

Board Member Spotlight



Carrie A. Resch, LVT
BOE Member
Wayne CSD

2021-2022 Four County SBA 2nd Vice Presidential Nominee

Carrie Resch currently serves on the Wayne Central School District Board of Education. She is in her second full year on the board. She has a wonderful, supportive husband Patrick; and together they have 3 children Lucy (14), Sydney (10), and Ben (10). Carrie shares that they are a family that loves to serve our community in various ways through volunteer opportunities as well as animal fostering. Carrie has learned a lot attending the many meetings offered by Four County. She participated in lobby day, and spoke as a new board member for the annual Prospective School Board Member Seminar in her first year. She hopes to continue her path of learning and advocating for our schools by joining the Four County School Boards Association in the position of Second Vice President.

Mark your calendar with upcoming meetings:

May 27th, 6:00 pm **Annual Meeting** Sponsored by C&S Companies: Pre-recorded Guest Speaker Brandon P. Fleming Founder & CEO of Harvard Diversity Project, Assistant Debate Coach at Harvard University

In this presentation, Mr. Fleming will share his riveting journey from being an at-risk youth and college dropout to becoming an award-winning Harvard educator.

For more information on Brandon P. Fleming go to his website: <https://bpfleming.com/about-me/>



June 3rd, 6:00 pm **Professional Development Meeting**, presented by: Ferrara Fiorenza PC

June 12th, 9:00 am **Legislative Committee Meeting**

June 22th, 5:30 pm **Get Acquainted Evening** for newly elected School Board of Education members

July 10th, 9:00 am **Legislative Committee Meeting**

July 20th, 6:00 pm **Professional Development Meeting**, presented by: Ferrara Fiorenza PC

August 14th, 9:00 am **Legislative Committee Meeting**

Here's what Four County SBA has been up to:

February 2nd, Board of Directors meeting

February 4th and 5th, Legislative Day: Zoom meetings with six Local Assembly Members and Senators

February 6th, Legislative Committee meeting: Debrief of Legislative Day Meetings

March 6th, Legislative Committee: Guest David Little, Executive Director of Rural Schools Association

March 13th, Prospective School Board Member Seminar: 18 prospective school board candidates met via Zoom to learn what is involved in being a School Board of Education Member. Presenters: President Robin Johnson, veteran member Russ Harris, new member Julianne Miller, Superintendent Howard Dennis, Legislative Committee representative Bill Buchko, and Legal Counsel Anne M. McGinnis, PH.D., Senior Counsel at Harris Beach PLLC, Attorneys at Law

March 30th, Board Clerk Workshop: "Mindfulness to Navigate Stress" Presented by Erica Ebert, WFL BOCES

April 6th and January 28th, General Membership meetings: "Dismantling Systemic Racism" Presented by: Karen Hughes, NYACK CSD Board of Education Member, and Equity Steering Committee Chairwoman, and Dr. Alexandria Connally, NYACK CSD Director of Equity, Inclusion, and Innovation

April 8th, Professional Development meeting: "Understanding The Danger of The Cliff Effect" Presented by: Keith Henry, Assistant Superintendent for Administration at Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES, Andrew DiBlasi, School Business Official at Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES, and Jay Schickling, School Business Administrator at Williamson CSD

April 10th, Legislative Committee meeting: Presenter Dr. Vicky Ramos, District Superintendent of WFL BOCES

April 14th, Board Clerk Workshop: Upcoming board elections, budget vote, and more presented by: Anne M. McGinnis, PH.D. Senior Counsel Harris Beach PLLC, Attorneys at Law

April 20, Board of Directors meeting

May 4th, Professional Development meeting: "Zoom Workshop" presented by Gordy Baxter, Staff Development Administrator, Instructional Technology Training at Edutech. This session helped to focus on getting comfortable to manage virtual meetings.

May 8th, 9:00 am Legislative Committee: Brian Fessler, Director of Governmental Relations and Staff Liaison to the Resolutions Committee, NYSSBA joined the meeting.

