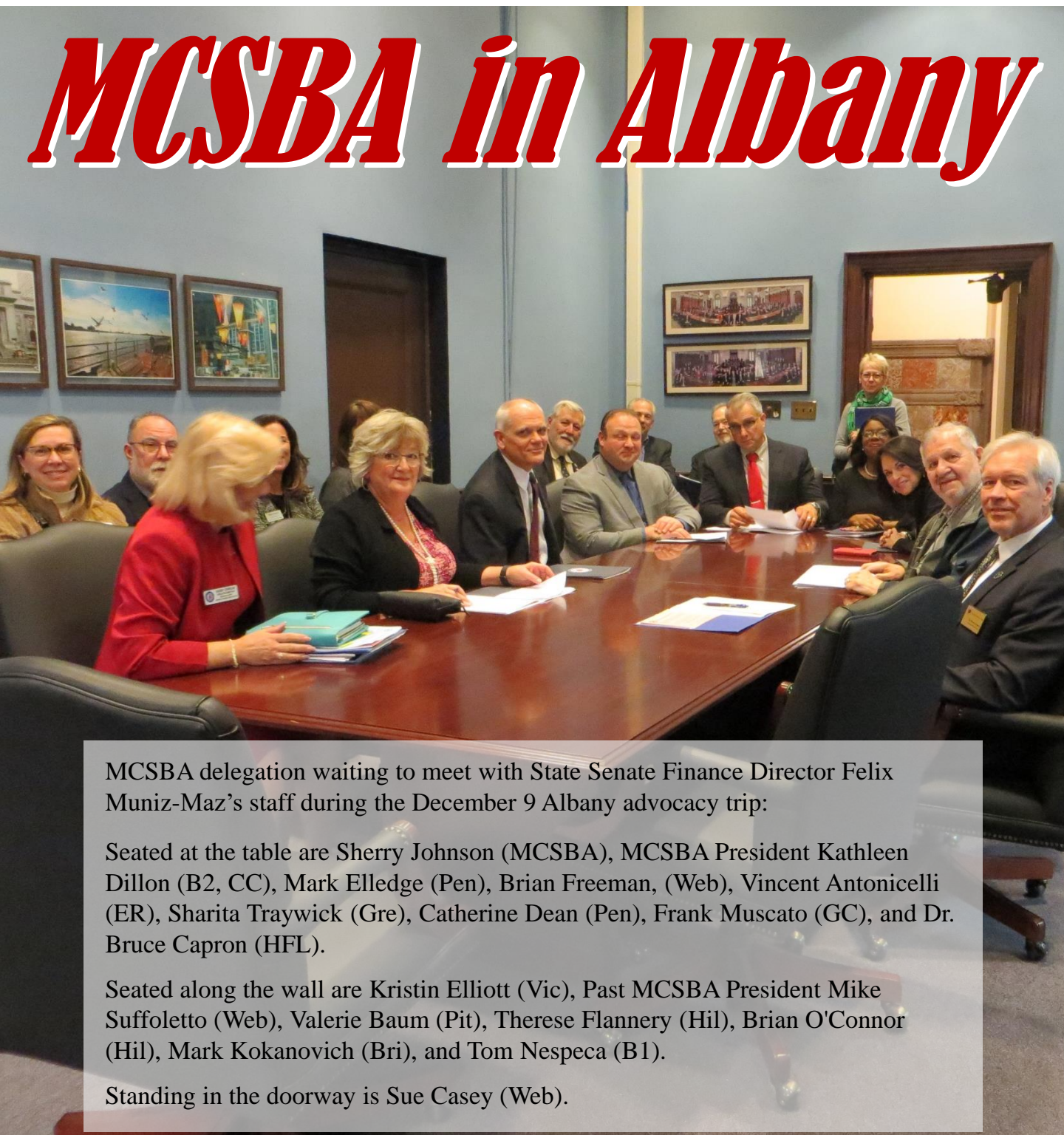


MCSBA in Albany



MCSBA delegation waiting to meet with State Senate Finance Director Felix Muniz-Maz's staff during the December 9 Albany advocacy trip:

Seated at the table are Sherry Johnson (MCSBA), MCSBA President Kathleen Dillon (B2, CC), Mark Elledge (Pen), Brian Freeman, (Web), Vincent Antonicelli (ER), Sharita Traywick (Gre), Catherine Dean (Pen), Frank Muscato (GC), and Dr. Bruce Capron (HFL).

