



MCSBA members lead sessions at NYSSBA Convention



MCSBA members were among those who made presentations to other school district leaders during the 2018 NYSSBA Convention. Presenters shown at the left from top to bottom are:

Webster's Carmen Gumina & Erica Ebert, Instructional Specialist discussing the value of mindfulness;

A team from Penfield—Brandon Fox, TIG Coordinator; Stephanie Dana, Counseling Department Chair; Tom Putnam, Superintendent; Leslie Maloney, High School Principal; Nancy Bradstreet, Community Relations Director; and Presider Lisa Benati-Chidsey, Board Member (at the microphone)—sharing how the district dealt with student suicide by changing district culture;



HFL Superintendent Gene Mancuso suggesting ways to encourage discussions that create honest dialogue and a supportive community.



Other presentations by MCSBA members included Spencerport's collaborative 3-year recruitment plan – by Board President Gary Bracken, Superintendent Dan Milgate, and Jamie Lissow, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Gates Chili's approach to integrating technology – by Superintendent Kimberle Ward & Technology Director Troy Olin; and Hilton's use of video coaching to help teachers reflect on instructional practices and implement changes – by Superintendent Casey Kosiorek.



Upstate/Downstate resolutions committee meeting. At the left is Kevin Hutton (Spe) and Diane McBride (R-H); on the right side is Elizabeth Hallmark (Roc); at the head of the table is Mark Elledge (Pen), co-chair of the NYSSBA Resolutions Committee. All resolutions approved by the Resolutions Committee, including one from Penfield, were approved during the annual NYSSBA Business Meeting.

More Convention coverage on page 4.

News Scope

MONROE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION
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President – Mike Suffoletto, Webster CSD
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MCSBA goes to Albany December 10, 2018

Join colleagues to discuss our issues with key legislative and education leaders.

Leave from the Bushnell's Basin Park & Ride Lot off Rte. 490 at 7:00 a.m.; return same day by 6:00 p.m.
Breakfast items and box lunches provided on the bus.

To learn more, contact MCSBA NOW!

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From our executive director: Intersectionality

Dear Member,

Once again we find ourselves at the month where we celebrate hope and light and love. Unfortunately, this is also juxtaposed by the many tragic events in our nation that daily break our hearts and fester fears about who we are and what we stand for.



With that said, on a very snowy Friday morning two weeks ago, I was privileged to attend the fall ROC2Change Summit on Race, hosted by Brighton High School. This was the 7th such summit, with 4 more scheduled for the spring and fall of 2019 and 2020. The Wegmans Conference Center was packed with students from 37 high schools across the county.

Every summit brings more and more student participants who want to become leaders of change. Indeed the keynote speaker Dr. Khuram Hussain, Dean of Hobart and William Smith Colleges, incited these young adults to become the leaders of change by telling them to cause trouble. While this may have caused a momentary cringe among the adults in the room, what Dr. Hussain was referring to is the kind of trouble created by Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King.

And so, these young adults were inspired, as they have been at every summit they have attended, to continue the work of those who came before. They spoke openly, honestly and passionately about a country that needs to value and practice

what it espouses. They learned specifically about intersectionality; the theory that the overlap of various social identities (such as race, gender, sexuality and class) contributes to the specific type of systemic oppression and discrimination experienced by an individual or group. Then they worked together to find ways to support those who feel marginalized.

These students represent the hope in our future. They bring light and joy to the dark that seems sometimes impenetrable. They are able to do this because of the adults in their lives who believe, that we can and need to do better...and, because they have all of you. It is your leadership which ensures that every child matters. It is your leadership that provides the supports and the tools for success. It is your leadership that engraves the spirit of our ideology through the promise of public education.

This December, as we give thanks for so much, I want to thank you for the work that you do every day of the entire year to help the next generation of young adults to become the leaders for the tomorrow that could be.

And, as I did last year, I wish you peace. At this time of year we are given a potent reminder that regardless of station or stature, race or religion, political affiliation or practice, if we are ever to reach the true meaning of the hope and light and love we gather together to celebrate, we will need to first, find peace.

Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas, Happy Kwanzaa and Happy New Year to you and yours.

