



Erie County Association of School Boards

Vol. 2; Issue 7; March 2023

ADVOCACY ALLIANCE MONTHLY YOUR MONTHLY UPDATE

Dear Members,

There's an interview with Dr. David O'Rourke, a report on the NYSSBA Capital Conference, the monthly Bill Alert, a report of the CCSBA's Legislative Dinner, and a press release announcing the new Regents.

It isn't going to slow down from here. We have a wonderful presentation coming up; the Cocktails and Conversations program is March 23. Today is the deadline for registration, so do not delay in getting your registration in to your district clerk!

On April 29, we will host our first ever ECASB Road Rally, and there is bound to be a few legislative connections in a clue or two. Hints may be found anywhere.

We will also host our own Legislative Dinner on May 11. Spring will certainly be here by then, right? In the meantime, perhaps St. Patrick's Day will have you seeing some green.

Sláinte is táinte ("slawn-che iss toin-che"), meaning "health and wealth,"

Jane

Spend some time checking out the new updates to the Advocacy tab on the ECASB website!

Important Dates

- ⇒ Next Legislative Team Meeting, March 16, 2023 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
- ⇒ Prospective School Board Member Workshop, Saturday, March 25 8-10:30 a.m. at Erie 1 BOCES B 2a/B2b
- ⇒ April Legislative Team Meeting, April 20 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- ⇒ Legislative Dinner 2023, May 11, 2023. Details coming soon.
- ⇒ School Board Budget Vote and Elections, May 16, 2023

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time to talk

Leading Erie 2 CC BOCES:

A Conversation with Dr. David O'Rourke

I had the pleasure of sitting down for a conversation with Erie 2CC BOCES Chief Executive Officer / District Superintendent Dr. David O'Rourke prior to attendance at the CCSBA legislative dinner on March 2. I learned so much about his role as a District Superintendent and the issues for which he feels boards of Educations can advocate.

His career path in education began as an English teacher in the Silver Creek CSD, just down the road from his alma mater, Dunkirk City School District. During his teaching career, his interests in serving kids led him to develop and hone his leadership skills; this led him to where he is now, "helping lead other leaders serving kids," he says. He adds, "along the way I realized the ways in which policy and best practices affect outcomes." As a District Superintendent, he is hands on in continuing to discover those policies and best practices and sharing them for the benefit of the students in his component districts, and across New York State. He spent six years as superintendent of Silver Creek CSD and has been in his current position at Erie 2 CC BOCES for almost 12 years.

As a District Superintendent, Dr. O'Rourke is not just simply running the Erie 2 CC BOCES district. He and all the other state district superintendents bring their field perspective to Albany, with weekly meetings with Commissioner of Education, Betty Rosa. The group of district superintendents collaborate with the commissioner sharing the concerns, issues, and celebrations of education across

the state. They also act as liaisons for their component school districts. Boards of education and superintendents can lean on their district superintendents to help guide a district when issues arise within the district and they need a sound reliable voice of expertise. Experience and expertise are exactly what Dr. O'Rourke brings to the table.

Dr. O'Rourke shares the thought that boards of education should focus on ways schools respond to the new demands of mental health in this post pandemic period. While fiduciary concerns are one main role of a school board, today a board cannot ignore quality programming to aid in stabilizing the mental health concerns. He suggests school boards work with their superintendents to set goals for continued improvement. "Find a fixed target and then reach it. Find ways to support the administration to reach those goals," he adds. The way just may be found in your local BOCES.

Dr. O'Rourke believes we "should think of BOCES as a partner." He states his goal is "being responsive to component districts."

The conversation turned to legislative concerns, and Dr. O'Rourke shares that one big area to focus on is the aid-able BOCES salary cap. While BOCES is paying competitive wages to its teachers, the aid-able amount of component districts needs to be increased. The last increase was in the 1990s. It has led to a diminishing of shared services, and that isn't the positive outcome we want to see in education. "As regional partners, BOCES can do things a single district can't do alone," he states. Shared programming is a benefit to all the component districts. A great example is the P-Tech program. ECASB members who serve on boards in component districts of Erie 2 CC

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BOCES are invited to attend the Annual Business meeting at WNY CAM P-TECH in Springville on April 11, at 7:30 p.m. Prior to the meeting, there is a social hour with demonstrations from 6 to 7:30 p.m. To attend, sign up with your district clerk by March 24th.

