



SPRING ELECTION RESULTS:

2025-2026 Officers:

President: Robin Johnson

Vice President: Julie Nevelizer

Congratulations to Robin and Julie!



Left to Right: Robin Johnson, Julie Nevelizer, and Beth Thomas - Treasurer

"I want to thank you all for electing me to serve as your next Four County SBA President. I am looking forward to working with Howard, Julie, and Sue to provide some great programs in the coming year!"
- Robin Johnson

"I would like to thank everyone for their trust in me as Vice President of this amazing organization. I look forward to a great year of learning programs and informative discussion events with all our member School Districts. Howard, Robin, and Sue, I can't wait to put our heads together for another great year!"
- Julie Nevelizer

4CSBA UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE

Saturday - 6/14/2025 Legislative Committee Meeting

Saturday - 6/28/2025 Mandated Governance Training

JULY

Saturday - 7/19/2025 Mandated Fiscal Training



SAVE THE DATE

NYSSBA's Annual Convention & Education Expo
OCT. 23-25, 2025 // NEW YORK CITY
NEW YORK HILTON MIDTOWN

Important!

The NYSSBA Convention will be held in New York City, this year on October 23rd-25th. We are researching the hiring of a bus to take members to the Convention again this year. The bus will pick up at Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES campus here in Newark and deliver you directly to the convention hotel. The bus will leave New York City at noon on Saturday the 25th to return to Newark.

We need to know by July 1st how many people are interested in joining Howard on the bus, as the price is much less the earlier we book. We also need to know how many would like to leave Newark, Wednesday afternoon on October 22nd to attend the law conference Thursday morning vs how many would prefer to leave Newark Thursday the 23rd early in the morning. Please reach out to the office @ 4countysba@edutech.org to let us know if you are interested in riding the bus, and which date you prefer to depart.

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President

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Vice President
Past President

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Messages from:
NYSSBA
Area 2 Director
Legislative Co-Chairs

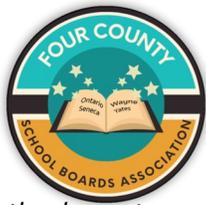
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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we come to the end of my first year, I want to thank everyone who has helped me to settle into this position. Even though I have been in the region for the last 30 years, I have learned so much about the work that gets done by Four County SBA and how important it is to our region. I also want to wish everyone a happy end to the 24-25 School Year. This is a very busy, crazy time with many events, celebrations, ceremonies, and successes being shared. It is such an amazing way to look at all of the success that your District has had over the last year. Enjoy all of these events! I also want to thank our outgoing officers for their years of service and dedication to the organization. Don't go far, you never know when we might need to reach out and tap into your experience and expertise.

I would like to thank everyone, and most especially Sue, for all the work that was done to celebrate our 50th Anniversary at the end of the year meeting. Many stories were told, successes were remembered and people who were part of the success were able to network and reminisce about their time with the organization.

At the same time, we are all gearing up for the 25-26 School Year. Our new officers are in place for the upcoming year, and we are planning the calendar and the events for next year. Please let me know if you have thoughts or ideas on what you would like to see. We want to make sure you continue to see the value in the service that we bring to you on a regular basis.

We are currently holding mandated training classes for new BOE members in June and July and we also just got done holding the new BOE member Get Acquainted Evening where we met and networked with some of our newly elected BOE members.

Finally, make sure that you take some time to rest and recharge over the summer. Enjoy your time with family and friends and do something fun and exciting just because you can. Soon enough we will be back to work again on another successful year. Reach out if you need anything.

See you soon.

Howard Dennis

4CSBA Executive Director
howard.dennis@wflboces.org



Thank you to **C&S Companies** for supporting Four County SBA at our Annual Meeting, Spring Conference, and throughout the year!

We are truly grateful for the difference you make!

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I want to thank everyone, our members, sponsors, and superintendents, for supporting our Four County School Boards Association throughout the past year. A note of thanks also goes out to our communities and business partners for their continuing support of our school districts' programs and education initiatives throughout our region.

On behalf of the Four County School Boards Association, I would also like to thank our district administrative teams and the teachers, throughout the region, for their work with our students to help them develop a vision and hopefulness for their individual success as they grow, learn and prepare for adulthood.

