



# Legislative Breakfast




On February 8, about 90 leaders in MCSBA districts met with our representatives to federal, state, and county governments to discuss issues facing public schools, many of which have been or will be exacerbated by actions of those levels of government.



**What we ask of our state, federal and local governments**

- Fund public education as intended and designed
- Vote no for any unfunded mandates
- Give back elected Board members their authority over instructional and financial decisions



TOP: Lawmakers Harry Bronson, Marjorie Byrnes, Stephen Hawley, Mark Johns, and Joseph Morelle who were invited to make statements after table discussions with their constituent school district leaders.

LEFT: Major concerns raised by district leaders with their elected county, state, and federal representatives.

RIGHT: Dan White (B1 DS) describing the damaging effects of some of Governor Cuomo’s education funding proposals.

# News Scope

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

## March 2020 INDEX

MCSBA Legislative Breakfast	1
Executive Director:	3
MCSBA Legislative Breakfast	4-5
Cultivating Lifelong Readers	6
What board members should know about reserves	6
Regional meetings discuss graduation measures	7
Addressing institutional bias in suburban schools	8



# Prospective School Board CANDIDATE SEMINAR

**Saturday, March 21, 2020**  
**DoubleTree, 1111 Jefferson Road**  
**8:00 am - 12:00 noon**

*Now is the time to seek potential candidates to run for seats on their local school boards.*

*Encourage potential candidates to learn more by attending the MCSBA seminar on March 21.*

*The seminar will help them learn the role of school boards in district governance, the effects of board service, and guidance on conducting a successful campaign.*

*Download the registration brochure from the home page of <https://www.monroe.edu/MCSBA> and share it widely.*



## United States Census 2020

Your response– and responses from ALL your community’s members -- matters.

\* Health clinics \* Fire departments \* Schools \* Roads & Highways \*

Census results help determine how billions of dollars in federal funding flow into states and communities each year.

The results determine how many seats in Congress each state gets.

In mid-March, households will begin receiving official Census Bureau mail with details on how to respond to the 2020 Census. By April 1, 2020, every home will receive an invitation with three ways to respond: Online, Phone, Mail.

**!! Encourage your parents and other community members to participate !!**

# From our executive director: LET'S TALK

Dear Members,

At our February Information Exchange committee meeting we heard a presentation by two West Irondequoit administrators on the importance of cultivating lifelong readers. And while the presentation discussed both digital and print literacy instruction, I was struck by some of the other points in their presentation on how our digital world has impacted all of us.



**Sherry Johnson**

We know as school leaders, the importance of early literacy and why it is vital for parents and guardians to read, talk and sing to their infants, babies, toddlers and school aged children. But, in our digitally immersed society, with all of the information choices bombarding us, are we also modeling effective literacy skills and making fully informed choices?

Go into any grocery store, restaurant, mall or anywhere that large groups gather and it is easy to observe that many of us are looking at our phones and not each other. At restaurants, couples and families are each absorbed by their individual devices and conversation can be little to nonexistent. Walk down any busy street and from parents pushing strollers to people on bikes, everyone is otherwise engaged by some digital device. Even in our cars, we are not present. We have become a completely distracted society.

We have also become accustomed to getting our information in segmented bits and many of us no longer take the time to read the complete story or get all of the facts to make sure that what we read is accurate.

Our social fabric and our ability to be fully engaged citizens depends on our ability to communicate effectively with one another. That can't be done as a comment on a social media site, no matter how many words are allowed. Even email messages can lose their meaning in translation,

something that most of us have experienced. We need to talk face to face, to listen to one another, to catch body language and facial expressions, in order to fully comprehend meaning. We know that we need to be teaching this to our young, but are we also showing the way?

Psychologists have known for years that humans are more inclined to treat others ill when they can remain anonymous or where there are no direct consequences for their behavior. Social media platforms provide a vehicle for those who choose to criticize, bully or outright threaten, those they find fault with or disagree with. Our children and many adults are paying an incredible price because of this. As with many inventions meant to be of service to the greater good, we must be diligent about how these also can be weaponized.

Is being connected by multiple, simultaneously fed information systems helpful in our quest to be informed, engaged individuals or is our capacity to be the social humans we have always been, now diminished?

One of the activities that our presenters provided for us was to sit with one another and discuss the last book that we read. It was a helpful conversation to display how we identify ourselves as readers and the importance of helping our students develop their reader identity. It was also a perfect way to be present with others, to talk about our interests and how we like to get our information.

In that spirit, I am going to offer up the last two books that I read. One was nonfiction and titled Dear Madam President, by Jennifer Palmieri, the other is fiction and titled Twisted Twenty-Six, by Janet Evanovich.

