



Erie County Association of School Boards

Vol. 1; Issue 8; April 2022



ADVOCACY ALLIANCE MONTHLY  
YOUR MONTHLY UPDATE  
FROM YOUR LEGISLATIVE TEAM

Dear Members,

April is certainly interesting with temperatures reaching the 70's one day and snowing the next. April has brought us a long awaited State Budget. The budget passed through both the Assembly and the Senate on April 9th. The Governor signed it on April 11th.

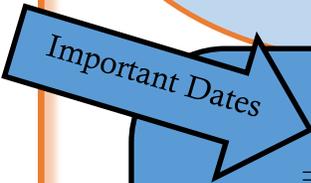
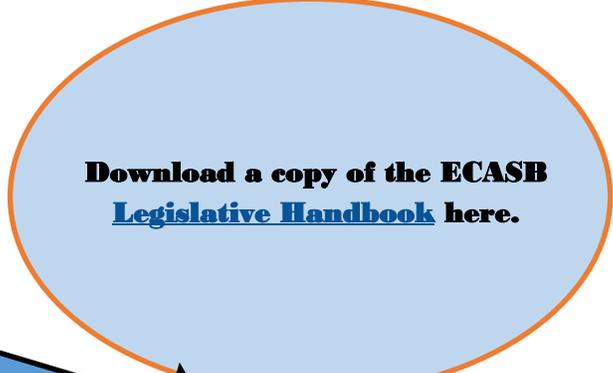
There are many implications for this year's budget. NYSSBA held a Budget Webinar. Included in the budget is full funding of so many things we have not seen in years. We will have to keep our eye on the budget so that we can understand the impact this will have on future school budgets. We must be forward thinking in what ways these funds can be used and stretched to maximize every dollar for every student.

I am already starting to plan the 2022-2023 ECASB Legislative Season, including the Legislative Breakfast on November 19, 2022. During the summer, my hours will be reduced, but I am always close at hand by email: [jsullivan@e1b.org](mailto:jsullivan@e1b.org). Keep me posted on what you are doing to advance advocacy in your district during the summer and I will do the same.

This concludes the Advocacy Monthly for the 2021-2022 School year. We will resume publication in September. Until then, I hope to see you at the remaining events we have planned at ECASB.

Best Regards,

Jane



- ⇒ Final Legislative Team Meeting of the Year, April 21st , 6:30-8:30, B2B
- ⇒ Budget Vote and School Board Elections, May 17th
- ⇒ ECASB and WNY Law Conference will be on Aug. 3rd.
- ⇒ Mark your calendars; the 2022 Legislative Breakfast will be held on November 19th!



- ⇒ Register for the May Speed Boarding on May 5th.
- ⇒ Annual Awards Dinner will be June 9th. Make your reservations today.



# time to talk

## BEYOND SCHOOL HOUSE ROCK:

### *How a Bill Becomes a Law in New York State*

At the last Legislative Team meeting, Amanda Wyzkiewicz, the Legislative Director for Assembly Member Monica Wallace, came to talk about the intricacies of how a bill becomes a law in New York State.

A bill begins with its introduction to either the Assembly or the Senate. In order for a bill to gain traction, it must find prime sponsorship in both branches and the bill language must be the same, creating a companion bill. Once passed in both houses, it is sent to the Governor.

The Governor can keep a bill from becoming law. It can be vetoed, or it can be set aside for a prescribed number of days creating a pocket veto. Sometimes, even a great bill can be vetoed. “It usually happens when there is a fiscal implication to the bill,” Wyzkiewicz explains; “It just might not fit in the budget.”

The Governor can also sign a bill into law. The Governor can also sign it *after* making it clear that some changes must immediately follow as an amendment to the law with a new bill.

Ultimately, if a bill never gets a companion bill, it cannot become a law. The cautionary advice is to remember that a bill can gain traction quickly once it is picked up in both houses, and sponsorship can happen overnight. If you see a bill proposed that you want to support, tell both your assembly member and your senator. Let both sides know there is support. This process also works too, when you want to try to block a bill.

