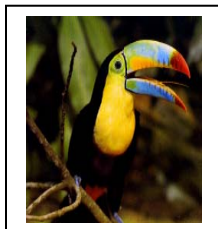


ECASB Update

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

2007-08 YEAR-END ROUND UP Edition 2008 Vol. 3, Issue 6

“Without education, we are in horrible and deadly danger of taking educated people seriously.” - **Gilbert Keith Chesterton**



Oh, What A Night! ... It has been a terrific year for ECASB, and this Year-End Edition of ECASB Update showcases some of the highlights.

Our 30th Annual Dinner was a “Night in the Rainforest” and we thank keynote speaker Dr. Donna Fernandes, President and CEO of the Buffalo Zoo, and our performers from Sweet Home’s Heritage Heights Elementary School, under the direction of Debbie Imiolo-Schraver. We’re told it’s the first-ever annual dinner where school board members and superintendents danced a conga line in the dining room (hmmm, imagine that)!

Special thanks to all board members who donated baskets for the Advocacy Stipend Raffle (\$735 was raised!), to Shirley and Sue from the ECASB office for their steadfast help, to ECASB President Mary Busse for dedication above and beyond in obtaining our rainforest centerpieces and making pastel rainforest chocolate favors until 2 a.m.



ECASB President Mary Busse presents a Galileo thermometer to Stanley Fiegel, Frontier Central School District Board of Education, at the 30th Annual Dinner Meeting at Salvatore’s. Special recognition was given to Mr. Fiegel who, at 35 years of service, has the longest, continuous run of school board service in a single school district in Erie County. The thermometer was described as signifying “his ability to weather the hot issues and sometimes chilling moments of school board service!”

BRAVO!

We had a tremendous turnout at this year’s Annual Dinner Meeting, which proved to be a most entertaining and adventuresome “Night in the Rainforest.” Receiving awards were:

Diana R. Miller Service Award ...

Received by Linda Hoffman, President of the Erie 2 Chautauqua Cattaraugus Board of Education and Vice President of the Springville Griffith Institute Board of Education.

Laura M. Burns Advocacy for Children ...

Received by Dolores Mendolia, retired West Seneca Schools district clerk, former School Board Member and current School Board Ambassador to the Community.

Annual Dinner Awards Continue on next page ...

fyi . . . this edition of ECASB Update is a

Year in Review, but before we look back too far, here's a look at what's ahead for this summer:

Beginning its work is the newly-formed **ECASB STUDY GROUP** on the recently issued reports from the NYS Commission on Property Tax Relief and NYS Commission on Local Government Efficiency & Competitiveness. The group will review the recommendations and assess the potential impact on school districts in ECASB. The group is chaired by Dave Smaczniak (West Seneca); with Superintendent Representative James Bodziak (East Aurora); School Business Official Representative Thomas Matuski (Williamsville) and members Jane Burzynski (ECASB), Mike Connors (Springville), Linda Hoffman (Springville and Erie 2 BOCES), Tom Kulaszewski (Cleveland Hill), Cindy Latimore (Lake Shore), Andrew Loeb (Erie 1 BOCES), Lorie Sabo (Erie 2 BOCES), Jack Semler (Clarence), and Sue Wagner (Depew).

Also starting its work this summer is the **ECASB By-Laws Review Team**, also to be chaired by Dave Smaczniak (West Seneca). Team members are: Lorie Sabo (Erie 2CC BOCES), Sue Wagner (Depew), Tom Gannon (Eden), Cindy Latimore (Lake Shore), Stan Fiegel (Frontier), and Margaret Moses (Hamburg).



***Do You Know What's In Your Teachers' Contract ?
(And what's not there that should be ...)***

About 40 area school board members know quite a lot after attending this Dessert Forum featuring John J. Christopher (second from left) from Hodgson Russ. This extremely informative and well-received program generated many requests for a longer, follow-up session. Pictured with Mr. Christopher are Lorie Sabo (Erie 2 CC BOCES), John Ptak (Clarence Director of Personnel) and Jack Semler (Clarence).

