



MCSBA members meet with officials in Albany



In the NYS Education Department Building between meetings with SED officials are Peter Forsgren (Fpt), Maureen Nupp (B1, Fpt), Nancy Pickering (Hil), Sherita Traywick (Gre), Joyce Kostyk (Fpt), and Beckie Schultz (MCSBA). More on pages 4 – 5.



President – Mike Suffoletto, Webster CSD
Vice President – Kathy Dillon, Monroe 2 – Orleans BOCES, Churchville-Chili CSD
Past President – John Piper, Penfield CSD
Treasurer – John Abbott, Monroe 2 – Orleans BOCES
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**Thursday, April 11, 2019 8:00 am – 12:00 pm
DoubleTree Inn**

**PROTECTING STUDENT AND EMPLOYEE PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE
INFORMATION AND HANDLING A BREACH OF THE INFORMATION**
(Changes to Ed Law 2-d; FERPA/IDEA/FOIL in light of these new amendments)

**SCHOOL DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SEXTING AND SEXUAL
HARASSMENT IN THE ME TOO ERA**



ABOVE: At the February 8 media conference are Sherry Johnson (MCSBA), Senator Charles Schumer, and Canandaigua Superintendent Jamie Farr.

Schumer media conference:

**More education,
legislation needed on
sextortion schemes**

On February 8, Senator Charles Schumer held a media conference in Canandaigua to announce his proposal to make student-targeted sextortion a federal crime. He also asked the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to work with school districts to help protect children from online predators. The senator noted that just in July – August 2018, more than 13,000 reports of this crime were reported to the FBI, and that since online predators often reside outside local jurisdictions, local law enforcement is hindered in attempts to identify and apprehend offenders.

Schumer’s proposal would criminalize using interstate telecommunications systems to coerce a victim to produce sexually intimate visuals; extort a victim using sexually intimate visuals; or publish a victim’s personally identifiable information (including sexually intimate visuals) with the intent to harm. It would also provide the FBI with additional enforcement resources, and train and equip state and local personnel to provide technical assistance to address cybercrimes against individuals.



Sherry Johnson

From our executive director: School Board Service Under Siege

I was elected to the Board of Education of my school district in 1997. I chose to run when a board seat was open due to a retirement. I was very involved in our school district on behalf of our two sons, so I felt that I knew a lot about the district and how it functioned. Once elected, I found that I really knew very little.

The vast amount of information needed to govern a district was overwhelming, but I took on the challenge to learn as much as I could in as few months as possible. Those few months turned into a term which ultimately turned into six terms and I was ready for the 7th, when I was honored to be hired to serve as the MCSBA executive director. So, what has changed since the time I was first elected to serve my community as a board trustee 22 years ago and now?

What hasn't changed is the structure of Board governance. Local elections are considered "grass roots" because those who serve their communities do so at the most accountable level without the layers of bureaucracy that is built into administering larger governmental institutions. School district budgets are developed by school board members with their superintendents and business officials and are still the only budgets voted on directly by their communities. School board meetings are held in public and, while not required, almost all boards allow for public comment at their meetings. School buildings are open to the public after school hours and many continue to serve as the hub for community activities.

What has changed is the authority for local boards of education to do the work that the community has elected them to do. In 1997, a school board could unilaterally pick when they wanted to present their budgets to their communities. This was important because late state budgets were becoming the norm and not the exception.

Superintendents could work directly with their boards to decide programmatic and instructional changes and where support should be directed. There were no charter schools, No Child Left Behind had not been legislated, there was no requirement for Academic Intervention Services, no required board training, no APPR evaluation matrix, no auditor for every business function, and no tax cap.

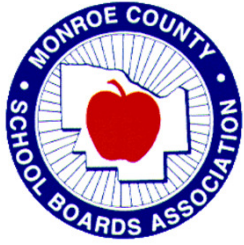
The exceptional amount of mandates that school districts have acquired over my time, most of them underfunded or not funded at all, have made board members into compliance officers instead of elected officials with the autonomy that has been legislated to them. By Education Law, Finance Law and other statutes, board of education members, as a corporate body, are the fiduciary agents of school districts. They own the school district buildings and the Board President is considered to be the CFO. Boards are also tasked, by law, to hire and evaluate a competent CEO, the superintendent, to run the school district and manage the approved budget.