Sherry Johnson

From our president: Education and Schooling

School Board members strive to support the achievement of all our students by providing the resources and opportunities that will promote student success. Each Board of Education is faced with questions, such as, “How do you know you have an effective school program? How do you best meet the needs of the students and the community?”



Mike Suffoletto

Thus, I recently was invited to weigh in on an article about school activities, and to consider a video related to the function and purpose of school. The article entitled, *High School Activities Have Become “All or Nothing” And It’s Unacceptable*, can be found at <https://grownandflown.com/too-many-high-school-activities/> This article strongly implies that students “need lives that go beyond spending double digit hours practicing sports and activities.” Research presented in the article finds a correlation between overscheduling and stress and anxiety in teens. The research indicated that many teens were having difficulty unwinding from their busy lives.

The article implies that schools play a huge part in this. It is true a certain level of stress is normal, and positive stress responses can actually help a student learn and grow. But, research has found that too much participation without enough down time can be toxic.

So, if true, the question must be asked, how do school board members opened a dialogue with parents, coaches, advisors, administrators and students to aid in finding a happy medium for our students?

The second was a video entitled *What is School For?* It can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PsLRgEYf9E> The implication is that the educational system needs to change. I can’t help but think of two famous education quotes connected to this topic. The first, a Chinese proverb, states, “If you give a

man a fish, you feed him for a day. If you teach the man to fish, you feed him for a lifetime”.

The second from Mark Twain says, “*I never let school interfere with my education.*” It seems that Mark Twain believed schooling is different from education and learning. And the Chinese believe that helping a person once is not as good as helping them learn how to help themselves. I admit there is room for debate regarding the educational system, but there should be no debate for the value of education. For education is the most important thing you can give someone. A strong education system helps people to improve their knowledge and to be successful in their lives. To be educated means more than to simply understand the material learned in school. One who is educated is one who can bring positive contributions to a society and who can adapt to the times.

The system may need a change, but our students still need to have their minds exposed to a wide range of subjects and all the ideas and knowledge that somehow provides each student with the skills, and developments which lead to a more stable and productive life.

Yes, Mr. Twain, there is thin line between education and schooling. If what schooling offers cannot be applied to solve societal problems, then, education has not taken place. If what schooling offers cannot instigate change in personal behavior, then, again, education has not occurred. Schooling makes you a functional person. Education makes you a well-rounded, active participant in the world around you.

Even if you do not agree with the article’s and video’s assertions, I believe they do offer a discussion piece. So, if your board is looking for a midyear retreat topic, these two items may just be what is needed.

On another note, on behalf of myself and the officers at MCSBA we wish everyone a joyful and happy holiday season.

Mike Suffoletto

SAVE THE DATES

Advocacy



MCSBA meets with lawmakers here on February 2 and returns to Albany for 2 days on March 4 - 5

MCSBA Board members, Superintendents, and Senior administrators please participate in these opportunities to meet with key legislative and education leaders to discuss our issues.

Registration information will follow soon. To learn more meanwhile, contact us at 328-1972 or Mary_Talbot@boces.monroe.edu.

Defending against attacks on social media

At the Information Exchange Committee’s November meeting, Douglas Gerhardt, Esq. from Harris Beach discussed how to defend school districts from social media attacks. He noted that there are limits to defending districts and their leaders (as public figures) from attacks on social media.

The legal criteria for defamation is difficult to meet if seeking damages. A higher bar exists for public officials, including district officials, because “by reason of notoriety of their achievements or the vigor and success with which they seek the public’s attention.... proof that defamatory falsehood was made with knowledge of its falsity or with reckless disregard for the truth” is necessary. Criticism of public official is permissible. However, harassment is not allowed if it creates a reasonable fear of physical injury for an individual.

Courts have supported an employee’s “obligation to honor the standards of behavior which an employer has the right to expect ... even during off-duty hours” and inappropriate behavior that affects the school can be actionable with discipline procedures even if it is not criminal or defamatory.



ABOVE: Information Exchange Chairs Jon Ottney (Pen) and Tammy Gurowski (Web) with presenter Douglas Gerhardt, Esq.



LEFT: Attorney Douglas Gerhardt speaking to Information Exchange Committee members.



