



## IN MEMORIAL

Long time Four County SBA supporter Kathy Guenther passed away on Friday, November 1, 2024.

Kathy served on the Penn Yan Board of Education from July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2022. She was Vice President from July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2019.

Kathy served as the Four County SBA 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President from July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013. She served as President from July 1, 2013 through June 30th, 2015 and then Immediate Past President from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2020.

Kathy and her husband owned KVentures Bus Company and she spent many hours volunteering at school, Four County SBA, and in the community. No one was a bigger supporter of Penn Yan Schools and the students than Kathy.

Four County SBA mourns Kathy's passing and extends condolences to her family and friends.



## 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL SPRING EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Friday, March 21, 2025

8:30 am - 2:30 pm

More information coming soon!



### EV Bus Report Released

Below is a link to the Zero Emission Busing Implementation Progress Report. The Finger Lakes Region is highlighted on pages 35-43. "This is really good data for school boards to review." -Lynne Rutnik, District Superintendent

<https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/pupil-transportation/zeb-transition-report-oct-2024.pdf>

CELEBRATING 50 Years 1975 2025

Save the Date

FOUR COUNTY SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY. A CELEBRATION OF DINNER, REMINISCING, AND SPECIAL GUESTS WILL TAKE PLACE ON **MAY 15, 2025**. FORMAL INVITATION WITH MORE INFORMATION TO FOLLOW

The Four County School Board Association has been serving Ontario, Seneca, Wayne, and Yates Counties since 1975.



Message from  
Assemblyman  
Jeff Gallahan and  
Legislative Co-Chairs  
Page 2

General  
Membership  
Meeting  
Highlights  
Page 3

Messages from  
President  
and  
Vice President  
Page 4

Messages from  
Executive Director  
and  
NYSSBA Area 2 Director  
Page 5

2024-2025  
Calendar of Events  
Message form Coordinator  
of Membership Services  
Page 6



## MESSAGE FROM ASSEMBLYMAN JEFF GALLAHAN

As the representative for New York's 131<sup>st</sup> Assembly District, I am proud to be a champion for public schools. Investing in our young people by supporting high quality education is critically important to the future of our state and the success of the next generation. It's truly inspiring to see the achievements of students and educators throughout my district in academics, athletics, and the arts.

Supporting vocational and college-level programs for high school students is vital and it's always exciting to see school districts take the initiative to improve student outcomes. Back in March, I visited the P-Tech program. Offering students the opportunity to earn an associate degree while in high school can be life changing. As a journeyman machinist, I also understand that not every student is college bound. High paying careers in the trades are abundant, and employers are always seeking motivated young talent with vocational training.

None of these amazing educational programs would be possible, however, without reliable access to funding. Foundation Aid and Save Harmless provide critical funding to rural and underserved schools. I was deeply dismayed by last year's proposal to cut these essential funding sources. Although this plan was fortunately NOT included in the 2024 -2025 budget, there will almost certainly be another attempt this coming year.

Budget cuts and regionalization efforts continue to pose a threat to school districts throughout New York State. Reducing aid to schools and compelling them to use shared services creates a problem, not a solution. Regionalization initiatives in particular are poorly conceived and unlikely to be as fiscally efficient as projected by state education officials. Efforts are also currently underway to study different ways to "adjust" the Foundation Aid formula. A report on this is set to be presented to the legislature this month.

Heading into the 2025 legislative session, I look forward to returning to Albany to fight for my constituents, advocate for improved public-school programming, and stand up against any new attempt to defund education. Our children are the future, and I believe the future in my district is very bright. It's the honor of a lifetime to be one of your representatives and I am fully committed to continuing my support for the Four County School Board Association as we prepare to ring in the new year.



## Board Clerk Workshop

Thank you to all the Board Clerks who attended a Board Clerk workshop on October 24, 2024.

We had a great turnout from member and non-member districts.

