



Erie County Association of School Boards

Where professional development, leadership & advocacy meet.

Leaders in Advocacy



ECASB Legislative Co-Chair - Kathleen Chiavetta

Kathleen Chiavetta has been advocating since she was 10! She has served on the Lake Shore Central School Board for the last 6 years, and currently serves as Co-Chair of the ECASB Legislative Committee.

What drove you to get involved with advocacy?

"I believe in the following quote: 'We in America do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate'"

What has been the most frustrating moment you have encountered while advocating?

"When I knew that a legislator was clearly not listening to me. Their attention was elsewhere"

What has been the most rewarding experience for you during your many years of advocating?

"Helping others learn to advocate. I love recruiting and educating others to advocate and am always happy to share my own experiences with them and information that will help them to be successful advocates for public education"

What do you wish every Board Member know about advocacy?

"Our elected officials work for YOU! Anyone can be an advocate! It is part of your job as a school board to not only educate the public, but to educate our elected officials"

What is one lesson you have learned through your years of advocacy?

"Be prepared! Have facts and data available - but also make it personal and tell your or your district's story"

How do you stay on top of Legislative Issues? Where do you get information about what is happening?

"I get a great deal of information from ECASB. The organization is a

Kathleen Chiavetta

ECASB Legislative Co-Chair

Lake Shore CSD Board Member

ECASB Lake Shore CSD-Legislative Representative

NYSSBA Convention Voting Delegate



wealth of information. I also read NYSSBA's advocacy alerts and follow local leaders on twitter and other social media."

Do you have any memorable moments from your many years of advocacy and meeting with legislators?

"I'll never forget playing in my yard during the summer of 1986. My father pulled in the driveway with the mail, and he had a packet addressed to me from the White House. I had written a letter to President Reagan, and the White House sent me back an informational packet. Ronald Regan might as well have stuffed the envelop himself. I was in awe. As an adult, I remember the first time stepping into the Capitol Building in Albany, and Chuck Schumer's offices in the Capitol Building. I've always had such respect for the offices, if not always the people who have held them over the years."

When your advocacy has been successful, how do you celebrate your success?

"Success is a group effort, but I usually celebrate most success the same way—Starbucks and Takeout".

What are your favorite places to visit either in Albany, NY or Washington D.C?

"DC - NPR Headquarters! I would also pay real money for the Albany Capitol Building to get a Tim Horton's".

Do you have any mentors that have guided you in your advocacy initiative?

"Scott Johnson from the Sweet Home CSD and Dr. Jill O'Malley who served on the Ken Ton UFSD School Board and served as the Associate Director of ECASB. Both individuals have so much wisdom and experience to share".

If you could have one wish from the New York State Legislature, what would that be?

"To have the state develop and fully fund an equitable public school funding structure."

Did you have any type of advocacy prior to serving on a School Board?

"Not in any formal role, but I have been a prolific letter writer for many years".

March/2021



Above Left: ECASB Members visit with each other prior to the Capital Conference in Albany in February 2020.
Above Right: Pictured at the ECASB Annual Dinner at



Salvatore's is Lake Shore School Board President Jennifer Michalec, Kathleen Chiavetta, Vice President Carla Thompson and Board Member Michael Franey.