Annual Dinner Awards Continued ...



Hodgson Russ Excellence in Collaboration

Received by the Lake Shore Central School District for its collaboration with WNY United Against Drug and Alcohol Abuse, the Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, the Town of Evans Police Department, and Citizens for Responsible Choices (CRC).



Hodgson Russ Honorable Mention for Excellence in Collaboration went to the Buffalo Public Schools and the Williamsville Central School District for their annual Poetry, Music and Dance Celebration.

Receiving 25-year Service Awards:

Wayne Schlifke, Erie 1 BOCES
Nancy Wood, Frontier
Rev. Paul Stellar, Hopevale

New Members On Board!

It was gratifying to see so many school board hopefuls attend the 'So You Want to Be A School Board Member Workshop' back in April. It's always encouraging to see potential candidates devoting time and effort to learn more about the nature, roles and responsibilities of the office. It also was very gratifying to see so many return for the session held for those successful in their elections.

That session - "Congratulations, You're Elected ... Now What?!" - gives a grounding in the myths and truths of school board membership, along with advice for first-time board members in the many protocols, relationships, and communications aspects of their leadership role. Many thanks to the day's presenters: Dr. Paul Connelly (Erie 2CC BOCES Assistant Superintendent); Karl Kristoff (Hodgson Russ); James Bodziak (East Aurora Superintendent); David Smaczniak (West Seneca BOE), Tom Kulaszewski (Cleveland Hill BOE), and John Karlis (West Seneca public relations) and Candice Reimer (Erie 1 BOCES communications).



On the Road Again ... Hot on the heels of three intense days in Washington for the National School Boards Association (NSBA) Federal Relations Network conference, ECASB advocacy reps turned their cars and attention toward Albany, for three days of networking and lobbying as part of the NYS School Boards Association's State Legislative Network. ((Above, Legislative Team Leader Mike Connors (Springville), ECASB Director Jane Burzynski; Sweet Home BOE member Dirk Rabenold; Williamsville BOE and Exec. Board member Ramona Popowich, and West Seneca BOE member and ECASB President Mary Busse are with Sen. Mary Lou Rath)).



Once back home, the focus was on the annual Legislative Breakfast ...



... and then turned to giving a school board point of view to the Commission on Property Tax Relief at its hearing in Buffalo. Representing ECASB were, from left, Jane Burzynski, Executive Director; and Executive Board members Dave Smaczniak (W. Seneca), Ramona Popowich (Williamsville), and Rick Vogan (Lake Shore).

The Celebration of Collaboration, a Promoting Partnerships in Public Education (PPPE) debut effort, showcased successful collaborations among several member districts. Clockwise: Buffalo School Board President Mary Ruth Kapsiak listens intently; Sally Yageric from the Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse shows various drug paraphernalia demonstrated to parents in a multi-agency collaboration with Lake Shore Schools; and Max Donatelli of the Parent Network discusses a special education grant obtained through collaboration among the Frontier and Lackawanna school districts. Also presenting were Lancaster and Grand Island schools on shared grant funding to make buses more environmentally-friendly; and superintendents from Clarence, Sweet Home and Williamsville on collaborative efforts with BOCES for administrative professional development.



"Treat people
as if they were
what they ought to be
and you help them
to become
what they are capable
of being."
– *Goethe*

Got A Great Collaboration?

**In February,
ECASB plans to hold a
"Collaboration Showcase"
Dessert Forum
featuring three collaborations
from our member districts.**

**If your district
has an activity or initiative
you would like to suggest
as a featured collaboration,
please call (821-7297)**

**or
e-mail (jburzynski@e1b.org)
to let us know what the activity is,
and designate a contact person we can
reach for more information.**

Thank you!

Did you know ...

Lou Reuter, KenTon Board of Education, spoke with students in the educational leadership development program at UB about the importance of the Board-Superintendent partnership.