Thank you also to our presenter Sara Visingard, Esq. from



## MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS

The Legislative committee has finalized the State Position Paper, and the Board of Directors reviewed and approved the paper at their 11/25/24 Board meeting. It feels good to have this done before December. It is not too late to submit any district data or story to support the paper. We can accept data and stories all the way up to a week before Lobby Day in February. Now, onto to our Federal Position Paper! We put work into this paper in the spring of last year. Now we will put the details together and make it pop! Come join us via zoom on Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 9am. See you soon and happy holidays!



**Julie Nevelizer**

Newark BOE

julie.nevelizer@newarkcsd.org



**Emily Fisher**

Geneva BOE

efisher@genevacsd.org

### Upcoming Legislative Committee Meeting Dates:

Dec. 14, Jan. 11, Feb. 8, March 8, April 12, May 10, and June 14  
Zoom 9:00-10:30 am





Blue Ribbon Commission's Recommendations



**General Membership Meeting**  
**October 3, 2024**  
 Guest Speaker  
**New York State Regent**  
**Adrian I. Hale**



Regent Hale presented on the most recent work coming from the State Education Department and the recommendations of the Blue-Ribbon Commission as New York State embarks on one of the most significant periods of change in its Education History.



## Welcome

### Four County School Boards Association

November 25, 2024



**General Membership Meeting**  
**November 25, 2024**  
 Guest Speaker  
**Brian Fessler**



**NYSSBA's Director of Governmental Relations**

Brian Fessler updated attendees on the status of Foundation Aid and the Rockefeller Institute study. He also discussed recommendations at the State Level and the implications as we begin budget planning for Districts.

Click → [Meeting History | 4county](#) to view PowerPoints from both meetings



### ACCOUNTING THAT EDUCATES.

100 Chestnut Street  
 Suite 1200  
 Rochester, NY 14604  
 (585) 423-1860

Tom Zuber, CPA, Partner  
 tzuber@mmb-co.com

Mike DeBadts, CPA, Partner  
 mdebadts@mmb-co.com

Melissa Duerr, CPA, Partner  
 mduerr@mmb-co.com



BUSINESS ADVISORS AND CPAS

mmbaccounting.com

Locations:  
 Canandaigua  
 Elmira  
 Latham  
 Queensbury  
 Rochester





## 4CSBA Welcomes Waterloo CSD to our Membership!



Left to right:  
Howard Dennis-4CSBA Executive Director,  
Chris Felice-Waterloo BOE President, and  
Joe McNamara-4CSBA President (Seneca  
Falls CSD/WFL BOCES)

### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we enter the holiday season, I want to express my sincere thanks to everyone for supporting the ongoing work of the Four County School Boards Association. We have implemented a sponsorship program to enable us to provide higher quality programs to meet our members' needs and continue to strengthen our legislative advocacy efforts.

I am very pleased to welcome Waterloo Central School District as our newest member. Board President Chris Felice is representing Waterloo CSD on our Board of Directors.

I continue to receive positive remarks of appreciation for the programs we provide, and for our recent efforts to better enable members to participate in statewide conferences. Through our member participation in statewide conferences, we are building awareness of not only our individual districts, but also of our organization and the region we serve.

Moving forward, we will be working hard on advocacy initiatives. The 4CSBA Legislative Committee State Positions Paper has been approved and accepted by the Board of Directors, and will be sent out shortly. We strongly encourage members to read the positions and contact legislators with personal examples of how each issue impacts their individual member districts.

Our Spring Education Conference is scheduled for March 21, 2025. We are mindfully working to bring in leading speakers on the topics our members have indicated are top priority areas of need. More details will be forthcoming. At our Annual Meeting, on May 15, 2025, we will be celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> year as an organization.

I encourage everyone to try to make time for these events. In closing, I wish everyone a Happy Holidays!!

**Joe McNamara**  
4CSBA President

Seneca Falls BOE/WFL BOCES BOE  
jmcnamara@senecafallscsd.org



### MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

I hope this finds everyone doing well and having a great school year! This is a busy time of year with the holidays just around the corner, school musicals and Christmas concerts fast approaching. I don't know about you, but I am not a fan of the time change. I don't like that it gets dark so early. I miss the sunshine, warmth and longer days!