But now, boards have their hands tied as they try to respond to the needs of their students, the will of the community who elect them and the fiscal balance that they must maintain. On top of costly mandates are the manipulations of the Foundation Aid formula and a tax cap tied to the CPI. While the Governor and other pundits argue that the per pupil cost is nearly double that of other states, in my office is a document that grows each year from the new laws that directly drive these costs.

Our public school districts accept all children and support them in many ways beyond academics to help them become thriving, participating citizens. School boards accept this daunting responsibility. But, they can't do this on capped and constrained resources. Public education is a fundamental right of our democracy and while states, constitutionally, are the primary providers of funding, the federal government has inserted itself in such a way that they also must increase the financial support necessary for the additional requirements that they ask of our school districts.

Now, more than ever, we must be the collective voice for the local authority of all school board members to be able to work with their communities to provide what is right and necessary and deserving for each and every student who enters our doors.

Sherry Johnson

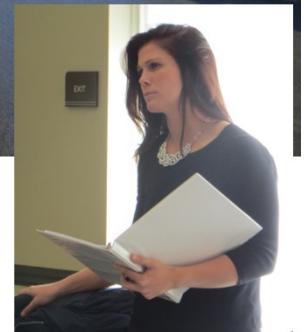


MCSBA in Albany

RIGHT: Meeting with media representatives before boarding the bus to Albany on March 4 were Sherita Traywick (Gre), Sherry Johnson (MCSBA), Nancy Pickering (Hil), Mark Kokanovich (Bri).



FAR RIGHT: Briana McNamee, Governmental Relations Representative at NYSSBA, provided an update on current issues for MCSBA advocates upon their arrival in Albany.



BELOW:

Bo Wright (RH), Assemblyman Harry Bronson, Sherry Johnson (MCSBA), and Bob Cook (RH).

While in Albany, MCSBA members learned –

The Governor has stated that he will not sign a budget without a permanent tax cap written in it. He has also stated for the first time in his tenure that a “good budget” was better than an “on time” budget. That is important because the raises given to the Legislature (and are currently being litigated) will not be implemented unless there is an on time budget.



Legislators are concerned that there will not be an on-time budget because of the fiscal issues for the state and the Governor’s demand for the tax cap in its current form. The Assembly and Senate could not agree on revenues so the Comptroller made the determination. His number is only \$190 million over the Governor’s proposal and he recommended that those extra dollars go into the reserve because he predicts an economic “downturn” sometime next year.



During meetings with law makers, MCSBA representatives discussed relief from the tax levy cap, especially removal of the 60% supermajority for an override, and the possible addition of a TRS exemption. Members also sought a salary increase for BOCES district superintendents and pilot exemptions.

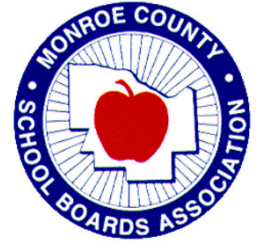


LEFT ABOVE: Meeting with Assemblywoman Jamie Romeo were Valerie Baum (Pit), Mark Kokanovich (Bri), Damon Buffum (Fpt), and Mark Elledge (Pen).

LEFT BELOW: Mark Elledge (Pen), Damon Buffum (Fpt), Assemblyman Stephen Hawley, John Abbott (B2, ED), Assemblyman Mark Johns, Nancy Pickering (Hil), Sherita Traywick (Gre), and Sherry Johnson (MCSBA).



MCSBA in Albany



LEFT: Alex Trikalinos, Education Specialist, Office of Teacher and Leader Effectiveness, NYSED (Upper Left), and Brian Cechnicki, Director of Education Finance, NYSED (Lower Left), met with Joyce Kostyk (Fpt), Sherita Traywick (Gre), Peter Forsgren (Fpt), Maureen Nupp (Fpt), and Nancy Pickering (Hil).

BELOW: John Abbott (B2, EI), Assembly Education Committee Chief of Staff John Collassi, Sherry Johnson (MCSBA), Valerie Baum (Pit), Bo Wright (RH), and Bob Cook (RH).

