



Law Conference Updates District Leaders



From Policy During the Pandemic to Consequences of COVID -19: What District Leaders Should Know as School Returns This Fall!

On the 24th of September, 37 school board members and administrators from 17 school districts attended the MCSBA – Monroe County Bar Center for Education to learn more about issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This conference continues a 30+ - year partnership between MCSBA and the Monroe County Bar to update school district leaders once or twice a year about legal matters affecting public education.

Pictured above are presenters Anne M. McGinnis, Esq., Ph.D.; Stacey Brindisi; Lynda M. Van Coske, Esq.; Sara E. Visingard, Esq.; and Gail M. Norris, Esq.

More on page 6.

News Scope

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October 2020 INDEX

Law conference updates district leaders	1
From our president	2
From our executive director	3
COAC meets	4
Member district officers meet	4
Legislative Committee Report	4
Information Exchange Committee Report	5
Law conference updates district leaders	6
Challenger Trip to Mars Goes Virtual	7
Relationships + Connection = Learning	7
MCSBA Fiscal Training Workshop	8

From our president: A Unique Time for BOE Members

This has been an unprecedented time in education, let alone in history. As I can surely attest, the current challenges in public education are beyond what any BOE member imagined when taking the oath of office. But these challenges represent an opportunity for our leadership.

The past several months have presented each of us with a chance to view our roles in a different light. We have been an integral part of a temporary solution to provide education to our students in an uncharted way while providing encouragement and hope for a better tomorrow. And we will all be involved in the “reimagining” of public education as a result.

In the August *News Scope*, I reflected that we as board members, and representatives and leaders of our communities, must be unified in our approach to doing what is best for our kids. We have to put politics aside and work together in solidarity as a team, focused on providing stability for our kids and schools during a time of uncertainty.

I want to reiterate this message as we face another significant challenge this year. The social issues in Rochester and across our nation are impacting our roles as BOE members. Our superintendents will need BOE support in their pledge against racism and all forms of hatred in the same steadfast approach demonstrated while planning the safe reopening of schools. How we choose to actively represent all students will be the legacy we create within our individual districts.

It is clear we have our work cut out for us this year, but with the help of professional development offerings through MCSBA, and solving problems collaboratively, we will become better role models and leaders for all students.

As we prepare for the challenges of this unique year, I am inspired by the wise words of the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and how they may be applied to the role of a Board of Education member today:

“Whatever you choose to do, leave tracks. And that means, don’t do just for yourself because in the end, it’s not going to be fully satisfying. I think you will want to leave the world a little better for you’re having lived. And there’s no satisfaction that a person can gain from just what people call turning over a [buck] that’s equal to the satisfaction that you get from knowing that you have made another’s life, your community, better for your effort.”

As a Board of Education member, embrace this moment in history to leave tracks!



Amy Thomas

Amy Jo Thomas

From our executive director: **THANK YOU!!**

Dear Members,

We have run out of exclamatory words to describe all of the events that have occurred since March. Simply through the magnitude of our experiences, these have all been overused to the point of cliché. But, there have been two words that you, in your role, have not heard hardly at all. Those two words are thank you. So, I want to spend this column to provide for what others could have, or should have said to all of you for these efforts and more.

- * For figuring out, literally in one weekend, what would be needed to move every student in your district to remote learning; *thank you!*
- * For reallocating resources in an already constrained budget to provide the necessary materials for the continuity of learning for all students; *thank you!*
- * For redefining how to address meal delivery to make sure that, not just those required to receive free school meals, but all students could access school prepared meals; *thank you!*
- * For finding creative supports for students and staff to help keep in them engaged and connected to one another and school; *thank you!*
- * For continuing to lead and govern by adopting and adapting to technology for board meetings, budget hearings, candidate nights, and retreats in order to remain transparent and available to your communities, *thank you!*
- * For helping grieving students and families find ways to celebrate the loss of significant life events like spring sport seasons, music concerts, plays, art shows, proms and graduation, *thank you!*
- * For providing the resources for a totally unexpected, full absentee ballot vote for school district budget and school board elections; *thank you!*
- * For figuring out the requirements from a myriad of executive orders that provided confusing and moving guidance on how to do your due diligence on behalf of students and your district; *thank you!*
- * For listening to parents and others as they challenged, and continue to challenge any and all of the decisions that you have had to make regarding these executive orders; *thank you!*
- * For working collaboratively with each other, Dr. Mendoza and other county leaders to make the very best decisions on behalf of students and staff, *thank you!*

I am so humbly honored and grateful for the opportunity to lead an organization that supports such passionate and dedicated leaders for the children in our MCSBA member communities. *Thank you!*



Sherry Johnson

Sherry Johnson

Churchville-Chili cuts ribbon to open new pool.