I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the NYSSBA convention in NYC. It was a fantastic convention, one of the best that I have ever attended. The programs were very informative with some great presenters. I have to say that I learned a lot and brought back tons of information to share with my district. The opening session was a highlight and mind blowing for me, it gave me goose bumps and was frankly a little scary in terms of thinking about the future. It was meet Sophia, she is an extraordinary robot with eye opening capabilities in robotics and artificial intelligence. It was absolutely amazing watching her movements that looked human. She even made jokes. Sophia said that she didn't have a heart or a brain but was programmed with every human emotion and feeling. The potential with robotics and Artificial Intelligence is very exciting. Other sessions attended ranged from addressing teacher shortages, combating absenteeism, goal setting, prioritizing mental health and wellness, school budgeting for the future, board evaluations and navigating bumps in the road with the electric bus mandates. I want to give a shout out to some great friends (Julie, Mary and Miranda) we found a few extra minutes to squeeze in a Jimmy Fallon, Tonight Show taping and the Today Show and even made it on TV!!!

I wish each of you a wonderful and magical holiday season filled with family, friends and good health. Thank you for all you do for our students!

**Robin Johnson**

4CSBA Vice President  
Penn Yan Board of Education  
robinsjohnson@proton.me




**Building Bright Futures**  
with  
**Four County SBA**  
Member Districts

campuscmg.com







## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*This is one of my favorite times of the year. The splendor of the Holidays and the magic that goes along with it for kids of all ages is such a special time. This time of year, also comes with lots of craziness and lots of stress for us in our normal routines.*

*Over the last few months, we have held a number of amazing events. We have done two well attended General Membership Meetings on relevant topics at Club 86. Both Regent Hale and Brian Fessler have kept our attention and passed along information that will be important for us to keep in mind as we move forward with budget planning and future planning for our Districts. Our next General Membership Meeting will be about Regionalization and be held on February 6th.*

*We have also held a great meet and greet session in Geneva and some great connections were made and the sharing of ideas was plentiful. A group of us also had a great time on our journey to the State NYSSBA Convention and had a chance to share about the workshops we attended and ideas that we gathered.*

*Behind the scenes the Legislative Committee has been meeting and creating position papers for all to use as we begin our advocacy efforts after the first of the year. There is a Legislative Breakfast event in the planning stages in order to let our Representatives know what is important to us as they enter the Legislative Session.*

*We have also been working hard with the events committee to plan two events for later this year: The Spring Education Conference is scheduled for March 21st at the Conference Center in Newark and also the Four County Annual Dinner and 50th Anniversary Celebration is scheduled for May 15<sup>th</sup>. More details to come on both of these events.*

*As we wrap up 2024 and begin 2025, I want to reiterate to you just how dedicated I am to listening to your thoughts and ideas about how we can make the Four County School Boards Association even better than it already is. Don't be afraid to send me an email, a text, or an invitation to meet to discuss your thoughts and ideas. I look forward to an exciting Spring.*



*Enjoy your holidays and we will see you at the next exciting event.*

**Howard Dennis**

4CSBA Executive Director  
howard.dennis@wflboces.org

## MESSAGE FROM THE NYSSBA AREA 2 DIRECTOR

*The leaves have turned and most have fallen, at least at my house. I am tired of raking them, but I think it is better than shoveling snow, at least thus far. We have made it through all the political campaign messages, emails, texts, and phone calls.*

*I hope that all of you who were able to attend the NYSSBA conference in NYC were able to take advantage of the many programs that were offered. I found the keynote sessions particularly interesting: the Sunday Opening Session - Meet Sophia, where she (an AI Robot) highlighted the potential of Artificial Intelligence and robotics and their likely impact on education, Dan Fitzpatrick's presentation on AI in the Classroom and how to harness its power to prepare students for success in this rapidly evolving world and how schools need to develop policies to address students' use of AI, and the final Keynote session with the "Piano Man" Steven Sharp Nelson describing how to recharge ourselves through story and song. The conference was enhanced by the atmosphere which is New York City, not to mention the beautiful weather we had during the conference.*