Another larger issue Dr. O'Rourke highlights is graduation measures. He feels the issue is growing and could become much more significant. It is not about eliminating the Regents Exams, but there is a movement to "create more lanes for students to demonstrate rigor and competency," Dr. O'Rourke articulates.

Dr. O'Rourke also advises the state is "entering into a reboot of accountability." The pandemic ran roughshod on education nationwide, but as we have phased into the post-pandemic period and federal level laws are forcing accountability back to center stage. However, Dr. O'Rourke sees positive and refreshing conversation centered on mutual respect as discussion takes place on what will become best policies and practices, and the new structures being discussed would make both the educators *and* the state accountable to one another. Perhaps the days of "bad lists" are over? The evolution of such a positive change is welcomed news. Expect to hear more about this in the near future.

I could not help but marvel at how Dr. O'Rourke has to work across two counties. I asked him how he approaches this challenge. He responds "the pandemic really intensified the need for schools to connect to county government" and speaks about how important the role of BOCES was in this connection. As he does with most things, he found a way to focus on the positive. He learned what worked in one county and compared how that might or might not be successful in the other, learning from each to meet the responsibility of the needs of all the stakeholders regardless of whether they were from a small rural school or a larger urban district.

Understanding his role as a District Superintendent, I asked him a political question, which is something I usually avoid. But because he deals with so many districts, and collaborates with colleagues representing all the districts of the state, he is in touch with the tenuous political climate. I asked if he thinks the role of political parties entering into the everyday operations of education is something

we can anticipate growing, as traditional it has not been a part of school board politics until recently. He is wise in his response: there are grassroots organizations using "playbooks that come from a national level. Some of these brands are designed to undermine local trust in public education. It is impacting the orderly functions of schools and shifting what should be substantive conversations."

He then shares that he hopes board members continue to hold on to the philosophy of leaving those kinds of politics at the door and remember we are here to serve kids; "the politics of our kids is not divisive. Kids welfare should not be divisive." He is working with leaders across the state and here locally with our school superintendents to develop emerging strategies to engage our public *authentically*, and he feels most of the community members respond well to the reasonable discussions taking place.

We also discussed the recently raised concerns about the civil service system and the impact it has on schools' abilities to hire qualified people in various positions. He conveys that "the current civil service system is archaic. Schools are especially feeling the damaging effects of this outdated system in this tight labor market."

Dr. O'Rourke then adds that solutions are possible; "There are a number of sensible reforms proposed at the state level by the New York State Council of School Superintendents." When you have the opportunity to add this to conversations with legislators, it should be something they can address, knowing we have been advocating for solutions for teacher and staffing shortages and this can be part of the solution.

Finally, Dr. O'Rourke shares his thoughts on how anyone can become a strong advocate for their district. "Advocacy is about relationships," he said. "We can never lose sight of that. We must create understanding in our legislators." He added something others have also shared: "Everything's a long game."

He closes with one important piece of advice, paraphrasing Tip O'Neil, that in one situation a legislator may be an adversary and in the next, an advocate.

BILL ALERT

ECASB uses Bill Track 50 for our bill tracking and advocacy needs. If you also have an interest in tracking bills, email Jane at JSullivan@e1b.org; she will set you up with an account umbrellaed under the ECASB Bill Track 50 subscription. A basic training session was held on Sept. 29 and has been recorded. If you would like to view the video, please email Jane.

Many of the bills we have been watching have had small changes, such as additional sponsors signing on. There are currently 378 bills before the Assembly Committee on Education and 243 bills before the Senate Education Committee as of March 4. Anyone interested in the full list can email Jane at jsullivan@e1b.org and it will be shared with you via BillTrack 50.

Assemblywoman Monica Wallace sent her **Legislative Director Amanda Wyzykiewicz** both to speak on the legislative process in NYS and to hear the concerns we brought to the legislators. *AM Wallace* was already concerned about the mental health of students across NYS. This is in part because of ongoing ECASB conversations over the last few years, in which we took various opportunities to share the struggles of student mental health and social media influences. **Wyzykiewicz** continued those conversations with members of the legislative team at the breakfast. She shared that *AM Wallace* was working on a bill to address this need.