Message from President Robin Johnson

Happy Spring! I am loving the sunshine, green grass and the beautiful flowers budding. We all need a breath of fresh air after the long winter and all things Covid. As you can see from this quarter activity list we have been keeping busy at Four County and have had some great presentations, trainings and meetings, that have been attended by many of you. Thank you to everyone that has been able to join the zooms. My hope is that in the near future we can all get back together in person. Wishing each of you a smooth end to the school year and best of luck with budget votes!

Robin Johnson

Message from Executive Director Dr. Marla Iverson

A few days ago, I was leaving the first in-person meeting I have had in many months when I noticed a poster on an office wall. It read, "Let's Create a Culture That's Smarter about Mental Health." I continued to exit but something about that poster drew me back, so I re-entered the building and took a picture of it. It happened to be the same day that I learned that May is Mental Health Month in the US. It has been since 1949 and I had no idea. I also had no idea that green is the color of the ribbon worn for support of mental health.

The 2021 themes for Mental Health Month are Tools to Thrive and Hope for Change. The National Council for Mental Wellbeing is committed to developing and sharing tools which everyone can use to improve their mental health and resiliency. There is no greater need for this than during the Covid 19 Global Pandemic, where isolation, uncertainty, fear, sickness, change, sacrifice, loss, and many other conditions have stressed us in unprecedented ways.

As Boards of Education, it is important to think about how the culture of your districts addresses mental health. How can you assure that the language of your culture is one of understanding and compassion and one that does not use hurtful euphemisms to describe serious health issues? How does your culture react to mental health issues with students and staff? How can you create policy which helps children and staff who are negatively impacted by current events? What training have you received related to mental health? How does your district develop, gather, and communicate various mental health resources? How can your culture become smarter about mental health?

One way to "get smarter about mental health" is to participate in Mental Health First Aid Training which is offered in our region numerous times per year. It is a very powerful training, and now comes in a version specific to rural communities. This version helps people notice and respond to mental health issues whereby the cultural and environmental conditions of life in rural areas are contributing factors. To learn more about training, please go to <http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org>.



Marla Iverson

Message from NYSSBA Area 2 Director Rodney George

Legendary UCLA basketball coach John Wooden once said, "Things work out best for those who make the best of how things work out." Over this past year of COVID-19, thanks to you in your role as school board members working closely with your district's leadership teams and your communities, we have been making "the best of how things work out" for the children we serve. Each one of us is in the process of helping finish the budgets for the next school year within our districts and hopefully we will have a more stable and secure school year moving forward than we had this current year.

Most of our school districts received additional State Aid over that which was initially proposed by the Governor in January. From his proposal to reduce State Aid by 20% to what was actually passed, most of us can breathe a little sigh of relief. Being managers of municipal budgets, we can appreciate the position the State has been in with its lost sources of revenue due to COVID; however, we are thankful that Federal funds arrived in time to allow the State Legislature to adopt a budget which helps us avoid some drastic reductions in opportunities for our children. Within the budget deliberations, it has been stated that the State will fully fund the current Foundation Aid formula over the next three years. This is something for which NYSSBA has been lobbying for many years. Whereas we are hopeful, seeing will be believing. In the process, we are also hopeful that some inequities within the Foundation Aid formula will be corrected.

The latest CDC guidelines for schools opening for full-time instruction offer some hope, as well. Guidance of ways to open our schools safely for all students to attend is helpful but still presents some challenges. It is wonderful to see our children able to participate in some extra-curricular activities at some level. To hear them laugh and see them play this spring has been a blossom of hope. Many of us learned how to offer a graduation ceremony last year in a socially distanced COVID environment, but this year our kids may be able to gather together for some social activities and celebrations. We might be able to have more than 100 persons attend a ceremony; time will tell.

Whereas this current school year we have been forced to learn new ways of providing our students instruction, we have also learned that we can successfully offer instruction in new ways. When the children could not be physically present, our teachers and administrators have worked very hard to make learning interesting and exciting for them; the adults have accepted the challenges abruptly thrown at them to do what is best for the children. Newscaster David Brinkley said, "A successful man is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks others have thrown at him." Over this school year, you, as school Board members, in concert with your administrative teams, teachers, and communities have used the bricks that have been thrown by COVID to lay a firm foundation for the futures of our children. Thank you for your service on behalf of the children. Good luck on your districts' upcoming budget votes. Please continue to stay safe and healthy.

Rodney George