FORT in Fredonia ... ECASB was on the road this spring, for the first-time ever offering a program in Chautauqua County. The NYS-mandated Fiscal Oversight and Responsibility Training, which is provided jointly by ECASB and Erie 1 BOCES, found a warm welcome at the LoGuidice Center, where we provided the six-hour program to our colleagues a bit further south.

ECASB President Mary Busse (West Seneca BOE) and **Promoting Partnerships in Public Education (PPPE) President Tom Kulaszewski** (Cleve Hill BOE) were named 2008 Pathfinders in the annual honor sponsored by Business First, the Buffalo Alliance for Education, Independent Health, Junior Achievement, and the Niagara Frontier Industry Education Council. The annual award honors educators and business people who have forged partnerships that benefit students in the Buffalo Niagara region.

Check out: <http://www.sunlight-ny.com/sn11/app/index.jsp>

This is the Web site for Project Sunlight ...it includes data on state and local officials, campaign finance documents, lobbying disclosure reports, text and supporting arguments for legislative bills, the names of the elected officials who sponsored them, and how much cash received by their campaigns from lobbyists advocating these bills.

A politician thinks of the next election

—

a statesman thinks of the next
generation.

— *James Freeman Clarke*

Staff Misconduct Issues To Be Topic of Aug. 6 Law Conference

PREVENTING, ADDRESSING and RESPONDING TO STAFF MISCONDUCT is the theme of the 30th Annual Western New York Education Law Conference sponsored by the Erie County Association of School Boards and the Western New York Educational Service Council from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 6, at the Millennium, 2040 Walden Ave., Cheektowaga.

The program covers the full range of employee discipline, from pre-hiring screening to post-hiring identification of poor performers, insights on the essentials of progressive discipline to identify, correct or “recycle” poor performers, as well as full 3020-a disciplinary procedures and Part 83 license removal, and how-to’s for successful return on the cost of 3020a actions.

Frank Clark, Erie County District Attorney, opens with an overview of the partnership of schools, law enforcement and the judicial system in the protection of our children.

Breakout sessions throughout the day include:

Overview of 3020a (Part 1), with David Farmelo, Hodgson Russ and **(Part 2)**, with Thomas Rinaldo, Labor & Employment Dispute Resolution

Tightening Hiring Procedures, Tracie Lopardi, Harris Beach, and Dr. Thomas Ramming, WNY Educational Service Council

Tightening Tenure Procedures, Ronald J. Mendrick, Harter, Secrest & Emery

Mandated Reporting: Protecting the Abused Child, Donald E. Budmen, Ferrara, Fiorenza, Larrison, Barrett, and Reitz

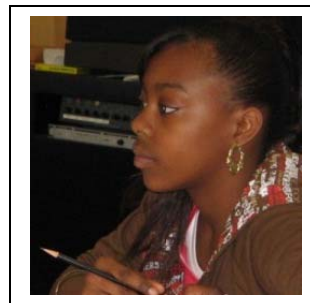
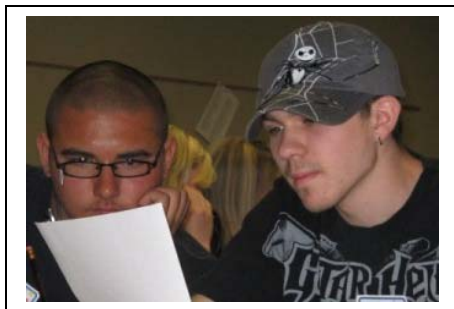
Educator Discipline, Deborah Marriott, NYS Office of School Personnel & Accountability

The NYSUT Perspective, Michael Preskop, NY State United Teachers

Also on the program is the annual **Special Education Update**, with Andrew J. Freeman, Norton/Radin/Hoover and Freedman and Dr. Anna Cieri, Williamsville Central Schools. Jay Worona, NYSSBA, will present a review of “**Hot Topics**” in legal circles across the state. Participating attorneys conclude the day with a **Legal Crossfire Panel** vetting questions from the audience.