LR: Staying inside the law when outside the classroom

During the November meeting of the Labor Relations Committee, Jennifer M. Schwartzott, Esq. of Bond, Schoeneck & King, and James E. Beyer, Esq., of Harris Beach PLLC, discussed how to stay inside the law when with students on field trips outside the classroom. They noted several areas where boards of education can assume liability with field trips, such as approval of trips, funding, insurance, room assignments, chaperones, transportation, special education issues, medications, and ethical matters. Boards were advised to develop policies for field trips, including links to curricula, supervision, transportation guidelines, permission slips, application of code of conduct, and flexibility to cancel or reschedule trips as needed.

ABOVE: Presenter Jennifer Schwartzott, Esq.; Labor Relations Committee Co-Chairs Irene Narotsky and Gary Bracken, and Presenter James Beyer, Esq.



RIGHT: Attorney James Beyer at the Labor Relations Committee.

MCSBA Members at NYSSBA



MCSBA Members who presided over learning sessions during the NYSSBA Convention included Barbara Babiarcz (Pen), Lisa Benati-Chidsey (Pen), Robert Cook (RH), Robert Dickson (B1), and Maureen Nupp (Fpt, B1).

LEFT: BOCES 1 Superintendent Dan White speaking to BOCES district superintendents during the NYSSBA Convention.

RIGHT: Kathy Graupman (Gre), Bill Maloney (Gre) and JoAnne Antonacci (B2).

BELOW LEFT: Spencerport Board Members Kate Czarniecki, President Gary Bracken, and Jody Gillette.

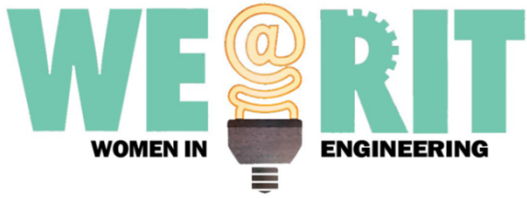
BELOW CENTER CAMEO: Presider Barbara Babiarcz (Pen).

BELOW RIGHT: Chuck Phillips, Gerry Maar, John Abbott—all of BOCES 2.

BOTTOM LEFT: Hilton Superintendent Casey Kosiorek and Board Member Brian O'Connor.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Honeoye Falls-Lima Board Member Gary Stottler (closest to camera) listening to presentation by HFL Superintendent Gene Mancuso.





4th Annual Engineering Open House for Girls

A free by-women-for-girls “buffet of engineering activities to explore”



Hundreds of girls in grades 5-9, plus their families and teachers, attended the 4th annual WE@RIT Engineering Open House on November 3.

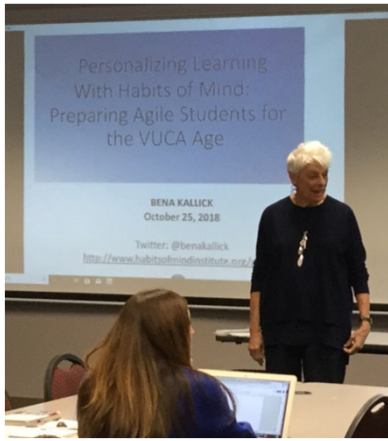
Each fall, WE@RIT (Women Engineering students at RIT’s Kate Gleason College of Engineering) hosts an open house for girls in grades 5 – 9 to offer them hands-on learning experiences in the many engineering programs offered at RIT.

At the 2018 fair, there were 25 activity stations for participants presented continuously from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm. The activities involved visiting girls in age appropriate experiences that introduced them to Biomedical Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Computer Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Industrial Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and Microelectronic Engineering.

The photos illustrate just a few of the many interactive displays prepared and presented by RIT women engineering students. Note the WE@RIT CAN DO IT (Rosy the Riveter) shirts worn by the presenters.

The event is sponsored by RIT and Verizon, with support also coming from Harris Corporation to pay for busing and a meal for students from schools where most students are eligible for free or reduced price meals.

To learn more about the Open House, visit www.rit.edu/kgcoe/women/ or contact Kathy Ehrlich-Scheffer, Director, WE@RIT, at keseen@rit.edu or 585-475-7028.