Seated along the wall are Kristin Elliott (Vic), Past MCSBA President Mike Suffoletto (Web), Valerie Baum (Pit), Therese Flannery (Hil), Brian O'Connor (Hil), Mark Kokanovich (Bri), and Tom Nespeca (B1).

Standing in the doorway is Sue Casey (Web).



MONROE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION
220 Idlewood Road, Rochester, NY 14618
(585) 328-1972 www.mcsba.org

President – Kathleen Dillon, Monroe 2 – Orleans BOCES, Churchville-Chili CSD
Vice President – Amy Jo Thomas – Pittsford CSD
Past President – Mike Suffoletto, Webster CSD
Treasurer – John Abbott, Monroe 2 – Orleans BOCES
Executive Director - Sherry Johnson, Sherry_Johnson@boces.monroe.edu
Program Director – Beckie Schultz, Beckie_Schultz@boces.monroe.edu



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From our president: Stay Calm and Advocate!

It's that time of year when we begin to prepare for the upcoming budget season. Every year we are concerned with state aid, pending legislation and competing priorities. This year is no different.

What is the best way to move forward? Stay Calm and advocate!

On our advocacy trip to Albany this week we offered a few new ideas: let school districts access different funding streams to assist with mental health and safety and security needs; and consider changes to Mental Health/Insurance regulations to allow for additional services being offered in our schools. Looking at innovative ways to work within the existing funding stream and regulatory framework offers a different point of view for our legislators in a tough budget year.



Kathleen Dillon

Additionally, we need to continue to seek mental health and safety and security funding outside of the tax cap, sending a message that current funding fails to meet the increasing mental health and safety and security needs of our students. All of us want what's best for our students, but appropriate funding and regulatory reforms are needed to help school districts to meet these increasing challenges.

Finally, let's not forget the continuing need to advocate for mandate relief. We were promised mandate relief with the implementation of the tax cap. Not only have we not had relief, we have had more unfunded mandates thrust upon us. We need to just say no to any further unfunded mandates.

This budget year offers new challenges for us. With our continued advocacy we can impact the upcoming budget year. Reach out to your legislators, attend the legislative breakfast on February 8 and consider going to Albany on March 9-10. Our collective advocacy can make a difference!

Kathleen Dillon

Lesli Myers-Small appointed NYSED assistant commissioner

On November 5, the NYS Board of Regents appointed Dr. Lesli Myers-Small, Brockport Superintendent, to serve as Assistant Commissioner for Innovation and School Reform. In her new capacity, she will oversee initiatives to improve student outcomes in struggling school districts. Lesli has nearly 30 years of experience in public education. She was named superintendent of Brockport schools in 2012; previously she served as an assistant superintendent in Ithaca, as director of student and career support in Greece, and as a counselor and house administrator in the Rochester School District. Lesli is a graduate of Pittsford Mendon High School.

She has received many prestigious honors, including the Rochester Business Journal 40 Under 40, St. John Fisher Distinguished Alumni Award and Urban League of Rochester Educator Award.

RIGHT: At the December 4 MCSBA Executive Committee meeting, members congratulated Dr. Lesli Myers-Small on her appointment as an assistant commissioner and thanked her for her service to MCSBA. With her are Brockport Board President Terry Carbone and MCSBA President Kathleen Dillon.



From our executive director: Engaged & Informed Leadership Part 2

In the fall of 1787, a complex debate was ensuing in America. It was bitter, it was partisan and it threatened to permanently divide those who had recently fought side by side to be an independent nation from Great Britain just three short years prior. This debate extended until June of 1788 and was about our Constitution. It might be difficult now to think of reasons why there were so many issues related to ratifying our Constitution, but many there were. This was the first referendum for our new nation and the decision to form a central Federal government would, forever determine what the United States of America represents.



Sherry Johnson

This debate also resulted in the publication of 85 essays, now known as the Federalist Papers. Written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay, but published under the pseudonym “Publius”, meaning public, these essays were meant to inform and engage the citizenry to promote ratification of this draft constitution, while countering the information put out by those who called themselves “anti-federalists”.

One of the most debated of these many issues was that the original draft of the Constitution had no Bill of Rights contained within it. Many considered the entire document a failure because of this omission. Others worried about how power would be concentrated within such a Federal system, and how state powers would be diminished.