After several years of study and committee work, the CCCSD Board, Superintendent, students and staff, celebrated the opening of their new pool facility on Saturday, September 19. With student athletes displaying their talents in the aquatic center, Board President Dr. Cheryl Repass welcomed everyone and reviewed the timeline of the project which also included a new track, a synthetic turf field, stadium upgrades and a new athletic entrance. Board members then handed students the scissors to cut the ribbon that officially opened the facility. MCSBA Executive Director, Sherry Johnson was invited to attend the ceremony as a former C-C board member who was also a part of the initial study for the improvements.

LEFT: Churchville-Chili leaders Kristen Brumbaugh, Amy Wilson, Steve Hogan, Leon Tucker, Kathleen Dillon (MCSBA Past President), Superintendent Lori Orologio, and Board President Dr. Cheryl Repass.

COAC meets

MCSBA's Communications Outreach Advisory Committee (COAC) conducted its first meeting of the school year on August 24 via Zoom. The COAC charge is to develop information and/or programs that could be used by member districts and their communities to further inroads or respond to the broader public about the value of public education. Members of the committee are appointed by the MCSBA president annually.

At the August meeting, COAC members brainstormed ideas for talking points that could be used by member districts on issues surrounding the re-opening of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. Those attending are seen in the screen shot at the right.



TOP: Sherry Johnson, Beckie Schultz, Sue Casey (Web), and Jo Anne Antonacci (B2).
MIDDLE: Kim McCluski (B1), Kathy Dillon (B2, CC), Amy West (HFL), and Mark Kokanovich (Bri).
BOTTOM: Amy Thomas (Pit), Catherine Dean (Pen), Kathleen Graupman (Gre), and Dr. Lesli Myers-Small (Roc).

Member district officers meet

Presidents and vice presidents of member district boards of education participated in the first Board Leadership meeting of this school year on September 9 to discuss issues of common concern. Seen below are some of the participants.



Legislative Committee approves mission, identifies 2020-21 issues

•Under the leadership of Co-Chairs Matt Metras (WI) and Valerie Baum (Pit), Legislative Committee members on September 9 reviewed the committee's mission statement and agreed to approve it as written. They also shared legislative issues important to their districts and identified the following priorities:

- Funding at both the state and federal levels for public education;
- Mandate relief- continuing to educate local and state leaders;
- Relief for COVID-19 Costs- Extending FEMA reimbursements, costs for additional substitutes, PPE and cleaning supplies;
- Building relationships with new legislators after the November elections and educating them about public education needs and financial burdens.

Members also reviewed existing MCSBA position papers and talking points. It was determined that several of them need revisions related to COVID-19 costs and removal of references to APPR. Office staff will complete these revisions and return the edited papers to the committee for approval during the October committee meeting. It was also determined that the position papers on mandates and school choice require extensive revisions, so sub-committees will be convened to make the appropriate changes.



ABOVE: 2020-2021 Legislative Committee Co-Chairs Matt Metras (WI) and Valerie Baum (Pit) at the September 9 committee meeting.

2020-2021 Information Exchange Committee begins work.

On September 23, Information Committee Chair Tammy Gurowski (Web) led members led discussions leading to the approval of committee goals for the coming year as well as identifying topics for the committee’s remaining sessions. The following issues will be discussed during the 2020-2021 school year:

Also at the meeting, several administrators shared reflections on virtual learning based on their experiences this past spring, as well as plans for moving forward. Presenters included Dr. Deborah Baker, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, (Bri); Karen Finter, Director 7-12 Instruction (WI); Christina Miga Director K-6 Instruction (WI); and Karen Spillman, Director of K-12 Learning and Staff Development (Hil).

Each speaker reflected on several aspects of the transition to remote learning, highlighting both challenges and celebrations that advanced student and staff learning. Among their comments were the following:

- Assistant Superintendents for Instruction across the Monroe County collaborated at weekly meetings. Learning from each other lessened the monumental task of transitioning to a remote learning environment essentially overnight.
- Districts were in different places with regard to 1:1 implementation of technology. Gaps were immediately obvious and in some cases were complicated by supply chain issues and/or the need to dismantle and redeploy technology from within the district.
- Integration of technology into instruction rapidly advanced across all teaching experience levels as did administrations skill with asynchronous, virtual professional development.
- Staff’s creativity and teaching toolboxes expanded in remote formats. They strived to make lessons relevant and meaningful to raise rigor and student engagement.
- Social emotional learning was a heavy focus in remote learning and was essential for student engagement especially with the short transition time to remote learning.

- Adjusting PD into shorter, manageable segments was beneficial and reduced staff stress.
- Parents also benefited from support with technology and tips for managing their students’ learning. Communication and consistency were important in advancing the quality of remote learning and reducing parents stress levels.
- Districts will benefit from and build on positive changes in the classroom and with instruction that resulted from the pandemic.