Regional education leaders investigate personalized learning

In October, 68 education leaders representing 24 school districts and two colleges attended a program co-sponsored by the Greater Rochester Teacher Center Network and the Genesee Valley ASCD entitled “Personalized Learning with Dr. Bena Kallick.” Dr. Kallick is co-author of *Students at the Center: Personalized Learning with Habits of Mind*.

The goal of personalized learning is for all students to become self-directed learners through the design and development of their learning experiences.

Dr. Kallick provided insight into personalized learning with a focus on a transformative model of personalization that puts students at the center and asks them to employ Habits of Mind. This learning model increases the student’s voice in their own learning and prepares them to navigate complexities in and out of the classroom.

According to Dr. Kallick, growing a personalized culture utilizes student voice, co-creation, social construction and self-discovery. During the session, opportunities were given to rethink traditional teacher and student roles and reexamine goal setting, lesson planning, assessment, and feedback practices. Table group discussions and collegial conversations focused upon establishing classrooms that prioritize student-centered learning and creating a personalized culture for students. Teachers had an opportunity to learn about their transforming role from being a lead learner to facilitator to coach in the classroom.



TOP: Dr. Bena Kallick leading discussion.

MIDDLE: Lynn Girolamo and Mike Titus, Technology Integration Teachers, Greece CSD.

BOTTOM: Cara Montrois, Teacher Center Director (WC); William Donahue, Math Consultant (B1); and Pat Mullikin, Tri-County Teacher Center Director.

Contributed by Lori Orologio (CC), Co-President, and Marguerite Dimgba (Gre), Member, of the GVASCD Board.

Remembering Jann Packard



Jann Packard, the first full-time Executive Director of MCSBA, died on November 22, 2018. MCSBA was created in January 1970 as a majority of eligible school districts approved the group’s proposed Constitution. Jann was appointed as full-time Executive Director in 1972. She was a member of the Pittsford School Board and a former President of that group. In MCSBA’s early years, the priorities were labor issues (due to the recent enactment of the Taylor Law), legislation, and regionalism. Jann helped the organization develop the cohesive approach to deal with all these issues that remains in place today. She also was responsible for the first annual *Facts & Figures* booklet that is still produced today. Jann retired in March 1986, but remained active in the Genesee Valley Presbytery for many years.

TOP ROW: NYS Assemblywoman Louise Slaughter, Mary Margaret Juers, and Jann Packard in Albany in 1983; Jann Packard with Congressman Frank Horton in 1983.

BOTTOM ROW: Robert Thompson (B2), John Washburn (Bri), Jann Packard, and Dr. Richard TenHaken with Congressman John LaFalce in 1983; Jann Packard in 2000.

Regional district clerks receive legal update, discuss efficiencies, review tracking of policy revisions, and board meeting issues that clerks might face

On November 15, clerks from school districts in and around Monroe County gathered for their fall seminar hosted by MCSBA. During the session:

Laura Purcell, Esq., Harris Beach PLLC, provided a legal update;

Jacob Pitch Khadze, eGovernance Coordinator at Board Docs, via a video conference, discussed how to tackle tasks efficiently;

District Clerk Patty Kelly (WI) led a discussion of Policy Revision Tracking;

MCSBA leaders and school board presidents acted out a tongue-in-cheek mock board meeting to address real issues and show how clerks can help boards prevent problematic situations (i.e., open meeting laws, parliamentary procedure, public input, etc.)

The planning committee for the conference included Cathy Andersen (EI), Cynthia Cushman (Web), Connie Nenni (Hol), Mary Torcello (CC), and Sarah Williams (Mt. Morris).



ABOVE: Attorney Laura Purcell reviewing legal updates with district clerks.

BELOW: School board members holding a mock meeting included Amy West (HFL), MCSBA President Mike Suffoletto (Web), Kathy Dillon (B2, CC), Gary Bracken (Spe), Amy Thomas (Pit), John Piper (Pen), and Mark Kokanovich (Bri).



*Best wishes for the coming year
from your MCSBA officers & staff:*

*Mike Suffoletto
Kathy Dillon
John Piper
John Abbott*

*Sherry Johnson
Beckie Schultz
Mary Talbot*