*We will all be starting the budget preparation and development season soon. The budget development process offers each Board the opportunity to listen to their staff and community and to clearly identify priorities for the district. I always told my superintendents that we need to provide the best opportunities for every child that our community can afford.*

*I am hoping you all had a Happy Thanksgiving; I am thankful for each of you and the volunteer service you provide for the children in your communities. Each year*

*I look forward to the Christmas holidays. For you, I wish: May your Christmas season be filled with love, blessed with peace, and be joyful with Family and Friends. Have a safe and happy holiday season.*

**Rodney George**

NYSSBA Area 2 Director



Start Here. Go Anywhere.

VISIT [FLCC.EDU](http://FLCC.EDU)



## 2024-2025 CALENDAR OF 4CSBA EVENTS

### DECEMBER

**Tuesday 12/3/24** Board of Directors Meeting  
**Saturday 12/14/2024** Legislative Committee Meeting

### JANUARY

**Saturday 1/11/2025** Legislative Committee Meeting  
**Wednesday 1/15/2025** Board of Directors Meeting

### FEBRUARY

TBD - Audit Committee  
**Thursday 2/6/25** **General Membership Meeting**  
**Saturday 2/8/25** Legislative Committee Meeting  
**Thursday 2/12/25** Board Clerk Workshop

### MARCH

**Saturday 3/1/2025** Prospective Board Member Seminar  
**Saturday 3/8/2025** Legislative Committee Meeting  
**Thursday 3/6/2025** Board of Directors Meeting  
**Friday 3/21/2025** **4CSBA Spring Education Conference**

### APRIL

**Saturday /12/2025** Legislative Committee Meeting  
**Wednesday 4/23/2025** BOCES VOTE

### MAY

**Saturday 5/10/2025** Legislative Committee Meeting  
**Thursday 5/15/2025** **Annual Meeting - 50 Year Celebration**

**Tuesday 5/20/2025** BOARD ELECTIONS / BUDGET VOTE  
**Thursday 5/29/25** New Member Get Acquainted Evening

### JUNE

**Saturday 6/14/25** Legislative Committee Meeting  
**Saturday 6/28/2025** Mandated Governance Training

### JULY

**Saturday 7/19/2025** Mandated Fiscal Training



### RSA EVENTS



#### DECEMBER

**Wed-Thurs 12/4-12/5** Winter Conference - Saratoga Springs

#### JULY

**Sun-Tues 7/13-7/15** 2025 Summer Conference - Lake Placid

### NYSSBA EVENTS



#### FEBRUARY

**Friday 2/7/25** NYSSBA - Capitol Conference, Virtual  
**Wednesday 2/12/24** NYSSBA - Lobby Day, Albany

### NSBA EVENTS



#### FEBRUARY

**Sun-Tues 2/2-2/4** NSBA-Advocacy Institute, Washington, D.C.

#### APRIL

**Wed-Fri 4/2-4/4** NSBA 2025 Annual Conference/Expo, Atlanta

## Day Automation



Our innovative solutions provide secure, comfortable, equitable and sustainable educational environments.






Regional Offices Throughout New York State  
www.dayautomation.com | 800.836.0969

As the 4CSBA Coordinator of Membership Services I am here to help you in any way I can. I have been with Four County SBA for 8 years. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out, if I am unable to answer them I will connect you with someone who can.

If you have any suggestions, ideas or would like to make a contribution to our next quarterly newsletter in March please let me know.

The office will be closed December 19-23 and December 25-26. I hope you have a Wonderful Holiday!

**Sue Wyatt**

Coordinator of Membership Services  
sue.wyatt@wfloces.org  
4countysba@edutech.org  
(315) 332-7294



## A one-of-a-kind relationship



## We're you... and you're us.