I would also like to thank the key staff of our organization, Howard and Sue for their support of me as an officer of 4CSBA for the past six years. The open sharing of thoughts and concerns among our Board of Directors, Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES, New York State Education Department, New York State School Boards Association, Council of Local School Boards Association, and Rural Schools Association, along with the resulting collaboration about public education and the education of all our students has been invaluable and greatly appreciated.

Support for the Four County School Boards Association's vision and mission continues to be strong and greatly appreciated. It was somewhat humbling and very encouraging to see so many former board members, as well as large numbers of current board members and a growing number of sponsors attend our 50th Anniversary Celebration.

Open communication, sharing of ideas and concerns, and ongoing engaged collaboration among all stakeholders is key to clarifying our vision and direction as we continue to strive to do what is best for our students.

Warm Regards,

Joe McNamara

4CSBA President
Seneca Falls BOE/WFL BOCES BOE
jmcmamara@senecafallscsd.org



Thank you to everyone who helped make our 50th Celebration a success! To view the 2024-2025 Annual Report with 50 years of pictures and memories click on the link below: ↓

[4County | Meeting History | Annual Report](#)

I hope you all have a wonderful summer!

Sue Wyatt

Coordinator of Membership Services

sue.wyatt@wfloces.org | 4countysba@edutech.org



MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

I hope this finds everyone enjoying all things Spring! It has been a super wet and chilly one, but it is better than the snow and ice! It is such a busy and exciting time of year with all the concerts, awards programs, spring sectional games and graduation.

It was so nice seeing all the smiling faces and catching up with so many of you at the Annual Meeting on May 15th marking our 50th Anniversary! It was a great turn out to celebrate all the great things that Four County SBA has to offer.

I want to wish each of you a restful and fantastic summer filled with family, friends, fun, and lots of warmth and sunshine!

All the best,

Robin Johnson

4CSBA Vice President

Penn Yan Board of Education

robinsjohnson@proton.me



MESSAGE FROM THE IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

As I enter my final year as a school board member, I find myself reflecting on more than two decades of service - over 21 years on the Newark Board of Education and more than 30 years in education overall. The landscape of public education has changed dramatically in that time, and while change can often bring uncertainty, I am genuinely excited about several major developments coming to New York schools districts in 2025.

These upcoming mandates signal a shift toward more inclusive, student-centered, and focused educational environments. They will significantly shape our work this summer and influence our future board culture for all Districts.

1. Student Representation on School Boards (Effective July 1, 2025) For the first time, school boards across the state will include at least one non-voting student member. This new law ensures that student perspectives have a seat at the table - something that can only enrich our decision-making. Newark's board will be finalizing policies to guide how students are selected, trained, and mentored for this important role. While student members won't vote or attend executive sessions, they will offer invaluable input that represents the voice of their peers.

2. Bell-to-Bell Cellphone Ban (Beginning 2025–2026 School Year) To better support student learning and mental health, New York State will implement a “bell-to-bell” ban on smartphones and internet-enabled personal devices during the school day. Devices will be stored securely from the first bell to the last, including lunch and hallway time. Exceptions will be made for medical, academic, or IEP-related needs. With clear communication systems in place for parents and guardians, this policy has broad support from educators and mental health professionals alike. Its goal is simple but powerful: to help students focus, reduce anxiety, and build stronger real-world connections.

3. Portrait of a Graduate Another bold and forward-thinking change is the introduction of the Portrait of a Graduate, a statewide framework designed to redefine what it means to be prepared for life after high school. It highlights six key attributes for every student to develop:

- Critical Thinker
- Innovative Problem Solver
- Effective Communicator
- Globally Competent Citizen
- Socially and Emotionally Competent
- Lifelong Learner

This vision will guide changes to curriculum and assessment over the next few years. Beginning in the 2027–2028 school year, students entering 9th grade will be able to demonstrate readiness in ways beyond traditional Regent's exams, which will no longer be a sole graduation requirement.

While we don't yet have the full framework in hand, districts must begin preparing now. That preparation will fall in part to school boards and administrators, and I'm confident we'll rise to the challenge with thoughtful planning and strong community input.