If you read this, and would like to offer up what you have recently read, email me and I will develop a list (no names attached) and put it as an article in the next News Scope. Perhaps this will be the start of a wonderful conversation at our next IE meeting or at one of your own meetings.

As always, thank you for all that you do on behalf of the children in your district, our county and public education!

*Sherry Johnson*

# MCSBA Legislative Breakfast

## A major topic of concern shared with state representatives: School Aid – Governor’s Proposal

\* \$826 total aid increase = 2.1%

- \$504 Foundation Aid increase includes \$50 million Community Schools set aside and \$10 million expense aid consolidation\*.
- \$200 million unallocated targeted aid
- \$122 other aid categories (trans, building aid, public/private excess cost, etc.)

\* Consolidation of expense aid categories

BOCES Aid	Supplemental Public Excess Cost Aid
Special Services Aid	Academic Enhancement Aid
Charter School Transition Aid	Instructional Materials Aid
High Tax Aid	(Textbooks, Library, Software, Computer Hardware)

\* Other Proposals

- Transportation Aid adjustment: Reimbursement limited by general inflation and change in enrollment.
- Building Aid adjustment: New tier for projects approved after July 1, 2020.
- Eliminate State’s portion for cost sharing for certain CSE placements.

\* Implications of consolidated aid categories

- “Run” as designed in 20-21
- Paid as Foundation Aid in 20-21
- Effectively Eliminated after 20-21
- Subject to changes in Foundation Aid each year thereafter

## Federal and County Officials also discussed issues



Congressman Joseph Morelle meeting with two groups of district leaders during the legislative breakfast:

ABOVE: Marv Sachs (Bri), Kim McCluski (Pit), Congressman Morelle, Romeo Colilli (Gre), Aaron Johnson (WI), Chris Dailey (GC), and Mike Pero (Pit).

BELOW: Brett Provenzano (Fpt), Irene Narotsky (Pit), Julene Gilbert (Bri), Congressman Morelle.

(Morelle photos uploaded to Facebook by his office)



Monroe County School Boards Association



ABOVE: Marv Sachs (Bri), Joyce Kostyk (Fpt), Amy West (HFL), Chris Zeltmann, (Rochester Regional Director for U.S. Senator Charles Schumer), Kevin Hutton (Spe), and Dick Stutzman (ER) with back to camera.

BELOW: Bob Dickson (B1), James O’Brien (RH), Jennifer Laird (RH), Mark Elledge (Pen), Deputy County Executive Jeff McCann (representing Monroe County Executive Adam Bello), Julene Gilbert (Bri), Jo Anne Antonacci (B2), and Mark Hilburger (Hil).



News Scope

March 2020

# MCSBA Legislative Breakfast

## Members met with NYS officials



LEFT: Vincent Felder (County Legislator, Assemblyman David Gantt aide) with Sherita Traywick (Gre)

BELOW: Catherine Coffee (GC), Frank Muscato (GC), NYS Senator Joseph Robach, and Terry Ann Carbone (Bro).

BELOW: Vincent Felder (David Gantt's Aide), Chris Dailey (GC), Bo Wright (RH), Jessica Jackson (WC), Bronson aide Elizabeth Morabito, Assemblyman Harry Bronson, Doug Rivers (RH), Shanna Fraser (WC), and Diane McBride (RH).



ABOVE: David Francis (HFL), Pete Sullivan (Pit), Assemblywoman Marjorie Byrnes, Mike Pero (Pit), Bruce Capron (HFL), and Gary Stottler (HFL).

BELOW: Tim Henry (ER), Ted Aroesty (Pit), Damon Buffum (Fpt), Gloria Hunter (Senator Rich Funke's office) and Bob Dickson (B1).



ABOVE: James O'Brien (RH) with back to camera, Diane McBride (RH), Doug Rivers (RH), Mike Hettler (Senator Ranzenhofer's office), Phyllis Wickerham (Senator Peter Gallivan's office), Russ Byer (Hil), Tim Dobbertin (B2).

BELOW: Steve Roland (B2), Dennis Laba (B2), Ernest Flagler (County Legislator), Vincent Felder (County Legislator, David Gantt Aide), Lori Orologio (CC), Cheryl Repass (CC), Deborah Leh (WC), Bronson aide Elizabeth Morabito, and Assemblyman Harry Bronson (back to camera).



ABOVE: Pete Sullivan (Pit) with back to camera, Christina Lee (Bri), Sherita Traywick (Gre), and Tim Slisz (Fpt) with back to camera.



MIDDLE: Cheryl Repass (CC) and Assemblyman Stephen Hawley.

BOTTOM: Tim Henry (ER), Dick Stutzman (ER), Assemblyman Mark Johns, Tom Putnam (Pen), Brett Provenzano (Fpt), Mike Suffoletto (Web), and Amy West (HFL).