On February 10, *AM Wallace* introduced **Bill A04136** and it was referred to the Education Committee. This is another example of how our advocacy is working. Our legislators are listening and are taking actions they believe will help secure better educational opportunities and environments for our students. ECASB in partnership with local legislators are making a difference. The Legislative Team will dig further into the bill to see if it is one ECASB will support.

Bills to Watch in the Assembly:

A00068- Enacts the "teachers and educators aiding the communities they call home (TEACH) act"; develops grow your own initiatives at school districts, boards of cooperative educational services and higher education institutions to attract underrepresented candidates into the teaching profession. There are no local sponsors. There is a companion bill in the Senate: **S02140**.

A00168-Provides that students who have an IEP shall not be required to take more than one regents examination in any given day. There is no local sponsor.

A00350-Adjusts the maintenance amount for the city school district of the city of New York; requires adjustment to reflect the consumer price index for all urban consumers in the New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island portion of the New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, New York-New Jersey-Pennsylvania Metropolitan statistical area, as such is defined by the United States Department of Labor. There is no local sponsor. *Note the adjustment is only for downstate.

A00408-Requires screening for dyslexia; provides for intervention services for dyslexic children. There is no local sponsor. There is a companion bill in the Senate: **S05206**.

A00409-Requires free education for grades pre-K through undergraduate degree programs. There is no local sponsor. There is a companion bill in the Senate, sponsored by **Tim Kennedy**: **S00056**. In both houses, the bill has been passed through the education committee and sent to Judiciary. *This could indicate it is*

BILL ALERT - continued

gaining popularity.

A04136- AN ACT to amend the public health law and the education law, in relation to establishing a statewide youth mental health and social media campaign to promote public awareness of the impacts of social media usage on mental health. *AM Wallace's* office emailed, "A4136 establishes a statewide youth mental health and social media campaign to promote public awareness of the impacts of social media usage on children. More importantly, this legislation contains an educational component and provides that kids in school receive instruction on social media and its impacts, healthy social media use behaviors, and mental health resources available." *AM Wallace* is currently the only sponsor.

Bills to Watch in the Senate:

S00054- Requires at least one full-time licensed or certified social worker to be employed in each elementary, intermediate, middle, junior high school and senior high school throughout the state. There is no local sponsor.

S01733- Establishes a school voter registration access program to promote student voter registration and pre-registration. There is no local sponsor. There is a companion bill in the Assembly, **A05180**, with *AM Monica Wallace, AM William Conrad, and AM Karen McMahon* as local sponsors.

S02599- Establishes a dyslexia and dysgraphia task force; implements the findings of such task force. This bill is in committee and is on its 2nd report, which means it is of some interest to the committee. There is no local sponsor.

S05112- Creates a school resource officer working group to study appropriate standards and training for a person to serve as a school resource officer; provides for the repeal of such provisions upon the expiration thereof. There is no local sponsor.

S05113- Requires the commissioner of education of the state of New York to conduct a study on the sufficiency of current education aid apportionment formulas, make recommendations for improvements to such formulas and deliver a report of such findings and recommendations and provides for the repeal of such provisions upon expiration thereof. There is no local sponsor. There is a companion bill in the Assembly with no local sponsors: **A03144**.

S05334- Allocates the Amistad commission in the department of education; repeals certain provisions relating to the Amistad commission; requires schools in the state to provide curriculum relating to African American history, slavery, and race. (The Amistad Commission is charged with researching and surveying the extent to which the African slave trade, American slavery and its aftermath and legacy is included in the curricula of New York state schools; and make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature regarding the implementation of education and awareness programs into schools curricula.) There is no local sponsor. There is a companion bill in the Assembly that also does not have a local sponsor:

A01939

S05350- Requires training for teachers, administrators, and instructors in the area of mental health response; requires office of mental health to assist in development of curriculum for training. There is no

BILL ALERT - continued

local sponsor.

Bills Adopted:

S00859/A01001-Lottery Bill-We have watched this bill grow from the efforts of ECASB members and legislators *Senator Sean Ryan* and *AM William Conrad*. The original bill passed in the previous legislative session, with exceptions. Now those changes have gone through the legislative process and on March 3rd, it was signed, with the Chapter 92 exception. The process is now fully complete and we have succeeded in partnering with local legislators to pass this **law**. Read the full law at [NY State Senate Bill S859 \(nysenate.gov\)](https://nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2019/S00859).

