



## Legislative Team Meeting

6:30 – 8:30 p.m., October 20, 2022  
Erie One BOCES Building A; Room A1

### **APPROVED Minutes**

**Attendance :** Erik Polkowski (Akron), Mark Smith (Amherst), Edward Schaefer (Cheektowaga Central), Wesley Schlossin (Cheektowaga Sloan), Dennis Priore (Clarence), Michael Montoro (Cleveland Hill), Todd Bush (Depew), Davis Podkulski (Frontier), David Yoviene (Hamburg), Lesley Battaglia (Ken-Ton), Kimberly Bukaty (Lackawanna), Michael Sage (Lancaster), Jennifer Pilarski (Maryvale), Co-Chair Scott Johnson (Sweet Home), Kristin Schmutzler (Tonawanda), Janice Dalbo (West Seneca), Mike Cornell (Superintendent Rep – Hamburg), Jane Sullivan (ECASB), Dave Lowrey (ECASB), Sue Beier (ECASB).

**Excused:** Paul Blowers (East Aurora), Co-Chair Kathleen Chiavetta (Erie 2 CC BOCES/Lake Shore), Linda Hoffman (Erie 2 CC BOCES), John Y. Waterman (Gowanda), Mary Jo Szucs (Holland), Jennifer Morrow (Ken Ton), Dr. Christine Gray-Tinnesz (Orchard Park), Elizabeth Gates (West Seneca), Teresa Leatherbarrow (Williamsville).

**Absent:** Michael Bennett (Alden), Lawrence Scott (Buffalo), Jennifer Horschel (Eden), Renee Wilson (Erie 1 BOCES), Ashli Dreher (Grand Island), Jim Michalek (Iroquois), Michelle DeCarlo (North Collins), Jessica Schuster (Springville Griffith Institute),

6:30 p.m. Call to Order by Legislative Committee Chair – Switched to B1 – **Scott Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:32.**

#### **Pledge to Flag**

**Approval of Agenda :** Motion to approve the agenda by Erik Polkowski (Akron); Second by Dave Yoviene (Hamburg). MCU

**Approval of Meeting Minutes-** September Meeting Minutes were emailed to the team on Sept. 6 **Motion to approve the September meeting minutes previously sent out. Motion by David Yoviene, Second by Kristin Schmutzler. MCU.**

**Review of Legislative/Advocacy Activities since last meeting. Since the last meeting Scott has contacted Assemblyman Bill Conrad about the CVA. Erik Polkowski has contacted local legislators and has had conversations with Senator Rath.**

#### **Old Business**

- (a) Bill Track 50 updates and training Video – Jane mentioned that there was a glitch in the program due to the gap and the state system of running on a 2 year time frame. If anyone needs assistance in operating the program, please contact Jane.
- (b) NYSSBA Virtual Business Meeting recap – Scott gave a brief report on the Virtual format. The session lasted 5.5 hours. There were 32 resolutions, 29 passed. 11 resolutions that were not endorsed by NYSSBA did not see any movement during the meeting. (Only 9 of the eleven were even introduced). Dave Lowrey mentioned that some of the other COLSBA organizations have a dinner for the Voting members of each board when the resolutions are released. The group is able to thoroughly discuss each and every resolution and the area is then able to come to consensus.
- (c) Legislative Breakfast updates – Jane provide an update. She said the following individuals volunteered to serve on a committee meeting prior to the breakfast and

- acting as hosts during the meeting. The following individuals include Kristin Schmutzler, Susan McClary, Lesley Battaglia, Erik Polkowski, Scott Johnson, and Kathleen Chiavetta. Jane will work on establishing the priorities, then meet with the group to review the power points and documents. Jane urged people to sign up. We gave the venue a count of 85 that would be attending based on previous years registrants. In the past we had a North and South breakfast. This year it will be the entire group back together again. Districts should bring board members, union leaders, PTA groups, or anyone else that will have common interest with ECASB.
- (i) Invites and Primer – Jane has sent out all information to the legislators both at the county and state level. We will follow up with legislators. In many cases, legislators will send their Chief of Staff (which is not a bad thing – as they often have more access to data that is shared with the legislator).
  - (ii) Committee formed – See above notes/comments

### **New Business**

- (a) Superintendent Representative Comments – Mike Cornell mentioned that it was Board Appreciation Month and thanked Board Members in attendance for being engaged. Mike discussed the Heath Care Worker Bonus program that was in the Budget which was tied to COVID. The bill originally was intended for nurses working in health care facilities, however NYSUT became involved. SED and DOH were then involved to define the titles that would be included. At this point no districts in the area are including the counselors. Paperwork should be submitted by October 31<sup>st</sup>. Individuals would get a bonus of \$3,000.
  - a. Mike spoke about electric buses. He cautioned the group about assuming the timeline for the buses would be pushed back. A group of Superintendents from around the state (himself included) were meeting with NYSERDA. Concerns brought up thus far include the weight of the buses as it pertains to local roadways and bridges, to the lifts in the garage, to having the capacity to generate enough electricity and have a space in a garage for each and every bus. Additional concerns brought up was the cost of the buses, how much money would be available for grants, concerns regarding first responders in the event of an emergency, having enough buses that are fully charged in the event an emergency run would need to be made as well as other issues that were brought up. Mike Cornell pointed out that legislatively the democrats who are in power, are pushing the electric vehicles, even though there are still a lot of unknowns.
    - Additionally, Mike discussed the possibility at looking at BOCES aid for SRO's in school.
    - Additionally, there is the issue about increasing the reimbursable aid from the state for BOCES instructors. It currently is at a 1970 or 1980 level.
    - This will be the last year of the Phase-In of the Foundation aid. We know what the expenses are with roll-over budgets. Foundation aid needs to at the very least stay current.
    - On the ballot this year is a \$500,000,000 referendum which would assist with the electric vehicles.
    - Mike mentioned that the state is really not going to be able to assist with the roll out of the electric vehicle costs, and that it is really the federal government that will be the driving force both in our funding and the industry.

