyric.org)

### **From the Bulletin Board:**

On Wednesday, March 5th, Dr. Geneva Gay, a nationally and internationally renowned scholar on multicultural education, ethnic identity, culturally responsive teaching, curriculum design, staff development, and the intersections of race, ethnicity, teaching, and learning, will be presenting at Campus School West during the day and the Academy of Visual and Performing Arts during the evening. To register and for more information, go to: [www.gse.buffalo.edu/eon/continuinged/k12.asp](http://www.gse.buffalo.edu/eon/continuinged/k12.asp)

**Florence Johnson**, 15-year member of the Buffalo Board of Education, will be inducted into the Western New York Women's Hall of Fame in recognition of her role in mainstreaming public education students and serving as an advocate for children. The 12<sup>th</sup> annual induction luncheon will be at noon on Thursday, March 13<sup>th</sup> at the Hyatt Regency in Buffalo.



## School District Clerks Share 'Best Practices'

District Clerks from Erie and Niagara County school districts gathered for a "Best Practices" information sharing discussion ranging from election protocols to document management. The discussion was facilitated by Jane Burzynski, ECASB Executive Director. Participating were: -

- Row 1, from left: Linda Poplewski (Holland), Debbie Galley (Clarence), Joyce Monaco (Maryvale), Ruth Pirinelli (Starpoint), Lisa Almasi (Eden)
- Row 2, from left: Judy Russell (Sweet Home), Sandy Janik (Lancaster), Cindy Jordan (Depew), Marlene Leone (West Seneca), Wendy Limardi (Cleve-Hill)
- Row 3, from left: Dan Pacos (Lake Shore), Jackie Wopperer (East Aurora), Sharon Krol (Amherst), Sherry Syroczyński (Cheek-Sloan), Robin Vertino (Niagara-Wheatfield), Marjorie Masters (Roy-Hart), Mitzie Serafin (Williamsville)

## Elections are Coming Up!

### Pre-Prospective Candidates' Conversation: Saturday, March 8, from 9:30-11 a.m.

Norman Vergils Center (behind Sweet Home Schools' District Office, 1901 Sweet Home Road, Amherst)

This is a very casual, sit-down-over-coffee opportunity to just ask questions and talk with area school board members about what school board service is all about.

### So, You Want to Be A School Board Member ... Saturday, April 5, 8:30 a.m.-Noon

Erie 1 BOCES, 355 Harlem Rd., W. Seneca

You're definitely interested and think you're going to be a candidate. Here are details on what's ahead. Hear about BOCES, school boards and the law, the election process, board-superintendent relationships and perspectives from new and veteran board members.

These sessions are presented as a community service and are free of charge. Light refreshments are provided. Register at 821-7297 or [snowak@e1b.org](mailto:snowak@e1b.org).

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## Save the Date ...



**Thursday, March 20 Dessert Forum:  
Do You Know What's In Your Teachers' Contract ... And What's Not There That Should Be!** Speaker will be John J. Christopher from Hodgson Russ. 7-9 p.m., Rm. B-1 at 355 Harlem Road, West Seneca.

**CIDEL presents Teaching Children to Care ...** Alfie Kohn speaks at 7 p.m., Tuesday, April 22 at Clarence Middle School, 10150 Greiner Road, Clarence. \$15 pre-registration, \$20 at door. Register at 1-800-836-7510 ext. 3756 or [csipdre@onboces.org](mailto:csipdre@onboces.org)

**Wednesday, Aug. 6, 2008 ...  
WNY Education Law Conference,  
at the Millennium. PREVENTING, ADDRESSING  
and RESPONDING to Staff Misconduct**  
Sponsored by ECASB & the WNY Educational Service Council.



From left: Jack Semler, ECASB Past President, PPPE Vice President and member of Clarence BOE, with Dr. Douglas B. Reeves, Michael Lex, Clarence Board of Education President; Susan Altman, Clarence BOE, and an as yet unidentified woman in glasses.