Advocacy is still the key to communicating the needs of ECASB’s member districts.

## DIVING DEEPER:

### *Understanding the Process*

**Bill A09417**, if passed, would establish Three King’s Day as a school holiday for all public schools ‘*in a city school district of a city having a population of one million or more inhabitants*’. Sent to the Education Committee on March 7th, it is sponsored by down state legislators *Edward Gibbs* (D), *Jo Anne Simon* (D), *Catalina Cruz* (D), *Emily Gallagher* (D), *Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas* (D), *Alfred Taylor* (D), and has a companion bill in the Senate: **Bill-S01356**, sponsored by *Jose Serrano* (D), *J. Gustavo Rivera* (D). (Read more about the specifics of these bills at <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2021/S1356> and <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2021/A9417>.)

The bill in the senate also lists Bill 04043 as a companion bill in the Assembly. This appears to be an older version of A09417, having a clause stricken in Dec. of 2021. It is a good example of how a bill may not pass, but can morph into a new bill with the same basic principle.

On occasion, bills are written for cities with a population over a million people. Buffalo (the 2nd largest city in NYS) has a population of about 262,500 people. Bills such as these are only meant to apply to New York City, which officially includes its five boroughs. One must ask themselves why NYC public school children need a day off when the rest of the state does not? What message is this sending? One has to wonder if bills for a day off for public schools in cities over 1 million people is really about ‘good educational practices’ or for political appeasement.

Here is another bill that appears to effect public schools only in NYC. **Bill S07809** would provide a videoconferencing exemption from the open meetings law for certain community boards,

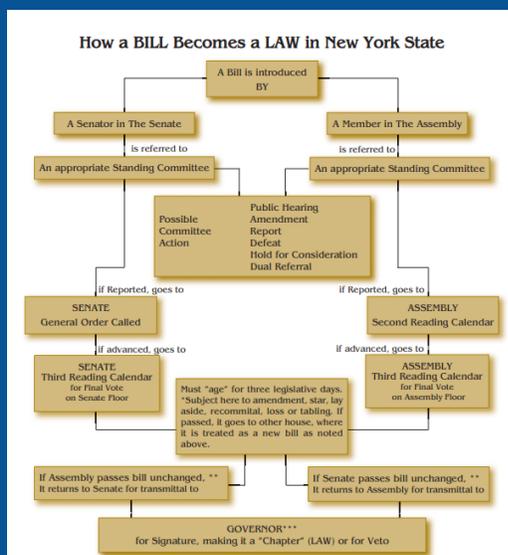
the board of education of the city school district of the city of New York and for certain community councils and any other public body of which the majority of the public body's membership are uncompensated, except for necessary expenses.

The last action was receiving Print Number on March 9. It is sponsored by *Brad Hoylman (D)*, *Liz Krueger (D)* and *J. Gustavo Rivera (D)*.

What does this mean? The City of New York's Board of Education gets an exemption not afforded to the rest of the school boards across New York State if this bill passes. One must ask, why?

Are we in Western New York going to support bills that don't benefit school districts across the state? What happens when a bill is introduced that only focuses on upstate districts?

If you find any bill goes against what is good for our ECASB districts, let your legislators know and ask how you can help stop these random pieces of legislation becoming law.



### CELEBRATING LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES:

#### Chautauqua County School Boards Association's Legislative Dinner

I attend the Chautauqua County School Boards Association Legislative Dinner on March 17th, with ECASB Executive Director David Lowrey. With about 60 school board members in attendance, participants were able to hear from *Senator George Borrello* and *Assemblyman Andrew Goodell*. The legislators spent about an hour talking about what has been happening in Albany in the past few months and about the bills being debated that will affect New York State Public Schools. Both expressed deep appreciation for the work school board members across the state do, especially during the pandemic. They recognized the challenges we have all faced, including angry parents and the attempts to keep up with the ever-changing guidelines .

