



Erie County Association of School Boards

Vol. 3; Issue 5; January 2024

ADVOCACY ALLIANCE MONTHLY
YOUR MONTHLY UPDATE

Dear ECASB Members,

Between the holidays and a family emergency at the start of the New Year, I was not able to schedule a Time to Talk feature interview. But hold your winter hats, as I have an upcoming interview for February that should be well worth the wait!

In the meantime, there is still plenty to ponder and take in this month, so stay out of the cold and enjoy a few moments with the Advocacy Alliance Monthly and all it offers regarding updated bill information and reports on the local legislative meetings already held.

If your New Year's Resolution was to become more active in advocacy, it is not to late. Find the links to register for the NYSSBA Capital Conference and arrange for lodging. Then be sure to let me know you are going so I can include you in all the ECASB Plans and Legislator Meetings. Last year we were one of the largest groups, and I sure would love to see us do that again!

Happy January,

~Jane



Important Dates

- ⇒ ECASB Awards Nominations opened January 2, 2024. Visit our ECASB.org website for applications.
- ⇒ Legislative Team Meeting, Jan. 18; 6:30-8:30 p.m. in room B1
- ⇒ Sign up for Capital Conference 2024. *You must register and book your hotel yourself.* Virtual and In-person events are two separate registrations. [Click here for the link to NYSSBA Registration.](#)

Our 2023-2024 Platinum Sponsors



- NEWS AND NOTES -

Articles of interest...

Time to take action ...

In no particular order...

[Dec. 28 article on the GOP challenge for Assemblyman Patrick Burke's seat.](#)

[Dec. 22 article on the bids for Senator Kennedy's seat should he win the congressional seat vacated by Congressman Brian Higgins.](#)

[Jan. 8 article on Lake Shore and Electric School Buses.](#)

[Jan. 8 article on reactions to proposed election law change.](#)

[It is Budget Season! See what the Buffalo News is saying about Buffalo Public Schools.](#)

[Broadband groundwork in Erie County](#)

[Governor Hochul and Literacy.](#)

[Candidate seeking Brian Higgins seat.](#)

[Governor Hochul's State of the State address.](#)

If you have interesting articles in the news to share, please forward them to Jane at jsullivan@elb.org.



Add these advocacy opportunities to your calendar. Let Jane Sullivan know when you plan to attend any of them by emailing her at jsullivan@elb.org.

[Local Winter Conference:](#)

[Senator Gallivan:](#) Today, Thurs., Jan. 11; 3 p.m.; 2721 Transit Rd, Elma, NY 14059 and

[Assemblyman Jonathan Rivera:](#) TBD– Contact Jane if you are interested in this meeting.

[NYSSBA Capital Conference:](#)

[Virtual Meeting on February 2:](#) Information was sent to your email from NYSSBA. You must register yourself. Link to NYSSBA registration page [here](#).

[2024 In-person Capital Conference on Wednesday, February 7 in Albany.](#) You must register yourself and book your own hotel. Link to the NYSSBA registration page [here](#).

NYSSBA provides a list of suggested hotels. Dave and Jane are staying at the Hilton.

Let Jane know you plan to attend [by January 15th](#) so she can set up meetings based on our representation. Jane will reach out to Assemblyman Conrad to arrange for the building tour and floor recognition that he has offered.

The Lorie Sabo Scholarship Fund at ECASB has money available a board member who wishes to attend the Capital Conference, whose district is unable to fund the request. Contact Dave Lowrey at dlowrey@elb.org for an application. Money is raised through the Annual Basket Raffle at the Annual Dinner.

[Wrap-Up Legislative Breakfast:](#) Sat., May 11. Details to follow soon, but save the date!

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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. Support is provided.

New Bills:

S08155- An act to amend chapter 217 of the laws of 2015, amending the education law relating to certified school psychologists and special education services and programs for preschool children with handicapping conditions, in relation to the effectiveness thereof. Introduced Jan. 8 by Senator Shelly Mayer, there is no local sponsor.

S08104- Directs the board of education or the board of trustees of each school district shall establish a policy and adopt procedures permitting the district to confer a diploma on a student posthumously if, at the time of death, such student had completed the eleventh grade class of a public school in the district and was enrolled or expected to be enrolled in the twelfth grade class within the same public school district the following school year. Introduced Jan. 8, there is no local sponsor.