## **Collaborative Venture Focuses on Student Performance**

*By Christine DiGaudio, Public Information Coordinator, Clarence Central School District*

The Clarence, Sweet Home, and Williamsville school districts worked together to bring Douglas B. Reeves, one of the country's leading experts in educational reform, to Western New York for a two-day professional development program. Dr. Reeves is the founder of the Leadership and Learning Center, an international organization dedicated to improving student achievement and educational equity.

Dr. Reeves discussed his research-based leadership and teaching strategies that lead to improved student achievement during several sessions with administrators, school board members, and teachers from the three districts.

Research provides compelling evidence that deep implementation of proven instructional practices is more effective than a revolving door approach of a variety of strategies, he said. As an example, he said non-fiction writing, which he describes as "thinking through the end of a pen," leads to better performance in all areas including art, music, and physical education.

The genesis of the three-district professional development venture stems from a 2005 study of K-12 public education in Erie County conducted by researchers from the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University and sponsored by the Erie County Association of School Boards. One of the study's recommendations was for each school district to commit to a collaborative project with at least one other district. Subsequently, administrators from the Clarence, Ken-Ton, Sweet Home and Williamsville districts began discussing ways to work together to enhance administrative and faculty leadership skills to improve student achievement. In the summer of 2006, administrators from the four districts continued the dialogue.

According to Thomas Coseo, superintendent of Clarence Schools, the Reeves collaborative project yielded several positive benefits. "Access to 'best practices' research expands educators' knowledge base and improves classroom instruction," he said. "The opportunity to share what works in the classroom with colleagues increases instructional options. Sharing costs among districts provides for quality staff development at an affordable price. Most important, student achievement improves as we better perfect the art and science of teaching."

# Coming Up:

## February 2008

28 **Dessert Forum:** Celebration of Collaboration Showcase, 6:30-9:30 p.m. (Rm A2)

## March 2008

2-4 State Legislative Network (SLN) – Albany  
8 Pre-Prospective Board Candidates, 1901 Sweet Home Road, 9:30-11 a.m.  
13 Executive Board, 5-7 p.m., AT CHEEKTOWAGA HIGH SCHOOL  
13 Legislative Team, 7:15-9:15 p.m. AT CHEEKTOWAGA HIGH SCHOOL  
15 **FORT, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. – at the LoGuidice Center in Fredonia**  
20 **Dessert Forum:** Do You Know What's In Your Teacher Contract – and What's Not There That Should Be!... 7-9 p.m. (Rm B1)  
21 **Good Friday (Office Closed)**  
29-April 1 NSBA in Orlando

## April 2008

5 **ECASB So You Want to be A School Board Member, 8:30-noon** (Room B1)  
10 Delegate Assembly, 7-9 p.m. (Room B1)  
14-18 Spring Recess, E1B & E2CCB  
25 **MY Story, MY Song ... program**

## May 2008

15 Scholastic Achievement Recognition Dinner (SARD), Marriott  
20 Budget Votes/Elections in School Districts  
23, 26 **Memorial Day (Office Closed)**

## June 2008

7 **ECASB New School Board Member Academy, 8:30-12:30, @ Millennium**  
12 ECASB Annual Dinner @ Salvatore's  
14 **FORT, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. – Room B1**

# 2007-08 ECASB Executive Board

## Officers:

Mary Busse (West Seneca) President  
Richard Vogan (Lake Shore) Vice President  
Linda Hoffman (Erie 2 CC BOCES), Treasurer

## At-large members:

Myrna Blair (Grand Island)  
Ray Carr (Cheektowaga)  
David Ehrle (Lancaster)  
Ramona Popowich (Williamsville)  
Donald Sniezak (Orchard Park)

## Buffalo Representative:

Catherine Nugent Panepinto

## Superintendent Representative:

James Bodziak (East Aurora)

## NYSSBA Area 1 Representative:

David Smaczniak

## Immediate Past President:

Jack Semler (Clarence)

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