Borello declared it is time to move forward and make education a priority for the children in the state. He talked about the disparity facing smaller suburban and rural districts. He then shared how he is advocating to ensure that we get what we need and our voices are heard in Albany.

Goodell joined in, and said he focused on the legislative initiatives geared at the zero emission electric busses. He is concerned by the mandates that would force all school busses to be electric by the year 2035. The current bills do not account for the electric grid infrastructures needed by both school districts and municipalities to power the charging stations, and the costs for installing such infrastructures. He mentioned that the power for these charging stations will be coming from: coal plants in Homer City, Pennsylvania, which in essence means the electricity to power the busses will come from coal, and outside the state. In addition, there is the issue regarding what happens when the batteries for the busses die and need to be disposed. What impact will that have on the state and the environment.

Both legislators turned to talking about the budget and they are pleased that some of the hard work from the past few years has turned into a funding public education. However, more work is still needed to fix the foundation aid formula. The fight to bring balance to funding is still raging. Both legislators talked about other state mandates affecting education including employee health insurance and retirement benefits.

The evening ended with a question-and-answer period. Fielding questions from attendees, many of the concerns are the same concerns we also have here at ECASB. The Legislators reiterated the message that we often hear from our own representatives: “Keep working with your legislators and let your voices continue to be heard in Albany.

As another school year comes to an end, ECASB is already planning our next Legislative Breakfast for November. We are hoping to add a Legislative Dinner towards the end of the school 2023 academic school year where our legislators can come back and share with us the impact our advocacy is having, as well as provide guidance to us on our advocacy efforts.



Assemblyman Goodell



Senator Borrello

## 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](mailto:JSullivan@e1b.org); she will set you up with an account umbrellaed under the ECASB Bill Track 50 subscription and send you a link to the online training recording made during the November 2021 legislative team training*

**Bill S08641**-Requires instruction about agriculture in every elementary, middle, and high school under state control or supported wholly or partly by the state. It was introduced and sent to the education committee on March 24th. It is sponsored by local Senator **George Borrello (R)\***. It does have a companion bill in the assembly, A09230 that was introduced by **John Lemondes (R)\*** and **Chris Tague (R)**, on Feb. 9th. Visit <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2021/S8641> to read the full details of these bills.

# BILL ALERT CONTINUED

**Bill A04840** - Has been held for consideration in the family and children committee on March 8, 2022. It would exempt teachers from additional certifications or prerequisites associated with running certain after-school programs except for background checks; and exempts any teacher working in any school building of a city school district of a city having one hundred twenty-five thousand inhabitants or more. It is sponsored by *Brian Manktelow (R)\**, *Joe Angelino (R)*, *Karl Brabenec (R)*, *Joseph De Stefano (R)*, **Stephen Hawley (R)**, *John Salka (R)*, and *Robert Smullen (R)*. Read the full bill at <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2021/A4840>.

**Bill A08003** - (update) – This bill would prohibit individuals serving on a school or library board of trustees from resigning from their current term in order to run for a vacant trustee position.

**Bill S08762**- Relates to the New York state masters-in-education teacher incentive scholarship program. It was introduced on April 23rd. The bill is sponsored by Neil Breslin (D)\*. Read the bill by visiting <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2021/S8762> . It has a companion bill in the Assembly: A08917.

*The New York State Legislature has finished their work on the 2022-23 state budget. Included in this budget is a \$2.08 billion increase in traditional school aid, which includes a \$1.53 billion increase in Foundation Aid. Other highlights in the budget are the full funding of expense-based aids, COVID-19 reliefs, hybrid meeting policies, transitioning to zero emission busses, and solutions to closing the digital divide. Be sure to spend some time this summer learning about the impact this new budget will have both on your district's next school year and the long-term impacts in future years.*