Ponder this:

Bill S00063 Directs the education department to study, review and report on the geographic cost variation of counties in the Hudson Valley labor force region to determine the appropriateness of the region cost index values for purposes of the public school foundation aid formula. The sponsor is from the region. It is not likely to go far, but it makes it clear the legislator knows the formula needs to be addressed and a study would help him navigate negotiations for a formula that is beneficial to his region if warranted. It puts the state on notice, even if it is not passed.

Should State representatives from Erie County be asking for the same? Let Jane know what you think. Email her at jsullivan@elb.org.

Links of interest:

Here is a link to view NYS Assembly Public Hearing Schedule:

[Bill Search and Legislative Information | New York State Assembly \(nyassembly.gov\)](https://nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2019/S00859)

Here is a link to view the NYS Assembly Committee on Education Annual Report, issued December 2022:

[2022 Annual Report of the New York State Assembly Committee on Education \(nyassembly.gov\)](https://nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2019/S00859)

Here is a link to view an archived Public Hearing on the Senate discussion of the proposed budget and education:

[Joint Legislative Public Hearing on 2023 Executive Budget Proposal: Topic Elementary & Secondary Education | NY State Senate \(nysenate.gov\)](https://nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2019/S00859)

CAPITAL CONFERENCE

REPORT

The NYSSBA sponsored Capital Conference was held in two parts. The virtual portion being held on February 10th and the in-person portion held on February 15.

The Virtual Meeting:

During the virtual meeting, a variety of topics were presented, but the majority of the event was focused on the proposed budget and how to address the social emotional needs of New York State students.

The virtual meeting opened with remarks from the NYSSBA president.

NYSSBA Executive Director Robert Schneider, hosted a conversation with New York State *Commissioner of Education Betty Rosa* and *Regent Chancellor Lester Young*. She spoke about the ways education is delivered in NYS, adding that it “has to be cohesive...to give voice to all the issues of student learning.” She addressed the key areas of high school leading to paths that lead to career success for today’s students tomorrow. She made it clear she is keenly aware that education that serves students serves the entire community.

Chancellor Young spoke about creating predictable environments that reduce stress. He addressed the new pressing issues school districts are facing and believes districts need to be able to look to the State Education Department and Board of Regents to hone values, beliefs, and expectations to solve the difficult challenges we face in public education today. He sees his role, and that of Commissioner Rosa’s role, as the “Chiefs of Education, stewards of the state in partnership with schools across the state.” He outlined three core principles for learning in NYS public education: a) more and better academic opportunities, b) equity designed for all, and c) customer service partnership. Chancellor Young made an analogy of how the communities, schools districts and students of NYS are customers expecting a quality product and when we work

in collaboration with one another, we can produce quality education.

The event then moved to the Legislative Panel, with *Senator Shelley Mayer*, Chair of Senate Committee on Education, and *Assemblyman Michael Benedetto*, Chair of Assembly Committee on Education.

Involved in panel discussions were *Michael Mastroianni*, Assistant Secretary for Education, and *Terry Pratt*, Assistant Counsel for Education.

The rest of the event entailed NYSSBA employees explaining the state proposed budget and various aspects of legislation NYSSBA would support, the areas where legislation falls short of meeting NYSSBA’s expectations and ways to bridge some of those gaps during anticipated conversations with legislators during the in-person event on February 15th. You can hear the entire event, as it was recorded. Just visit <https://nyssba-1.wistia.com/medias/i7mme7ixcd>.