TOP LEFT: Presenting on ‘Reflections on Virtual Learning: Impacts on the classroom looking back and moving forward’ were (l to r): Karen Spillman (Hil), Karen Finter (WI), Deb Baker (Bri), and Chirstina Miga (WI).



ABOVE: Some of the participants in the September 23 meeting of the Information Exchange Committee.

RIGHT: MCSBA Executive Director Sherry Johnson speaking to committee members.

Law conference focuses on policy during the pandemic and consequences of COVID-19

During the MCSBA – Monroe County Bar Center for Education law conference held on September 24, participants received legal guidance on the following topics:

WHAT THE NEW TITLE IX REGULATIONS MEAN FOR SCHOOLS

Gail M. Norris, Esq., Bond, Schoeneck, & King PLLC, reviewed what the new Title IX regulations mean for schools when a sexual misconduct complaint against an employee or student is made.

PROVIDING COMPENSATORY SERVICES DUE TO SCHOOL CLOSURE: LEGAL AND PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Anne M. McGinnis, Esq. Ph.D., Harris Beach PLLC, and **Stacey Brindisi**, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, Greece CSD, addressed the legal requirements for determining whether a student legally requires compensatory services and provided tips for implementing such services when schools are closed.

COVID-19 AND ITS IMPACT ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

Sara E. Visingard, Esq., Harris Beach PLLC, and **Lynda M. VanCoske, Esq.**, Labor Relations Administrator, Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES, discussed how COVID-19 has affected the workplace and workforce and its impact on labor and employment issues, such as negotiations, delivery of instruction and staffing.



ABOVE: MCSBA President Amy Thomas introducing law conference panelists Anne M. McGinnis, Esq., Ph.D.; Stacey Brindisi; Lynda M. Van Coske, Esq.; Sara E. Visingard, Esq.; and Gail M. Norris, Esq.

BELOW: MCSBA Executive Director Sherry Johnson speaking to participants at the law conference.



Challenger Field trip to Mars goes virtual this fall

CHALLENGER
Learning Center of Greater Rochester



As reported by Lynette Adams on WHEC/Channel 10 on September 1, the Department of Instructional Programs and Services at Monroe One BOCES has found a way to provide a virtual field trip to Mars. Normally, students would visit the Challenger Learning Center in Rochester and spend two hours working on a spacecraft headed to Mars. Through this program, students would get the chance to see what it's like to be aboard a space shuttle and work on a mission.

To deal with issues created by the COVID-19 pandemic that could limit trips to the Challenger Learning Center, Steven Orcutt, who heads the department, and his team have duplicated the experience virtually. Each student has a specific task to help the mission commanders get to Mars and perform a rescue.

"Not only are we going to provide meaningful instruction for these kids, but they'll work remotely, but in teams...toward a common goal," Orcutt said.

The center is still open for schools that want to bring students but the virtual option ensures social distancing and safety. Orcutt says the main goal hasn't changed: to inspire kids to consider careers in science, math and technology. To learn more, visit the Challenger Learning Center website at <https://www.monroe.edu/Page/2468>.



Learning is multi-dimensional.

Learning is contextual.

Learning is relational.



The Whole Child Connection at Children's Institute, ROC the Future, the Greater Rochester After School and Summer Alliance, Rochester City School District, and Youth Voice One Vision present -

Virtual Convening: Relationships + Connection = Learning,

a virtual event centered on transforming learning environments through the power of relationships.

This interactive event will elevate your understanding of the importance of developing, maintaining and repairing relationships as a catalyst to learning. Community youth leaders will share invaluable insights regarding the importance of relationships and context in learning, with a focus on equity and racial justice.

The keynote speaker is the inspiring activist educator, Dena Simmons, Ed.D. As Director of Education at the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, she works with schools to use the power of emotions to create a more effective and compassionate society. Prior to working at the Center, Dena served as an educator, teacher educator, diversity facilitator, and curriculum developer. She has been a leading voice on teacher education and has written and spoken across the country about social justice pedagogy, diversity, education reform, and bullying in K-12 school settings.



Register Now

CTLE Credits Available

For questions or more information, please [contact Sierra Fisher](#).

To participate in the October 22 discussion, register at

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/relationships-connection-learning-a-virtual-convening-tickets-122566472619>.

SAVE THE DATE...

MCSBA Fiscal Training

Saturday, October 17, 2020

7:30am – 3:30pm

Double Tree at 1111 Jefferson Road



\$\$ SAVE \$\$ MCSBA fiscal training is \$120 & includes a continental breakfast, lunch and light snack

Registration form will follow in early September. While this is required for new Board members, it is a great refresher for any member.



Topics:

- Role of Boards of Education & Administration in Financial Planning and Oversight
- Budget Planning
- What Financial Reports Tell
- Checks and Balances to Prevent Misuse of Resources
- Fund Balance & Reserves
- Auditor Functions (Claims, Internal, and External)

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Conference**

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