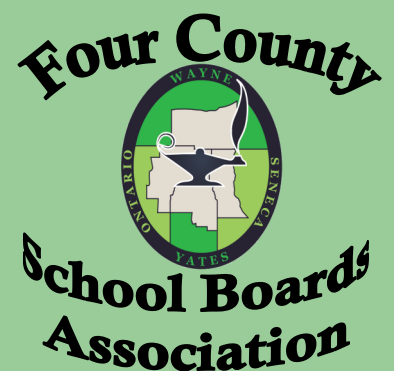


NEWS NOTES



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February 2017

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Tuesday March 21, 2017

THE GENEVA COUNTRY CLUB

Route 14, Geneva NY

5:30 Registration/Conversation

5:45 Board of Directors' Meeting

6:30 Dinner

7:30 Program

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PANEL DISCUSSION
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES-HEALTHY SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

Please make your reservations no later than Thursday 3/16/17

PRESIDENTS' & VICE PRESIDENTS' DINNER & PROGRAM

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

5:45pm - Registration/Conversation

6:15pm - Dinner/Program

Four County Offices and Meeting Room

Wayne-finger Lakes BOCES Regional Support Center, Maple Building, Newark

**Let us know what you would like to talk about, learn about,
share with one another! The evening is yours to plan!**



PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

My daughter, who is a senior in college, recently called me to thank me for my board service. Although she has always been supportive, she called because she had just gone to a panel discussion about advocacy. The panel discussion, which was held to discuss environmental issues on the federal level, encouraged the audience to get involved on any level, noting that local service can be equally or more rewarding. The discussion became more about getting involved than any specific issue.

As board members we are well aware of issues that affect our students/staff and districts. When you feel uncertain of the issues or of how to present them, the Four County legislative papers can help organize your thoughts. Now is an excellent time to channel the current political energy and our knowledge of education and the issues, both on the state and federal level, to inform and engage our family and friends. Legislators know they need to listen to elected officials like school board members, but I believe they hold the opinions of parents and community members in high regard. They know an issue is important when they hear from people they haven't heard from before.

February and March are considered "advocacy season" for school board members. Our legislative papers are done and the Capital Conference is held in Albany (when there isn't a blizzard.) Please take time this month to share with legislators your knowledge of what your district needs.

Beth



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**Sharon A.
Sweeney**
Executive Director

Sue Wyatt
*Administrative
Assistant*



FROM YOUR AREA DIRECTOR

As it is February in upstate New York, I am hoping you are warm as we know it will be getting hot as we all work on building our district budgets.

Our Capital Conference in Albany was canceled due to inclement weather; as I write this message, a reschedule date has not yet been determined. Our major focus for the Capital Conference is to engage in conversations with our legislative leaders and implore them to make positive changes to benefit funding for public schools and improving policies on behalf of our students. As school board members, it is imperative that we regularly reach out to our legislators in Albany and in their local offices. Please call them, write them, and, when they are in their home offices, go visit them.

The governor's proposed budget adds some additional dollars for public education, but how it will be distributed is always in question. It took us too many years to rid our schools of the burden of the Gap Elimination Adjustment but we cannot let our legislators believe they are done. They must engage educators and school board members to correct the Foundation Aid formula. This continues to be a major impetus of our advocacy efforts.

The governor has proposed free college tuition for NYS students attending a public college; the legislature has proposed raising TAP eligibility and allowing it to be used in both public and private colleges. Our focus has always been on public education and, in my opinion that should continue for P-16 schooling. That is, allocating public funds for private college opportunities is not our best focus for public funds. Also, whereas the governor's college tuition proposal is worth consideration, shouldn't we be focused first on proper, adequate funding for K-12, or better yet, Pre K-12? Ensuring that all children receive a sound, basic education does extend beyond high school, but it also starts before kindergarten, which, by the way, in regulation, full day kindergarten is not even mandated. Shouldn't the State budget first ensure appropriate funding for Pre K and K-12 before starting a new program for post-high school?

Clearly, we also have the questions as to what might be coming from the federal government. At the end of January, several Board members from all Area 2 School Boards Associations dedicated our time to go to Washington where we were able to meet with aides from Senators' Schumer and Gillibrand offices. The discussions centered on concerns with the nominated new Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos' lack of experience and derision towards public education; as you are aware her appointment was confirmed on February 7. Other items of interest discussed in Washington centered on the ESSA roll out and IDEA funding.