The registration deadline is July 23. Member fee is \$139/person or \$125/person for teams of five. Non-member fee is \$199/person. To register, call 645-2932.

What is The GREAT MYTH of Being Cool?



How it began ...

It all started after some ECASB members heard an inspirational address by Erin Gruwell of the Freedom Writers at the 2006 National School Boards convention. Her true story of reaching disenfranchised youth through writing was so provocative and moving, many people wanted Erin to share her story with board members in our region. Bringing Erin to town was way beyond our financial means. But the notion of doing *something* grew legs and kept on walking.

During this time, Buffalo was making headlines as the second poorest city in the nation. Violence and gangland-type killings in "The City of Good Neighbors" were becoming a familiar litany. Many families were leaving our city schools and moving to our first-ring suburban districts.

With growing concerns about youth violence and "gang culture" emerging in so many schools and communities, ECASB made a pro-active effort to help schools reach students who may be "at risk" and/or who may be in a leadership position to model alternatives to the violent messages that often beset youth culture. The feeling was that this tone does a tremendous disservice to youth. What they needed was to experience genuine expression and the kinds of learning experiences that create connections and a sense of community.

Did anybody else feel this way ...

Several ECASB members reached out to many organizations with similar concerns, and several actively responded, including Erie 1 and Erie 2CC BOCES, the YWCA of WNY, the Arts in Education Institute, and the West Seneca Youth Bureau and AmeriCorps group. They in turn tapped their contacts in the business community, the arts, higher education and, interestingly, Erin Gruwell herself. Over the course of a year, a program emerged, along with donations, sponsors and volunteers. The program - "The Great Myth of Being Cool" - was designed to help students take their culture back.

Dr. Greg Dimitriadis from the UB Graduate School of Education and Phyllis MacCameron, from Erie Community College, joined the group to help develop a program that reached directly to students and the staff who worked with them. The program was designed as a wake up call to the hype and hyperbole of shock art - with an assurance to students that they are better than that. We brought in Dr. Marc Hill, from Temple University, and an alternative education teacher, Aaron Burkhardt, who was given a scholarship from the Erin Gruwell Foundation to attend the Freedom Writers Boot Camp in California. Also in the day's program were teaching artists and performers who worked with students on developing their own forms of authentic expression.

Thanks to volunteers and sponsors (Hodgson Russ, Sgroi Financial, Turner Construction, BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York, Watts Architecture & Engineering) the event was offered at a reasonable cost to teams of students and teachers. The day unfolded with nearly 200 participants from schools in three counties. Marc Hill's keynote energized the audience. A live performance by teaching artists movingly depicted the inner conflicts of youth. Students then selected two "MY Story, MY Song" breakout sessions - in music/dance, hip hop, poetry or journal-writing - and worked on creating their own authentic expression.

The Far West Teacher Centers are providing follow up staff development and "learning communities" to participants. The first one is on Thursday, July 10, from 1-4 p.m. at the Kenmore West Library. It's free and all interested folks are invited. If you're interested, please register at Courtney_Williams@kenton.k12.ny.us.

Coming Up:

July 2008

- 16 By-Laws Review Team
- 18-20 NYSSBA in Buffalo Summer Institute, Adam's Mark Hotel.
- 23 PPPE Meeting, 4 p.m., Erie 1 BOCES

August 2008

- 6 WNY Education Law Conference, 8 a.m.–3 p.m., Millennium

September 2008

- 1 *Labor Day (Office Closed)*
- 4 Budget & Finance Team, 6-7:15 p.m.
- 4 ECASB Legislative Team, 7:15-9 p.m.
- 18 ECASB Executive Board, 5-6:45 p.m.
- 18 ECASB Delegate Assembly, 7-8:30 p.m.

2008-09 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:	Ray Carr (Cheektowaga) Michael Connors (Springville) 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 jburzynski@e1b.org for the next ECASB Update!