LEFT: Bob Dickson (B1) Sora Sachs (B1), Caralyn Ross (HFL), Christina Lee (Bri), Pat Storm (EI) and Mary Grow, (EI).

# Cultivating life long readers



ABOVE: Christina Miga (WI), Information Exchange Committee Co-Chairs Nancy Pickering (Hil) and Valerie Baum (Pit), and Brenna Farella (WI).

BELOW: Presenters and some of the Information Exchange Committee members in attendance.



Leading a discussion during the February 12 meeting of the Information Exchange Committee on ways to cultivate life long readers in our electronic age were West Irondequoit administrators Christina Miga, K-6 Director of Instruction, and Brenna Farrell, K-12 Supervisor of ELA.

Among their comments were the following:

\*Children should be taught to see reading as a tool for empowerment since the better their literacy skills, the more likely they are to hold a full-time job, to vote, to participate in their communities, volunteer, and help their own children with homework. To become life-long readers children must develop their own reader's identity. The presenters noted that West Irondequoit defined non-negotiable practices for developing lifelong literacy that included science based practices and independent reading.

\* Experts recommend limiting time with digital materials before age 5.

\* West Irondequoit has developed a guide for teachers to use science-based practices for developing life-long readers and provides time for independent reading.

\* The district has created instructional videos of teacher leaders for colleagues as an implementation tool.

# What board members should understand about reserves

Dr. Bruce Capron, Assistant Superintendent for Business & Operations (HFL), shared an interactive presentation regarding reserve accounts and their use by school boards. Following each question posed to members, he discussed responses in more depth. Key comments from the presentation include:

- Reserves provide an alternate tool for a district to manage risk.
- Legally the Board, not the NYS Comptroller, determines the level of reserves a district holds.
- Reserve spending must be accompanied by a plan to stop spending and/or a plan to refund reserves.
- It is not advisable to use reserves to settle collective bargaining agreements.
- Boards of Education should set reserve targets and review balances regularly.
- Reserves are important for determining fiscal stress within a district and can influence a district's credit rating.



ABOVE: Dr. Bruce Capron, Assistant Superintendent for Business & Operations (HFL) with Labor Relations Committee Co-Chair Amy West (HFL).



- Emerging issues that could add risk to districts include liability for child sexual abuse lawsuits and cyber-attack ransom payments.

LEFT: Dr. Capron and some of those attending the Labor Relations meeting.

# Regional meetings on graduation measures



ABOVE: District Superintendents Dan White (B1) and Jo Anne Antonacci (B2) and Regent Wade Norwood hosting the session.

RIGHT: Video featuring Regents Chancellor Betty Rosa.



The Board of Regents and SED have scheduled regional information meetings in each judicial district across the state in early 2020 to gather input on what a state diploma should signify to ensure educational excellence and equity for every NYS student. The meetings are part of Phase I in the review of graduation measures and offer opportunities for all interested persons to be involved. **The regional meeting held on February 13 at Monroe 2 – Orleans BOCES served as conduit for input from stakeholders in five BOCES: Monroe One and Monroe 2 – Orleans BOCES on site—with satellite locations at Genesee Valley Educational Partnership Service Center in LeRoy, Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES in Newark, and Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES in Auburn.** More than 100 participants attended the hearing on site at BOCES 2.

Board of Regents Chancellor Betty A. Rosa, who appeared on video during the session at Monroe 2 –Orleans BOCES, says that the Regents have made it their mission “to ensure that every child has equitable access to the highest quality education opportunities, services and supports.” To this end, they hope the regional meetings will involve interested parties with diverse viewpoints in the process.

The meetings include small group discussions to provide feedback on each of five guiding questions:

- 1- What do we want students to know and to be able to do before they graduate?
- 2- How do we want students to demonstrate such knowledge and skills?
- 3- How do you measure learning and achievement (as it pertains to the answers to #2 above) to ensure they are indicators of high school completion?
- 4- How can measures of achievement accurately reflect the skills and knowledge of our special populations, such as students with disabilities and English language learners?
- 5- What course requirements or examinations will ensure that students are prepared for college and careers or civic engagement?