As always, winter/spring is a very busy time for all School Boards of Education. I wish you well in your budget development process and I thank you for your continued, voluntary service on behalf of all children.

Rodney



FOUR COUNTY WEBSITE ADDS "MEMBERS ONLY" PORTAL

The Four County website has now included a "members only" log in protected section on the website. Log in and create your password and then consider how we might best take advantage of the opportunity to communicate and share information between and among members.

<http://www.fourcountysba.org>



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FOUR COUNTY HOSTS SEMINAR FOR PROSPECTIVE SCHOOL BOARD MEMEBERS

On Saturday, March 18, 2017, Four County will host the annual "Seminar for Prospective School Board Members." This event is widely advertised and open to any community member considering candidacy for their local school board or just curious to know more about how a school board operates! The event is a community service with no fee for those attending.

The program is presented by a panel of current school board members, a superintendent and a school attorney.

Notice is sent to all media outlets in the Four County service area, public libraries, PTA/PTO presidents, board clerks, board presidents, and superintendents. Four County clerks include the information with the packets provided to those who pick up petitions. Please encourage anyone you know who would be interested to please join us on the 18th. While registration is not required, it is encouraged to facilitate planning. Light refreshments are available.

SEMINAR FOR PROSPECTIVE SCHOOL BOARD MEM-

SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 2017

8:45 am - 12:00 noon

Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES
Four County Offices and Meeting Room
Maple Building
Newark, New York



LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

By
HEATHER ZELLERS
Legislative Committee Chair

After many early Saturday morning sessions, the Legislative Committee completed drafting the State, Federal, and Regents/Regulatory Position Papers for 2016-2017. Those papers were then unanimously approved by the Board of Directors at their January meeting as the official 2016-2017 legislative agenda for the Association. Copies of the papers are available on the Four County website at <http://www.fourcountysba.org/advocacy>

Federal Advocacy - Representing Four County at the National School Boards Association National Advocacy Institute (NAI) were Legislative Committee Chair **Heather Zellers** and Executive Director **Sharon Sweeney**. Meetings were held with NY Senators and area representatives to the House of Representatives. Legislative committee members received information detailing the NSBA sessions that Heather attended as well as a federal update and reflections. If your district needs information pertaining to Federal Issues, please refer to the NSBA Federal Advocacy website. <https://www.nsba.org/advocacy/federal-legislative-priorities>

State Advocacy - Several Four County members were scheduled to attend the NYSSBA Capital Conference that was cancelled due to severe weather in the Albany area this past weekend. Beginning in January, Association members have been meeting with State Legislators in local district offices. Sharon has scheduled meetings with all the membership's representatives. Local action is critical in communicating the impact of educational decisions in our region. As local leaders, we have the district and regional data that is necessary for our representatives in Albany to make informed decisions. All legislative members are encouraged to attend these meetings. For additional background materials please see the Four County website under advocacy or the NYSSBA Budget Priorities and Key Issues page. <http://www.nyssba.org/advocacy-legislation/key-issues/>



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February 2017

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE NEWS

Association President **Beth Thomas** (Canandaigua) is sad to report the resignation of **Bill Buchko** (Cananda) as Chair of the Legislative Committee. Increasing personal demands necessitated his decision. Thank you to Bill for his passionate dedication to Four County advocacy for the more than two years of his leadership. President Thomas is happy to report the appointment of **Legislative Committee Vice-Chair Heather Zellers** (Seneca Falls) to the Chair position of that Committee. We welcome Heather and look forward to her equally passionate commitment to Four County advocacy efforts.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 28, 2017

Presidents' and Vice Presidents' Meeting - 5:45pm
Four County SBA Office/Meeting Room

March 12, 2017

Daylight Savings Time Begins

Don't forget to change your clocks

March 15, 2017

By-Laws Committee Meeting - 5:30pm
Four County SBA Office/Meeting Room

March 18, 2017

Seminar For Prospective School Board Members
9:00am - 12:00pm
Four County SBA Office/Meeting Room

March 21, 2017

General Membership Meeting - 5:30pm
Board of Directors' Meeting - 5:45pm
Dinner - 6:30pm / Program - 7:30pm
Geneva Country Club

April 24 or 25, 2017

Board of Directors' Meeting - 5:45pm
Four County SBA Office/Meeting Room

May 18, 2017

Annual Meeting - 5:30pm
Dinner - 6:30pm / Program - 7:30pm
Location to be determined