Madison is often referred to as the “Father of the Constitution” and his discussions in these essays were primarily about the inclusions of the separation of powers and the deliberate checks and balances on each of the branches of this new government. He wrote about how conflicting interests compete naturally in all societies and the way to prevent sway in government was by making it large enough so that one faction

could not overcome the public good through the Athenian principle of representation. Hamilton also highlighted the importance of heeding to the broader “public good” so as to be able to rise above what he called “interested or ambitious views”. He called out the dangers of a divided nation when states would compete against one another instead of working together. He also proposed a standing army for the common defense which was another major concern for anti-federalists. John Jay wrote about the tenets of a national foreign policy and treaties with other countries, but also the need to protect what he considered to be the weakest of the branches of the new government, the Judicial. Hamilton defended the Judicial by citing that the Constitution must be regarded by federal judges as the “fundamental law”. And, at the same time that they were writing to express the reasons that all good men should ratify this new draft constitution, these statesmen were privately concerned that it might not be strong enough to protect against its demise.

And that was the biggest take away that I gained from reading these papers. While these three eloquently used civil discourse to try and allay the concerns of those who were against or undecided about ratification, they were also empathetic. They understood that this grand design could be ruined by faction, or intolerance, or apathy, but adamantly believed it was the surest path to unite us as a nation. They deliberately structured this new government to make sure that a balance of power could be maintained with the conviction that patriots would never allow outside forces to undo what so many fought and died for. Hamilton referred to this as an “energetic” government that would work to protect against a weak and divided nation.

The qualities that we, today, consider to be exemplary leadership, began in this country with these men and all those who stepped up to ratify our Constitution that you take an oath to defend and protect. And it requires all of us to demand that same principled leadership today or risk losing both our anchor and our rudder.

Sherry Johnson



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

*Kathleen Dillon
Amy Jo Thomas
Mike Suffoletto
John Abbott*

*Sherry Johnson
Beckie Schultz
Mary Talbot*

Juuling & E-cigarettes create health issues for students



During their November meeting, members of the Information Exchange Committee heard a presentation about JUULing and E-cigarette use and its effects on student health. Presenters included a group from the Wester School District - Janine Sanger, Coordinator of Health and Wellness; Neil Flood, Director of Safety and Security; David Herrle, School Resource Officer; and N. Sanger, a recent graduate from the district – as well as Alexandra Popovici, Community Engagement Manager, American Lung Association.

Presenters discussed the operation and evolution of e-cigarettes, as well as emerging trends and devices to conceal use; rising youth smoking rates; risks posed by nicotine and the propensity for users to use other drugs; carcinogens in e-cigarette flavorings; the irreversible lung damage by flavorings and vaping; the use of social media in marketing e-cigarettes and drugs; and the importance of parent education about products and their use. Webster CSD offers training for parents twice a year and is offering training for teachers to help identify use.



LEFT: David Herrle, Janine Sanger, I.E. Committee Co-Chairs Nancy Pickering (Hil) and Valerie Baum (Pit), Alexandra Popovici, N. Sanger, and Neil Flood.

BELOW: David Herrle sharing data with committee members.



Negotiations 101



At the November meeting of the Labor Relations Committee, Karlee Bolanos, Esq., Partner, Bolanos Lowe PLLC, provided an introduction for new board members (review for more senior members) of the Taylor Law, statutory phases of bargaining, the role of the school board in negotiations, issues board members might face during negotiations, and best practices for successful outcomes.

LEFT: L.R. Co-Chairs Amy West (HFL) and Gary Bracken (Spe) with presenter Karlee Bolanos, Esq. seen in front of committee members attending the meeting

Meeting with officials in Albany

RIGHT: Dr. Bruce Capron (HFL), Catherine Dean (Pen), member of the Governor’s staff, Assistant Secretary of Education for the Governor Dan Fuller, and Mark Kokanovich (Bri) discussing issues. Other staff members are visible in the background.



LEFT: After a conference call with Georgia Ascuitto, Chief of Staff for Senate Education Committee Chair Shelley Mayer are seen Kristin Elliott (Vic), Mark Elledge (Pen), MCSBA President Kathleen Dillon, (B2, CC), Tom Nespeca (B1), Mike Suffoletto (Web), Brian Freeman (Web), Vincent Antonicelli (ER).