S08107- Allows students attending agricultural learning events to be counted as in attendance at school; defines "agricultural learning events" as including FFA events and 4-H programs. Introduced Jan. 8, there is no local sponsor.

S08123- An act to amend the education law, in relation to creating a school budget tax cap exemption for expenditures resulting from settlement awards in civil actions brought against school districts under the child victims act. It was introduced by *Senator Tim Kennedy* on Jan. 8, **at our request!**

A08447- Relates to the availability and purchase of zero-emission school buses. Introduced on Jan. 3, it is locally sponsored by *AM Hawley, AM Giglio and AM DiPietro*.

A08438- Directs the board of education or the board of trustees of each school district shall establish a policy and adopt procedures permitting the district to confer a diploma on a student posthumously if, at the time of death, such student had completed the eleventh grade class of a public school in the district and was enrolled or expected to be enrolled in the twelfth grade class within the same public school district the following school year. Introduced Jan. 3, there are no local sponsors.

A08440- Provides that where practicable, school districts in which schools are utilized as polling places shall schedule conference or professional development days on primary or election days when the polls are open to voters, and if students are present during hours when polls are open, school districts shall take measures to ensure that the general public shall not access other areas of the school outside of the polling place. Introduced Jan. 3, there are no local sponsors.

More on the next page



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BILL ALERT

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Gaining Sponsors in the Senate:

S05523- Grants an exemption for the purchase of energy efficient snow making equipment, ski lift equipment, snow grooming equipment, and the production of snow by a recreational ski facility from state sales and compensating use tax. There are no local sponsors

S00089- Prohibits a town, city, or county industrial development agency from waiving taxes which would be received by a school district. It is locally sponsored by **Senator Ryan**.

Gaining Sponsors in the Assembly:

A08076- Creates a school budget tax cap exemption for expenditures resulting from settlements or jury awards for civil actions brought against school districts under the child victims act. It is locally sponsored by **AM Conrad, AM Wallace and AM McMahon**.

A07788- Establishes a pilot program to provide grants to local education providers to implement high-impact tutoring programs prioritizing low-income or underserved students to address student learning loss or unfinished learning resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. There are no local sponsors.

A06665- Decreases the frequency of lock-down drills in schools; directs that such drills shall be implemented with a trauma-informed approach; permits parents to opt their children out of such drills. There are no local sponsors.

A05523- Allows a suspending authority to condition the early return of a student on such student's voluntary participation in counseling or specialized classes, including anger management or dispute resolution, where applicable. There are no local sponsors.

A01559- Establishes a course of instruction and learning expectations on climate education in all public pre-kindergarten, elementary and secondary schools which shall include various principles and concepts including environmental justice. There are no local sponsors.

A00351- Prohibits a town, city, or county industrial development agency from waiving taxes which would be received by a school district. It is locally sponsored by **AM Rivera and AM Wallace**

Governor Signed:

A00133/S-2599- Establishes a dyslexia and dysgraphia task force; implements the findings of such task force. It was locally sponsored by **AM McMahon**.

MEETING OUR LEGISLATORS

Locally and in Albany, We Have Their Attention!

Local and Albany Winter Conference Updates:

Senator Kennedy (Staff): Thurs., Dec. 14; 3 p.m.; 37 Franklin St. on the 5th floor with Jessica LaFalce and Bob Brandon

Jane Sullivan and Scott Johnson represented ECASB at a meeting with Senator Kennedy staff members Jessica LaFalce, Director of Outreach and Bob Brandon, a top legislative aid. We were able to speak about the four top priorities of ECASB: Foundation Aid Funding, Zero Emission Bus Mandates, Teacher and Staff Shortages and Student Mental Health and Wellness.

We also addressed specific bills, including following up with a request to have Senator Kennedy sign on as the same as senate bill to Assembly bill A8076, a CVA bill sponsored by AM William Conrad. Not long after, in early January, Senator Kennedy introduced S8123, the same as bill we requested. This is a great example of how building a relationship with AM Conrad and his staff has led to movement. AM Conrad's staff reached out to ECASB and asked us to write a memo of support for the bill, asking Senator Kennedy to introduce the same as bill. Our continued conversation following up on the memo helped bring the issue to the forefront and ultimately allowed for the introduction of the bill in the senate.

Assemblywoman Wallace: Mon., Dec. 18; 3:45 p.m.; 2562 Walden Ave. Suite 102 in Cheektowaga.