In-Person Events

Advocating for ECASB component districts in Albany on February 15th were ECASB Executive Director Dave Lowrey (E2CC BOCES), ECASB Program Services Manager Jane Sullivan (Iroquois), Erik Polkowski (Akron), Ed Schaefer (Cheektowaga), Wesley Schlossin (Cheektowaga-Sloan), Mary Jo Szucs (Holland), Heather Jacobs (Iroquois), James Michalek (Iroquois), Lesley Battaglia (Ken-Ton), Matt Chimera (Ken-Ton), Superintendent Sabatino Cimato (Ken-Ton), Todd Marquart (Ken-Ton), Kathleen Chiavetta (Lake Shore & Erie 2 CC BOCES), Michael Franey (Lake Shore), Superintendent Dan Pacos (Lake Shore), and Kristin Schmutzler (Tonawanda). The group met with *Senator Sean Ryan*, *AM William Conrad*, and a host of staff members from the offices of *Senator Patrick Gallivan*, *Senator Timothy Kennedy*, *Senator Robert Ortt*, *AM Monica Wallace*, *AM Ste-*

CAPITAL CONFERENCE

REPORT CONTINUED

phen Hawley, and *AM Patrick Burke*. In each meeting, a leave behind packet, provided to us by NYSSBA, with the NYSSBA priorities was distributed along with a packet of our own that included our priorities and our legislative handbook. We shared the concerns of ECASB school districts, with heavy focus on CVA funding requests and student mental health.

We also shared the concerns about the timeline and supply/demand issues involved with meeting the electric school bus mandate. This discussion did not fall on deaf ears as republicans and democrats alike shared the concerns of the pace at which districts are expected to address the mandate with few avenues for funding the heavy financial burden. *AM Conrad* described Albany as often legislating from a place of reactionary to crisis rather than proactive positions, and the electric school bus mandate seems to be putting everyone into crisis mode. The scariest part is that when asked what options a district would have when faced with a NO vote to a ballot proposition asking local tax payers to approve the spending of funds to build infrastructure necessary and ultimately to purchase the busses, Albany doesn't have a viable solution to help districts meet the mandate. The only solution suggested is that of an Executive Order that would essentially remove all local control and threaten the very foundations of our system of government.

The day-long event was enhanced when we were able to secure an afternoon appointment with *AM Conrad* at the last minute. What was meant to be a brief 20-minute conversation turned into the *AM Conrad* taking the visiting delegates on a tour of the Capital Building, sharing its rich history and architecture wonders with us.

During the building tour, his personality really showed through. He was humble as he talked

about his first day in office, while riding up the elevator toward the Assembly floor. He took office during COVID, and although he reported to the building, he was not allowed in because his office did not have a working computer for him to use. Instead, he sat in his car and Zoomed into legislative session to vote for his first time!

As we turned the corner to reach the "million-dollar staircase" (which looked like it was right out of the set of Harry Potter, and one wondered if the staircase would soon split apart and move), *AM Conrad* wondered, "Can you believe I get to work here? It's mesmerizing, isn't it?"

Reaching the Assembly floor, he allowed us to sit in his chair! He could not have been a more gracious host and it was a great way to end the visit to Albany.

CCSBA Legislative Dinner

REPORT

I spent the evening of March 2nd with our neighbors to the south at the Chautauqua County School Boards Association Legislative Dinner. Much of the focus for the event was on electric school buses and the state of the New York State economy. Both Senator *George Borrello* and Assemblyman *Andrew Goodell* were in attendance and spoke at the town hall styled meeting.

After open remarks by Chautauqua County School Board Association President Sylvester Cleary and dinner, we heard from guest speaker *John Spacht*, the Transportation Supervisor of Southwestern Central School District, Transportation Supervisor of Frewsburg Central School District, and Vice President of Chautauqua County Association For Pupil Transportation (CCAPT). Spacht proceeded to explain the costs of an electric school bus, just since the passing of the mandate, has increased six percent to over \$400,000. He made comparisons between electric bus emissions to the emissions of bio-fuel, gas, and diesel powered buses, illustrating that school bus emissions are not a large contributing factor to greenhouse gasses. He added that those holding out hope for hydro powered buses should stop, as a hydro school bus would cost in the range of 1 million dollars.

His presentation debunked popular myths about electric school buses, such as they are too heavy and will require replacement of some roadways and bridges to accommodate that weight. He reinforced other concerns such as the need for training of maintenance crews and local first responders should there be an incident with an electric school bus. His final message was clear: electric school buses cannot happen in the time frame the state has created and cannot happen without considerable state funding of the mandate. After Spacht's presentation, the two legislators took to the stage. Senator *Borrello* commanded attention with a strong message

about his stance on the electric school bus issue: "You look at some of these state mandates and the frustrating part for us is that there really is no plan...We have aspirational goals, but we're not going to grab the aspirational business. We are in the business of making laws and making sure that we can actually execute these plans and this is where the state has colossally failed. This electric bus thing is a perfect example."