**Bill S08701**– Relates to excluding certain lottery winnings from a school district's adjusted gross income; provides that any lottery winnings in excess of 25% of a district's adjusted gross income shall be excluded from such district's adjusted gross income for the year. It is sponsored by *Sean Ryan (D)\**, and was referred to the Education committee on March 31st. See the full details of this bill at <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2021/S8701>. A companion bill (A09878) was introduced on April 19, sponsored by Assemblyman *William Conrad (D)*

**ACTION TIME:** ECASB advocated for this bill. Communicate with your legislators by letters, emails and phone calls to ask Assemblymembers & Senators to support these bills by signing on as co-sponsors. Drop me an email to let me know you have taken action on the bill by emailing me at: [jsullivan@e1b.org](mailto:jsullivan@e1b.org).

# Meet the New York State Senate Committee on Education Members



*Each month, ECASB highlights a member from the New York State Senate Committee on Education. This month ECASB introduces you to the Honorable Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.*

NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

( D ) 15 SENATE DISTRICT

Email: [addabbo@nysenate.gov](mailto:addabbo@nysenate.gov)

**Albany Office:**

**188 State Street**

**LOB room 811**

**Albany, NY 12247**

**Phone 518-426-6875**

**Joseph Addabbo, a lifelong resident of Queens, was born in 1964, the youngest child of Joseph and Grace Addabbo. He attended Nativity BVM School in Ozone Park and Archbishop Molloy High School, graduating with the Class of 1982. He continued with his education graduating first from St. John's University in 1986 and then from Touro Law School in 1992. He practiced law for 10 years before running for political office.**

**Senator Addabbo's father, Congressman Joseph P. Addabbo, Sr., served 13 terms in the United States House of Representatives from 1960 to 1986, so legislative service is a family trait.**

**Senator Addabbo was elected to the New York State Senate in 2008 after serving seven years in the New York City Council. He works hard, and has secured millions of dollars for infrastructure improvements, school technology, and senior and youth services.**

**His legislative record includes bills he has introduced and supported, reflecting a commitment to fighting on behalf of children, the elderly, families, working people, consumers and veterans.**

**Senator Addabbo is a dedicated family man who enjoys spending time with his wife, Dawn, and two daughters, Alexis and Arianna.**



# Meet the New York State Assembly Committee on Education Members



*Each month, ECASB highlights one member from the New York State Assembly Committee on Education. This month we introduce Assembly Member, the Honorable Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn.*

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY  
MEMBER

ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 42

Email:

[bichotter@nyassembly.gov](mailto:bichotter@nyassembly.gov)

**Albany Office:**

**Legislative Office Building, Room 727**

**Albany, NY 12248**

**Phone 518-455-5385**

**Assembly member Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn is the Assemblymember and State Committee Woman / District Leader for the 42nd Assembly District representing Flatbush, East Flatbush, Midwood and Ditmas Park in Brooklyn. She became a legislator in 2015.**

**She was born and raised in Brooklyn and is the first Haitian American woman elected in New York City; the first Engineer elected to the New York State Legislature; and the first woman to chair the Majority County Party in Brooklyn. In addition, she has been appointed to Governor Kathy Hochul's Advisory Council on Domestic Violence and appointed by Mayor Bill de Blasio to NYC's Advisory Council on Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise.**

**She has worked in a number of different capacities including being a New York Math teacher in the public school education system. She earned and holds an MBA from Northwestern University, Kellogg School of Management, an MS in Electrical Engineering from Illinois Institute of Technology, a BS in Electrical Engineering from SUNY Buffalo, a BS in Mathematics in Secondary Education and a BT in Electrical Engineering both from Buffalo State College. She is currently attending Brooklyn Law School as a juris doctorate candidate..**

**Ms. Bichotte Hermelyn has introduced legislation addressing issues such as housing, health, education, criminal justice, safety and voting rights. She co-sponsored the DREAM Act, a bill which gives undocumented students an opportunity to pursue higher education. Her work on the Child Victims Act gives survivors of child sex abuse the right to seek justice against their abusers or negligent institutions.**