I have deeply valued my time serving the Districts of the Four Counties, and I'm proud of the work we've accomplished together. These changes mark a promising future for New York's students - and I look forward to watching that future unfold, even as I step into a new chapter in July 2026. I am continually proud for the opportunity to serve.

Russ Harris

Nominating Committee Chair
4CSBA Immediate Past President
Newark Board of Education
russell.harris@newarkcsd.org





MESSAGE FROM THE NYSSBA AREA 2 DIRECTOR

Congratulations to your organization's 50th anniversary; 50 years of the Four-County School Boards Association supporting the 27-member school boards and the education of all children within districts of the Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES. Since 1975 your support has been invaluable. I apologize for not attending your celebration as I had been planning to do but a personnel matter occurred, and I was not able to attend. I truly appreciate your support for our State School Boards Association.

I would like to congratulate each of your districts who had a recent successful budget and proposition votes. I know how much work goes into building budgets responsible to your communities while continuing opportunities for children in your communities. I want to extend congratulations to all new Board Members recently elected; thank you for agreeing to volunteer your time and service for the children. I also need to thank any Board members who are leaving your tenure on the School Board in your districts; farewell and thank you for your service; your historical perspectives will be missed. Now we focus on our upcoming reorganizational meetings in July getting ready to focus on the coming school year and beyond.

I hope you are also looking forward to attending our State convention on October 23rd through 25th in New York City. We are planning to provide many learning opportunities for all school board members along with the valuable time to interact with other school board members from around the State; the conversations are always enlightening. On behalf of the New York State School Boards Association, thank you for your service and have a safe and relaxing summer.

Thank you,

Rodney George

NYSSBA Area 2 Director



MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS

We would like to thank Assemblyman Jeff Gallahan for attending our Annual Meeting on May 15th and presenting Four County School Boards Association with a 50th Year Proclamation, which read in part: "Proclaimed that we, Senator Tom O'Mara, Senator Pam Helming, Assemblyman Jeff Gallahan, Assemblyman Brian Manktelow, Assemblyman Phil Palmesano, and Assemblywoman Andrea Bailey along with the citizens of Seneca, Yates, Ontario, and Wayne counties, extend our deepest gratitude and sincere congratulations to the Four County School Boards Association for its five decades of tireless advocacy and commitment to our area schools."

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS MESSAGE CONTINUED...

We appreciate our Legislative Representatives acknowledgement of the work the Association has continued to do for 50 years, and we thank the above-mentioned Senate and Assembly members who also work hard on behalf of our districts and students.

We would like to thank David Frank, Chief of Staff, Assistant Commissioner, Education Policy, at the New York State Education Department for joining us at our Annual Meeting and Presenting a Resolution in Recognition of the 50th Anniversary of the Four County School Boards Association which reads in part: **RESOLVED**, on this 15th day of May 2025, that the Chancellor of the New York State Board of Regents, the Commissioner of Education, and the New York State Education Department Formally recognize and commend the Four County School Boards Association for five decades of exceptional service, advocacy, and leadership on behalf of the students and school districts of Ontario, Seneca, Wayne, and Yates Counties. It is signed by Lester W. Young, Jr., Chancellor, Board of Regents and Betty A. Rosa, Commissioner of Education and President, University of the State of New York.

The Legislative Committee will send out a survey over the summer asking what your district's advocacy needs are. Returning board members may remember seeing this survey in the fall in the past. We hope that sending it out during the summer will help us start work on the Position Papers earlier in the annual cycle. Please keep an eye out for the survey. We hope you will discuss it at your July or August meetings and respond before our September meeting.

The Legislative Committee will meet one more time this year, in June, then take a break for July and August. We will meet again in September, and we hope you will consider joining us in Zoom one Saturday morning each month, September-June to help us advocate for your district's needs.

We will meet next on June 14th where we will discuss the survey to send to districts over the summer.

We hope you have a great summer!