He shared how the conversation has been carried out: "They have said that climate change is an existential threat to humanity." Senator *Borrello* spoke about the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) and the Climate Action Council (CAC), calling it "a fool's errand that is going to drive New York into bankruptcy." He related a discussion he had with the lead professor of the CAC, a biology professor from Cornell. Senator *Borrello* asked him, "you're talking about spending hundreds of millions, if not a trillion dollars, driving manufacturers and families out of New York State, devastating our economy. My first question for you is what percentage of global greenhouse gas emissions is New York State responsible for? His response was, 'I don't really know.'

Really, in two years that didn't come up? You're going to do all of this to New York, this huge expense, and you don't really know what the benefit is going to be? 'Well, it's not much,' was his next response."

Senator *Borrello* did a little research and learned that the answer to his original question is 0.4 percent. "Less than half a percent of greenhouse gas emissions worldwide come from New York State." After speaking more about driving businesses and families from the state, he concludes, "so for those of you that think that this is an existential threat to humanity, your state is not responsible for enough to move the deal."

Senator *Borrello* paraphrased his co-speaker,

CCSBA Legislative Dinner

REPORT

saying *AM Goodell's* favorite thing to say is that New York State is importing more power than it ever has and that is because we shut down reliable forms of energy. Senator *Borrello* declared, "all these wind turbines and solar panels. Okay. That's just show because we shut down natural gas, shut down our nuclear plants. And we're now importing power from the dirtiest old fashion coal plants in America like Homer City, Pennsylvania. So New York State converting to electric school buses will be powered by coal plants out of Pennsylvania...we'll have the first coal powered school buses in America here in New York State."

He goes on to address the issues of the impact things such as weather can have on the battery charge and how far the bus can travel on a single charge in winter. "So nice idea in New York City where school buses travel about five miles before they get the kids from where they live to school but not out here. And this is the real problem," he explains; "our colleagues believe that New York State mandates it that the seas will part and that the technology will magically appear."

He concludes saying, "There is no measurable benefit when it comes to climate change. This is not an existential threat to humanity. It is an existential threat to our economy here in New York State and to our ability to keep our families here, keep our kids here."

Senator *Borrello* then shifted focus to the recent conversations about electrifying homes in New York State and how some across the aisle are walking back on the conversation and that saying 'we're gonna take your gas stove' is a bunch of rhetoric. He retorts, "It's not rhetoric. It's in the governor's budget... It's the end of affordability in New York State. There is no discussion; there has been no negotiation. This is the plan. And it starts in the budget this year. I'd love to talk about foundation aid and all those other things, but the bottom line is if we continue to drive our manufactures, our families out of New York

State, there's not going to be any reason to continue on with this. We don't have the money to do this. That is the biggest threat to New York State. The fact that our government has really lost its mind when it comes to what we're trying to do to continue to make your state a place where people can actually live and raise a family."

AM Goodell took over saying "Everyone in this room is concerned about the environment. And for me personally, these environmental issues are some of the most difficult and complex issues we face." He all but repeated the message, wholeheartedly agreeing with the Senator *Borrello*, "So we triple the cost of school buses and we run them on coal. Not sure that's an environmentally sensible approach."

AM Goodell focused his attentions next on battery production. "Where did the batteries come from? Well, Cobalt is mined in the Congo with horrific conditions using child labor. And lithium, as we all know, comes from China. And so this legislation requires our school districts send billions of dollars to support the Chinese economy. China accounts for 29 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions. It is the largest worldwide producer of greenhouse gas emissions. So your tax dollars will help support the worst environmentalist record in the world. And in order to meet this demand, China has announced it is adding 80 gigabytes of new coal power to re-mine those batteries for us."