Due to scheduling and rescheduling conflicts we were unable to arrange a local meeting. The good news is that AM Wallace and her staff are the first to schedule an appointment with us for the NYSSBA Capital Conference on Feb. 7!

Senator Gallivan: Thurs., Jan. 11; 3 p.m., Transit Road in Elma.

This meeting will take place just after the publication of this newsletter. Watch for a report in Feb. And more good news...Senator Gallivan's

staff has already arranged for our meeting with him in Albany on Feb. 7!

Assemblyman Rivera: Fri., Jan. 26 9 a.m. in his Hamburg office:

Several members of the Frontier CSD Board and even a PTA member will be in attendance. If you would like to join this meeting, just email Jane!

Assemblyman DiPietro:

We have confirmed an appointment with AM DiPietro in Albany on Feb. 7!

Senator Ryan:

We have confirmed an appointment with Senator Ryan's Legislative Director in Albany on Feb. 7!

NYSSBA Capital Conference

We have 11 people who have notified ECASB that they have registered to attend. They are:

Jane Sullivan- Iroquois/ECASB (Gallivan/ DiPietro)

Dave Lowrey-E2CC BOCES/ECASB

Kathleen- Lake Shore (Gallivan/ DiPietro)

Mike Franey- Lake Shore (Gallivan/ DiPietro)

Dan Pacos- Lake Shore Superintendent (Gallivan/ DiPietro)

Heather Jacobs- Iroquois (Gallivan/ DiPietro)

Sabatino Cimato-Ken-Ton (Ryan/Conrad)

Matt Chimera- Ken-Ton (Ryan/Conrad)

Todd Marquardt- Ken-Ton (Ryan/Conrad)

Lese Ann Vogt- Ken-Ton (Ryan/Conrad)

Karen Whitelaw- Ken-Ton (Ryan/Conrad)

FYI, Heather Jacobs and I are taking the train! We will be on train 64, leaving at 12:40 p.m. from the Depew station on Feb. 6, and returning on train 449, leaving Albany at 7:05 p.m. on Feb. 7. Consider

AN AI RECIPE

ANOTHER PLUG FOR THE NYSSBA/ ECASB JANUARY 27 PROGRAM

After last month's AI poem, perhaps you have now tried using ChatGPT and are interested about what it means for education K-12. Have you thought about how it can enhance your programming? What challenges does it bring? As another example, I used ChatGPT-Open AI to create the following "recipe for successful school board service in Western New York. It took me less than a minute. I was pleased to see it included "ingredients" on advocacy.

I hope you plan to attend the special program on January 27th! Deadline to register is January 17th.

1. **Community Connection**: *Actively engage with the local community to understand its unique needs and concerns. Attend community events, listen to residents, and build strong relationships.*
2. **Stay Informed**: *Keep abreast of educational trends, policies, and challenges in both the state and the local district. Regularly attend school board meetings and participate in relevant training to stay well-informed.*
3. **Collaboration**: *Foster a collaborative environment within the school board, working effectively with fellow members, administrators, teachers, and staff. Encourage open communication and teamwork.*
4. **Advocate for Equity**: *Strive for fairness and equity in educational opportunities. Advocate for policies that ensure every student, regardless of background, receives an excellent education.*
5. **Financial Stewardship**: *Demonstrate responsible fiscal management by understanding the budget, making informed financial decisions, and advocating for resources that benefit students*

without unduly burdening taxpayers.

6. **Transparency**: *Promote transparency by communicating clearly with the community, sharing decisions, and providing opportunities for public input. Transparency builds trust and fosters a positive relationship with the community.*
7. **Student-Centric Focus**: *Keep the students' best interests at the forefront of decision-making. Support initiatives that enhance educational outcomes and contribute to the overall well-being of students.*
8. **Advocacy Skills**: *Develop strong advocacy skills to effectively represent the district's interests to external stakeholders, such as state officials, and to secure necessary resources for the school system.*
9. **Adaptability**: *Education is dynamic, and circumstances change. Be adaptable and open to new ideas, adjusting strategies when necessary to address evolving challenges in the educational landscape.*
10. **Ethical Leadership**: *Uphold high ethical standards in all aspects of your role. Demonstrate integrity, honesty, and a commitment to ethical conduct, setting a positive example for the entire school community.*