- (b) Discussion of Legislative Breakfast Priorities – Jane will get together with the committee. It appears that all of the priorities that Rick Timbs spoke about in his program will be issues that we will need to address including electric vehicles, foundation aid, CVA, and shrinking school populations. Jane will review the Rick Timbs document and craft a general outline.
- (c) Discussion of Bills: Writing bills for our Legislators to sponsor – Jane reminded everyone that we still have the post cards that say “Vote No”, “Vote Yes”, Thank You” that should be used with legislators. If anyone needs additional postcards they should let Jane know or Sue in the office. Jane and Scott indicated that districts can still contact legislators about issues we have had in the past including the Lottery Winner Bill we would like to have passed, setting up a special ed reserve, setting up a reserve account for energy, increasing the BOCES approved CTE salary cap, Rural Teaching, and the CVA.
- (d) Advocacy Alliance Monthly: Suggestions? – Jane was looking for feedback. She did shorten the document and is not including members of the Education Committee in the document. There were no other comments or suggestions at this time.
- (e) Advocacy Alert Google Form – Jane has set up an Advocacy Alert Google Form on the ECASB website. Anyone that hears about a bill that they believe we should be addressing, should fill out the form.  
[Advocacy Alert Link](#)
- (f) Co-Chair Comments
- (g) Questions and comments – There were no chair comments at this time.

**Member Forum** (2 minutes per person, advocacy related topics)

1. Frontier CSD (Davis Podkulski) – district received a grant for weapons detection system. Sent out message to students and parents. Working on the vaping issue in the school.
2. Cheektowaga CSD (Ed Schaefer) – Pass.
3. Cleveland Hill UFSD – (Mike Montoro) – SRO program at the school is going well.
4. Akron CSD - (Erik Polkowski) – District had an Every Child Matters program on September 30<sup>th</sup>. They are currently working on developing a program to share information and knowledge about the Native American culture. The Akron School district has a 14% Native American population.
5. Hamburg CSD (David Yoviene) – Pass
6. Ken Ton UFS (Jennifer Morrow) – She received a response from Brian Higgins office after having contacted him. Received a grant through Assemblyman Conrad for AED’s. Program through UB’s Grad Education Grad School is preparing teachers and targets Amherst, Ken-Ton, Tonawanda and Buffalo schools.
7. Tonawanda City (Kristin Schmutzler) – Received grant to fund 2<sup>nd</sup> SRO; Received a grant for an inclusive playground at one of the schools.
8. West Seneca CSD (Jan Dalbo) – Committees are discussing ideas for the best use of buildings.
9. Depew UFSD (Todd Bush) – pass
10. Cheektowaga-Sloan UFSD (Wesley Schlossin) – Developing a Special Ed Reserve fund.
11. Lackawanna City (Kim Bukaty) – pass

12. Clarence CSD (Dennis Priore) – Thanked Jane and Dave for attending Board of Education meeting. Currently having discussions about the top students and how they are stressed and trying to take more and more classes and be involved in more and more activities.
13. Lancaster CSD (Mike Sage) – Working in the district on the climate of the culture and working with inclusive environment.
14. Amherst CSD (Mark Smith) – Made mention about schools in the area and the increase in the use of security and how the news is picking up on the issues.
15. Maryvale UFSD (Jennifer Pilarski) – They now have a full time SRO and things are going well.
16. Sweet Home CSD (Scott Johnson) – District received Champion of Change Award from NYSSBA recently. The award recognized the work they have done on the community center. Currently have therapy dogs in many of the buildings and have passed a policy on working with therapy dogs.
17. Jane Sullivan – Reminded everyone that the Legislative Breakfast was coming soon and districts should register early.

Adjournment – Motion to adjourn made by Dave Yoviene second by Kristin Schmutzler. MCU

**Notice of Event Reminders:**

**ECASB**

Next Legislative Meeting- Nov. 17  
Legislative Breakfast- Nov. 19  
Dave Little Dinner-Nov. 3  
Advocacy Training Day- Jan. 21, 2023  
Local Advocacy Week- Feb 1-4, 2023  
Legislative Dinner- May 11, 2023

**NYSSBA**

Annual Convention in Syracuse, Oct. 27-29  
Capital Conference  
Virtual Meeting-Feb.10, 2023  
In-Person-Feb. 15, 2023