Alex Trikalinos of the SED provided an update on workgroup teacher and principal evaluations and how evaluations would work if the APPR changes were signed by the Governor. If the APPR changes were passed, evaluations would have more flexibility, but tests would still need to have SED approval.

Brian Cechnicki of the SED discussed the “building by building” per pupil statements. He noted that a way to streamline this reporting had yet to be found, and that the reports would be published indexes explaining what the numbers represent versus using those statistics in a punitive report.

In the Governor’s Office, Deputy Secretary for Education Dan Fuller was unable to meet, but an Excelsior Fellow named Adaobi Oguagha did. She indicated that our concerns echoed those of others who had visited: NYSSBA, NYSUT and NYSCOSS.

Members met with the recently named Director of the Senate Education committee, Georgia Ascitutto, who stated that the Senate Education Committee Chair Shelley Mayer planned to reject the consolidation of the expense based aids, introduce a TRS reserve bill and reject many of the Governor’s education proposals.



RIGHT ABOVE: Bob Cook (RH), Bo Wright (RH), Beckie Schultz (MCSBA), Assembly Education Committee Chair Michael Benedetto, Sherry Johnson (MCSBA), John Abbott (B2, EI), and Valerie Baum (Pit).

RIGHT BELOW: Maureen Nupp (B1, Fpt), Joyce Kostyk (Fpt), Deputy Education Secretary for Governor staff member Adaobi Oguagha, Mark Kokanovich (Bri), and Valerie Baum (Pit).





Labor Relations Committee looks at issues with NYS minimum wage and bus driver shortage

During the February 27 meeting of the MCSBA Labor Relations Committee, members heard from local administrators about issues stemming from the NYS minimum wage law as well as the shortage of school bus drivers.

MINIMUM WAGE IMPACT

Lisa Ryan, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations for Monroe One BOCES, reviewed the impact of the 2018 minimum wage increases and employee groups affected by the changes. She also described potential impacts of the rate changes will have on negotiations and steps districts have taken to mitigate increased costs.

BUS DRIVER SHORTAGE: CAUSES AND ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES

Dr. Bruce Capron, Assistant Superintendent for Business & Operations, and Bill Harvey, Director of Transportation, both at Honeoye Falls-Lima CSD, led a discussion of the causes of the current bus driver shortage and possible solutions involving advocacy. Among their comments were the following:

- Monroe County districts collectively have 180 vacancies for school bus drivers.
- Demands for bus service have expanded: more charter schools, more sport participation, and more homeless and foster students – mean more busing.
- Barriers to obtaining drivers include the mandated driver certification that takes almost two months from the time a driver is hired.
- Challenges to retaining drivers include their ability to earn more in the private sector under less demanding circumstances.
- Sandwich boards, banners, social media, and word of mouth appear to be the most effective advertisement tools for recruitment. Finder’s fees and signing bonuses have been effective in the private sector.
- Since transportation costs are reimbursed by NYS at approximately 75%, potential changes to service aids pose a significant risk for school districts and should be an advocacy priority.
- Minimum wage increases, proposed stop-arm cameras and new driver training regulations all present potential challenges to filling shortages.
- Potential innovations under consideration include shared positions and increased benefits and salary.



TOP: Labor Relations Committee Co-Chair Gray Bracken (Spe) with presenters Dr. Bruce Capron (HFL), Bill Harvey (HFL), and Lisa Ryan (B1).

LEFT: Some of the participants in the February Labor Relations Committee meeting.

Strengthening Relationships and Repairing Harm

During their March meeting, Information Exchange Committee members heard from a panel from the Churchville-Chili Central School District describing their program responsible for “Strengthening Relationships and Repairing Harm.”

Panelists included Lori Orologio, Superintendent and 2018-2019 MCCOSS President; Amanda Puleo, Communication Coordinator and 2018 President of Greater Rochester Professional School Communicators Group; Mary Leach, NGA House Administration; and high school seniors Asha Charles, Mariama Woods, and Savannah Perez.