For all those people who think telling New York State they should have to use electric vehicles too, you might just get your wish. *AM Goodell* shares information about three bills that went through the Assembly this year, "The first one calls for the transition of all state vehicles to be electric over the next few years. And that's because we wanted to share your pain. I (*AM Goodell*) ask what I thought was an obvious question. So if all of our state police vehicles are all electric, how

CCSBA Legislative Dinner

REPORT

are they gonna respond when we have a superstorm and we don't have any power for three weeks on Long Island? And you all know the answer don't ya. And the answer is well, we'll have diesel generators at every state police station and then every firehouse and every DOT." He went on to explain that whole modern natural gas plants produce less emissions than individual generators.

The second bill requires that all these electric vehicles be manufactured in the United States using US produced components. He asked if there is a single vehicle commercially manufactured in the United States that uses US made components, like the battery. The answer was no. "That," AM Goodell said, "did not stop the majority from passing the bill anyway."

Finally, the third bill calls for all state agencies to "come up with a plan on how to implement this program and I'm waiting to hear how they're going to do it when they have to buy American made vehicles that don't exist in order to transition to a structure we don't have in place. And to put it into perspective, to convert to just all electric vehicles, we would have to more than double our electric generating and distribution capacity." He talked about how the state would have to build generating plants as fast as they could, but instead the state has turned down every single permit application for new generating among other concerns.

Bringing it full circle and back to education to conclude, he shared, "In the meantime the governor is proposing a substantial increase in school aid and is fully funding foundation aid so for the next couple of years before you have to pay for all these extraordinarily expensive new buses, you should enjoy the short-term benefits you have from our short-term generosity."

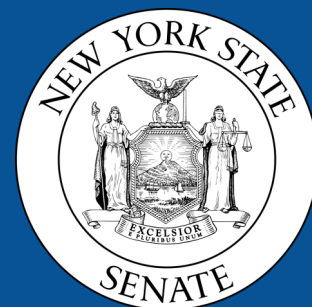
Audience members were then able to ask a few questions. The questions asked included thoughts on the BOCES salary cap, raising

fund balance limits, and changes to the foundation aid formula.

Note: The opinions expressed in this article are those of the guest speakers. It is not meant to be interpreted as a position statement of ECASB.

The ECASB Legislative Team has discussed and addressed concerns and asked many questions about the electric school bus mandate.

ECASB has not determined an official position at this time.



Press Release from the New York State Legislature:

Legislature Elects New Member and Re-elects Two Members to Board of Regents

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, Senate and Assembly Education Committee Chairs Shelley B. Mayer and Michael Benedetto, and Senate and Assembly Higher Education Committee Chairs Toby Ann Stavisky and Patricia Fahy announced the Legislature's election of Adrian I. Hale, and the re-election of Judith Chin and Aramina Vega Ferrer to the New York State Board of Regents, on March 1st.

The Board of Regents is comprised of 17 members elected by the Legislature for five-year terms. One member is elected from each of the state's 13 judicial districts and four members serve at-large.

Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins said "Each of these elected regents brings a unique perspective rooted in the diversity of their backgrounds and wealth experience, which will be invaluable to advance the mission of providing a world-class education to all of our students."

Adrian Hale (Judicial District 7) has more than 16 years of leadership, economic and workforce development and education advocacy experience. Hale currently serves as director of economic and community development for Foundry Digital. Hale also worked at the Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce where he oversaw workforce development initiatives and led the chamber's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts. Hale also served in the U.S. Marine Corps for five years, and afterward enlisted in the U.S. Air Force Reserves where he served for three more years.

Judith Chin (Judicial District 11) was elected to the Board of Regents in 2015. A lifelong educator, Regent Chin spent more than three decades working for the New York City Department of Education where she served as a teacher, principal, and numerous other leadership roles including as a supervising superintendent for more than 230 schools across the five boroughs. Regent Chin most recently served as the project leader for strategic development for the Reading and Writing Project at the Teachers College at Columbia University.

Aramina Vega Ferrer, Ph.D., (Judicial District 12) was elected to the Board of Regents in 2021. Dr. Ferrer taught in elementary and secondary education for over 30 years and developed and implemented innovative instructional programs for culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. She has also taught at several colleges and universities throughout New York City before becoming an associate professor and chair of the Department of Literacy and Multilingual Studies at Mercy College School of Education. Dr. Ferrer also served as founding director of the School of Education Bronx Parent Center, an initiative working with Bronx families and educators to increase student achievement in pre-K through 12th grade and ensure college access.