Julie Nevelizer

Newark BOE

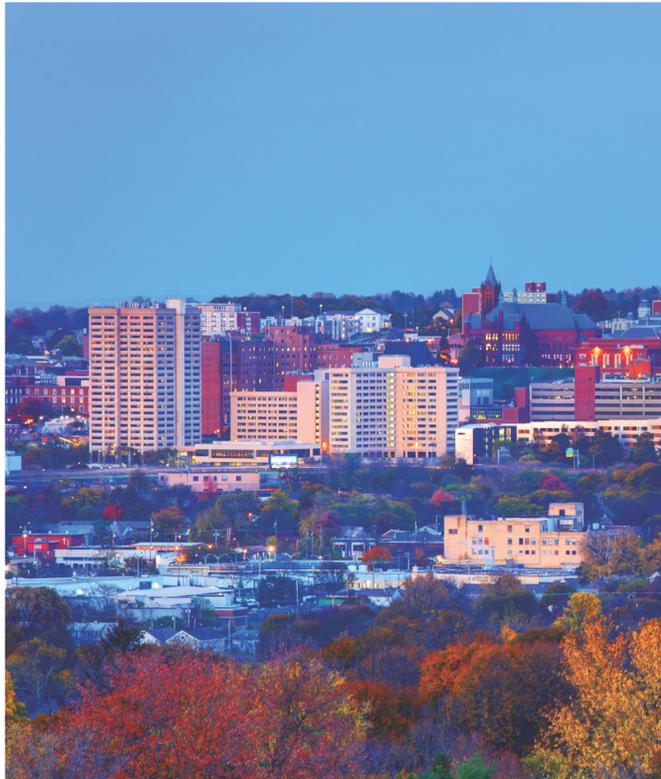
julie.nevelizer@newarkcsd.org



Emily Fisher

Geneva BOE

efisher@genevacsd.org



Rural Summit for Cradle to Career Success

Advancing Place-Based
Initiatives Nationwide

AUGUST 12, 2025

Syracuse University
8 AM - 3 PM

This is an all-call event that will **inspire, uplift, prepare, and connect** participants from across service sectors to learn about **place-based strategies for cradle-to-career success**.

Our context is **rural**. Partners from all contexts are welcome. Dreama Gentry frames place-based work for us with national exemplars & Geoffrey Canada shares examples from the legendary success of the Harlem Children's Zone.



SPEAKER

Dreama Gentry

Founder & CEO
Partners for Rural Impact



SPEAKER

Geoffrey Canada

President, Harlem Children's Zone
Founder, William Julius Wilson Institute

Register yourself or your team at :

[WWW.THURWAYCOALITION.ORG/
CRADLE-TO-CAREER-SUMMIT](http://WWW.THURWAYCOALITION.ORG/CRADLE-TO-CAREER-SUMMIT)



Pre-Conference August 11th - See website for more details.



ANNUAL MEETING 50th YEAR CELEBRATION MAY 15, 2025



Left to Right: Executive Director Howard Dennis accepted a 50th Year Proclamation on behalf of 4CSBA from Assemblyman Jeff Gallahan, signed by: Senator Tom O'Mara, Senator Pam Helming, Assemblyman Jeff Gallahan, Assemblyman Brian Manktelow, Assemblyman Phil Palmesano, and Assemblywoman Andrea Bailey

Left to Right: Executive Director Howard Dennis accepted a 50th Year Proclamation on behalf of 4CSBA from David Frank, NYS Education Department, Chief of Staff, Assistant Commissioner, Education Policy



Left to Right: RSA David Little, Executive Director, NYSED David Frank, Chief of Staff, Assistant Commissioner, Education Policy, and 4CSBA Robin Johnson, Vice President



Left to Right: C&S Companies Sharon Sweeney - 4CBA President 1992-1994 and 4CBA Executive Director 1994-2018, WFL BOCES Anne Morgan - 4CBA President 2011-2013, WFL BOCES Lynn Gay - 4CBA President 1990-1992, and Judy Huber - 4CBA 2nd Vice President 1982-1983 and 4CBA Executive Director 1983-1992



The Geneva High School "C Students Rock Band" were fantastic as they entertained guests before dinner with some throw back songs that were perfect for celebrating the last 50 years.



Geneva High School "C Students" Rock Band



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF SERVICE MAY 15, 2025