Lori Orologio briefly described how and why the Churchville-Chili district embarked on restorative practices, noting that their work began in this area before DASA was in place with a Protect and Respect Committee which was then integrated with DASA requirements. Surveys developed by the district were instrumental in understanding their school culture and informing the work of the DASA committee. In 2016, students joined the committee assisting in planning school events and leading relationship circles.

The district initially worked with PiRI (www.pirirochester.org), a nonprofit organization that specializes in restorative initiatives, to understand the practices and train district staff.

The district’s goal is “To support through training in restorative practices the development of safe, caring schools where all students and staff feel they belong and are valued and where learning is the priority”. The district’s code of conduct was modified to include restorative practices and an early return from suspensions if all parties participated and restorative practices were successfully utilized.

Mary Leach noted that the Relationship Circles could be lengthy and emotional for participants. She indicated that the same practices could be used to address conflicts between staff members, between students, and between students and staff.



TOP: Churchville-Chili’s Mary Leach, Amanda Puleo, Asha Charles, Mariama Woods, Savannah Perez, and Lori Orologio.

ABOVE: Churchville-Chili seniors Mariama Woods, Savannah Perez, and Asha Charles speaking to Information Exchange Committee members.

The district uses relationship and community building circles as part of its everyday practices. Peace circles are used when conflict occurs or to repair harm done to other individuals if needed. Discussion of the impact of people’s actions involved in a conflict makes harm more real and yields more productive outcomes.

Senior high students Asha Charles, Savannah Perez, and Mariama Woods discussed relationship circles they have led with staff, elementary students and middle school students and how each differed. They noted that the middle school level circles focused on leadership development and preparing students to join the DASA committee in the future, as current students graduated.

Helping our students who are coping with poverty:



It is common knowledge that good nutrition is critical to good health and success at school. Children who don't get enough to eat often have trouble concentrating, lower academic achievement, difficulty interacting with peers, and lower graduation rates. Foodlink, our region's not-for-profit food bank, seeks to support students in many ways. Children are served as part of the distribution network Foodlink has developed with hundreds of agencies—but there are two major Foodlink initiatives that serve students directly: **BackPack Program™** and **School Pantries**.

Tens of thousands of children in our 10-county area receive free or reduced-price lunch at school. But when school is closed during weekends and holidays, many of those children go hungry.

The BackPack Program provides children at risk of food insecurity with bags of nutritious food each weekend, when school meals are no longer available. Children receive food they can discreetly take home and easily prepare on their own. The bags typically weigh about five pounds and contain items from all the food groups (according to MyPlate.gov). Foodlink is currently working with 80 schools in 9 different counties (*Monroe, Wayne, Ontario, Seneca, Yates, Livingston, Allegany, Genesee, Orleans*) to provide the BackPack Program. In Monroe County, the BackPack Program serves students in the Brockport, Churchville-Chili, East Rochester, Greece, and Rochester School Districts.

Foodlink is also addressing the issue of childhood hunger through a new school pantry initiative, providing food for the entire family. Having a pantry right at school helps fill a gap by making access to healthy foods convenient and consistent. Foodlink is currently working with the Greece and Rochester School Districts to support school pantries.

To learn more, contact **Emily Diaz**, Member Services Capacity Coordinator, Foodlink, at ediaz@foodlinkny.org, or visit http://foodlinkny.org/fight_hunger/backpack-program/#tab-1



Percentage of Students in Monroe 1 and Monroe 2 – Orleans BOCES School Districts Who Live in Poverty

% OF STUDENTS LIVING IN POVERTY	# OF DISTRICTS
Less than 10%	1
10% - 20%	5
21% - 30%	4
31% - 40%	2
41% - 50%	3
More than 50%	5
Total Districts	20

The data indicate that 25% of the component districts of Monroe 1 and Monroe 2 – Orleans BOCES serve populations with more than 50% of their students living in poverty.

And 50% of these same districts serve populations with 31% or more of their students living in poverty.

SOURCE for poverty figures: NYS ED website. To learn more, go to <https://data.nysed.gov/>

WHAT IS YOUR DISTRICT DOING TO SUPPORT YOUR STUDENTS DEALING WITH POVERTY?

If you have a program you think might be of interest to other districts, please forward information to MCSBA and we will share it in a future issue of News Scope.