RIGHT: At a meeting with Senate staffers Michael Swanson, Director of Education Policy, and Amanda Godkin, Esq., Senior Council, both of whom work for Andrea Stewart -Cousins, Temporary President of the Senate, are seen: Catherine Dean (Pen), Frank Muscato (GC), Dr. Bruce Capron (HFL), Amanda Godkin, Michael Swanson, Sherry Johnson (MCSBA), MCSBA President Kathleen Dillon(B2, CC), Mark Elledge (Pen), Brian Freeman (Web), and Sharita Traywick (Gre) at the table. Along wall are Kristin Elliott (Vic), Sue Casey (Web), Mike Suffoletto (Web), and Valerie Baum (Pit).



RIGHT: Seen arriving in Albany are Mark Elledge (Pen), Frank Muscato (GC), and Sherita Traywick (Gre).



Local meetings with lawmakers

MCSBA members met with NYS Senator Joseph Robach in his Greece office on November 12 to discuss issues such as -

- * Many bills involving unfunded mandates that are awaiting the governor's signature;
- * Appreciation for the senator's support of legislation to raise the BOCES superintendent salary cap, stagger school building surveys, allow for a TRS reserve, and disconnect APPR from testing;
- * NYS Senate roundtables about the Foundation Aid formula;
- * Lack of funding for school district mental health services for students and families;
- * Transportation staffing issues as well as teacher and substitute teacher shortages;
- * Senator Robach's bill S.3381 to allow unpaid leave for domestic violence victims; and
- * Bill S.4242 requiring at least one school nurse in every school building in Big 5 schools.



ABOVE: Mark Hilburger (Hil), Beckie Schultz (MCSBA), Sherita Traywick (Gre), Senator Joseph Robach, Sherry Johnson (MCSBA), Chris Dailey (GC), Franck Muscato (GC), and Casey Kosiorek (Hil).

Meetings in local offices with Assembly Members Harry Bronson and Jamie Romeo were also held in November to discuss similar matters. Assemblywoman Romeo noted the looming NYS budget deficit and the fact that education and healthcare make up the largest pieces of the budget, and may be areas where the Governor seeks cost savings in his 2020 budget proposal.

Assemblyman Bronson recognizes that the increasing mental health needs districts face without a proper funding stream are problematic and sees the issue also in higher education. He also requested more information regarding cost barriers for establishing pre-school programs in districts where they currently do not exist.

9th ROC2Change summit combats racism

Hundreds of high school students from across Monroe County met at Monroe 2 – Orleans BOCES for the 9th ROC2Change summit organized by students to discuss racism, as well as non-racist and anti-racist behaviors. This summit was hosted by

students from Pittsford's Mendon and Sutherland High Schools, who selected the theme, "The Power of One" to make a difference. Students developed and ran the program, including interactive group breakout sessions.



District clerks meet

On November 14, District Clerks from our region, in and beyond Monroe County, met to discuss issues of common concern. Among the topics discussed were:

* The 2020 Census- Complete Count

Presentation: How School Districts Can Help & Why it is Important to Your District – by Susan Perry, Partnership Specialist for the NYS Regional Census Center, Field Division, U.S. Census; and Sherry Johnson, Executive Director, MCSBA;

* **Legal Update** – including Vote Record Retention, Safety Plans, Immunizations, Red Flag Policies, DASA Update – by Laura Purcell, Esq., Harris Beach PLLC.

In addition, the agenda included, as always, a session of sharing questions, concerns, issues raised by individual participants.

The Clerk Conference Planning Committee included Kristen Adler (ER), Cynthia Cushman (Web), Connie Nenni (Hol), Mary Torcello (CC), and Sarah Williams (Mt.Morris)).

TOP: Presenters Susan Perry and Laura Purcell, Esq.

MIDDLE: Conference Planning Team Members Connie Nenni (Hol), Mary Torcello (CC), Cynthia Cushman (Web), Sara Williams (Mt. M.), and Kristen Adler (ER).

BOTTOM: Some of the 19 clerks in attendance at the conference.





Join colleagues to take our message to NYS officials



MCSBA Legislative Breakfast

Saturday, February 8 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.
DoubleTree Inn

Register for either or both events:
Call 585-328-1972

Email Mary_Talbot@boces.monroe.edu.

Meet with members of our delegation
to Albany to discuss issues important
to your school district and its students.

MCSBA Trek to Albany

Monday – Tuesday, March 9 – 10
Bushnell's Basin Park 'n Ride