**An additional session in our area is scheduled for Wednesday, March 11, 2020 (Snow date: March 18, 2020).**

**Regent Wade Norwood, Regent at Large, will host the meeting at East High School, 1801 East Main St, Rochester, from 5:30 - 8:00 p.m. (Satellite Location: Joseph C. Wilson Foundation Academy, 200 Genesee St, Rochester). Registration is required. Go to [Register for the Rochester Regional Meeting](#)**

**[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScIa\\_sBg3ZJ13Cz8MLHJ8re5bGpZKJtt6eGbI5zwvc062SflA/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScIa_sBg3ZJ13Cz8MLHJ8re5bGpZKJtt6eGbI5zwvc062SflA/viewform).**

**Those who cannot attend a meeting, are invited to complete the [online survey of the 5 guiding questions](#) to provide feedback**

**(<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=6BbvFeBMw0-S4mp6bI52XhxUnxIR0SRAtguBccwKd8dUMFk3NVk5UzdSNzVNSUdXUIhOV1hISjRMQy4u>).**

Blue Ribbon Commission members, who will be named later this year, will examine what a State diploma should signify to ensure educational excellence and equity. The Commission will look at whether adding other measures of achievement could better serve our diverse student population as indicators of what they know and if they are career and college ready. The Phase I: Information Gathering sessions will inform the Commission’s work. A Winter 2021-2022 deadline for the Commission’s final report has been set. NYSED has engaged the U.S.E.D.’s Region Two Comprehensive Center, led by [WestEd](#), to compile the feedback gathered during regional informational meetings and to conduct the literature review of graduation requirements in other states.

The SED has created a [Graduation Measures website](#) at <http://www.nysed.gov/grad-measures> which will feature updates throughout the process and has established a listserv that is open to anyone wishing to receive updates. The Department will also provide updates via traditional social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn with #NYSGradMeasures.

To learn more, visit

<http://www.nysed.gov/grad-measures/regional-meetings>.

RIGHT: Some of the 100 or so participants who attended the February 13 Regents/SED hearing on graduation requirements, working in small groups at tables to give input into the graduation requirements development process.



Stephen Dawe photo

# Addressing Institutional Bias in Suburban Schools



RIGHT: Program presenters Terrance McCarthy, Ed.D, (Web); Nerlande Anselme, (RH), Kevin S. Beckford, Jonathan Falk, Esq.; and Duwayne Bascoe, Esq.

Seen in the inserts are Nerlande Anselme (RH) and Terry McCarthy (Web) making comments.

On February 25, more than 50 school district leaders, teachers, and community members gathered at Irondequoit Public Library for a Monroe County Bar Center for Education discussion of institutional bias in our suburban schools.

Sharing input were:

Moderator: **Duwayne Bascoe, Esq.**, Abrams, Fensterman, Fensterman, Eisman, Formato, Ferrara, Wolf & Carone, LLP; and

Panelists:

- Nerlande Anselme**, Assistant Superintendent for Student and Family Services, Rush-Henrietta Central School District;
- Kevin S. Beckford**, Senior Human Resources Director for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, University of Rochester; and Town of Pittsford Council Member;
- Jonathan Falk, Esq.**, Supervising Attorney of the Education Law Program, Legal Aid Society of Rochester (counsel to general and special education K12 students and their parents regarding their civil and due process rights in school);
- Terrance McCarthy, Ed.D**, Director of Humanities and Equity and Diversity Co-facilitator, Webster Central School District.

Among their comments were the following:

- \* Institutional biases are ingrained in all social systems, including healthcare, justice, and zoning. In schools, factors include curricula, literature choices, values, rewards, disciplinary choices and records, and criteria for student involvement in enrichment programs.
- \* Bias is not only a matter of race, but includes special education, poverty, and English Language Learners. Schools should be safe for all students, but some students feel threatened in school on a daily basis.
- \* Unconscious bias is based on what one sees, and can be overcome by placing adults of diverse backgrounds in positions of authority. Schools can help by recruiting teachers from colleges that graduate more students from diverse backgrounds. But once hired, these employees need support from their administrators. In addition, such employees should not be expected to solve all bias issues in a district.
- \* Racism remains a critical issue because the legacy of slavery-segregation hasn't been addressed; e.g., why do some people need groups to fear?
- \* Inequity for anyone affects everyone. Administrators need training in advocating for those who are different; they also need training in how to deal with pushback from community members fearing change. Leaders need to lead when others are not ready.

Nerlande Anselme and Terry McCarthy outlined steps their districts are taking to overcome institutional racism, including development of inclusion policies by their boards of education, professional development for employees, employment of teachers and administrators of more diverse backgrounds, and involvement of the community in creating more equitable environments.



This session was sponsored by the Lawyers' Coalition for Racial and Social Justice and Woods Oviatt Gilman LLP. Distributed electronically at the meeting were the following materials:

- [Institutional Bias Definitions](#)
- [Implicit Bias Powerpoint](#)
- [Due Process Rights in Student Discipline](#)
- [R. Rothstein: Toxic Stress and Children's Outcomes](#)
- [Video: Martin Luther King, Jr.: The Other America](#)

LEFT: Those attending the session included Bob Dickson (B1) and Mike Suffoletto (Web) seen at the left near the back of the picture.