



25th Annual Legislative Brunch

MHSSC's 25th annual legislative brunch, sponsored by HSBC Bank, was held on February 6th at the Hotel Thayer at West Point.

With over 125 people in attendance, the schools in our region were well-represented at this breakfast meeting.

Laura Mann (NYSSBA) presented a video and spoke about being a change agent for kids.

Terrence Olivo, MHSSC's Research Director and Chief Operating Officer for Orange-Ulster BOCES, articulated clearly our legislative platform and delivered a strong message to our legislators. During the question and answer portion of our program, many school personnel commented on the education cuts that will have to be made if the state does not assume its rightful share of support for our schools.

Eileen Casey, MHSSC's Legislative Director, moderated the program and called on legislators to respond to our issues.



MHSSC's Annual Legislative Brunch at Hotel Thayer at West Point



Assemblywoman Ellen Jaffee speaks during our brunch



Senator William J. Larkin, Jr. addresses our audience at the brunch



Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther with Bill Boss (O/U BOCES)



Assemblywoman Nancy Calhoun with MHSSC President Anne Byrne and Beth Blashka (Valley Central)



Assemblywoman Annie Rabbitt with Ron Sommer, Bill Kelly, and Richard Brockel (Greenwood Lake)

P-16 Initiative by Dean Robert Michael

The Mid-Hudson Region P-16 partnership grew out of a New York State Department of Education initiative to encourage regional partnerships to engage issues of teacher quality and preparation.

On January 15, eighteen representatives from Mid-Hudson region districts, schools, BOCES, two- and four-year colleges, teacher centers and the Mid-Hudson School Study Council gathered at SUNY New Paltz at the invitation of Dean Robert Michael to talk about issues of concern to their schools and districts. Out of the lively discussion

came the clear need to focus on two areas: alignment and diversity. Broadly, it is in the transition from high school to community and/or four-year colleges that the issues relating to lack of alignment between state standards for high school curricula and college expectations for entry requirements become most evident. As well, there is growing concern that teachers as a group are becoming less reflective of the diversity of the students that they teach.

Out of last year's Mid-Hudson P-16 partnership's discussion of the need for teachers in high-needs areas grew "It's

a Class Act: Future Teacher Information Day," a conference for high school students interested in careers in teaching/education. The initial 2009 event, sponsored by the P-16 group, was hosted by Mount Saint Mary College and featured workshops on various areas of teaching. This year's event, to be held at SUNY New Paltz on March 16, 2010, will also feature workshops on teaching careers and a talk by Debra Calvino, 2010 New York State Teacher of the Year.

MHSSC Legislative Platform for 2010

Understanding Our Mission

In times of crisis, educating our children is critical to our country's future.

Schools are both the social fabric and foundation of our communities, state, and country. As such, our schools bind our communities together.

Schools have neither a budgetary nor regulatory authority; we have different issues. Schools are unique; we prepare today's children to be future educated, productive, and contributing citizens.

The outcomes of our education system directly affect the future of our communities, our state, and our nation.

As social services are cut, our schools are absorbing these programs without any extra funding.

With dire consequences to follow, we are forced to make cuts in school programs and services that are critical for our families and communities.

Since our budget deadlines are firm, we cannot present a realistic budget until we know how much revenue we will receive from the state.

Because our credibility is on the line, we ask you for no mid-year cuts and allow us to do our job by passing a budget on time.

Flexibility In Mandates

During this crisis, we ask you to pass no more unfunded mandates and give us options and relief from existing mandates.

Absent flexibility in the many unfunded or partially funded mandates that are imposed upon us, we will be forced to make irrational cuts to our programs that will hurt children and by extension, our communities.

For your consideration, we have put together a mandate relief list, including the following:

*In 50+ pages, New York mandates go above and beyond federal guidelines

*The volume of required testing results in a direct loss of classroom teaching time.

*The many audit layers are redundant and costly in personnel time.

We ask you to place a high priority for mandate relief on your agenda.

Responsibility And Government

These are unprecedented times, and we need unprecedented solutions.

Collectively, you have the legislative power to address the dire situation facing all of us, and we need you to focus on fixing the fundamental financial issues of the state before the situation becomes irreparably broken.

We believe the survival of public education in New York State is at serious risk. The issues and potential dire outcomes we deal with directly affect our future.

During times of crisis, politicians must become statesmen (and women) and distinguish themselves by courage and action.

Our school districts have the confidence in you to take the action needed to save public education and our state.

Please don't let us down.

Educational Leadership Award

MHSSC and SUNY New Paltz announce the co-sponsorship of an award for educational leadership. Designed to recognize those individuals who have demonstrated outstanding school leadership, this award will be bestowed on our school leaders who are not eligible to participate in our annual awards for excellence program at Anthony's in October.

At MHSSC's Annual Meeting, up to three awards will be granted from the nominations we receive from our districts and from SUNY New Paltz.

Research Update

MHSSC's Collective Bargaining Survey Report was discussed at our December 9th regional forum in Newburgh. Copies of the report were mailed to our member superintendents shortly after the forum. Our excellent response rate enabled us to assemble a comprehensive report on

The nomination form consists of three parts. The first part lists the candidate's educational and academic background. The second part is the rationale for the nomination. This narrative should include the following: how the candidate has increased the school's capacity to improve educational results; specific examples of excellence and creativity; and how his/her work has extended throughout the district/campus and beyond. The final segment of the form asks for up to

three letters of support.

A call for nominations and the nomination form were mailed in January to district clerks for distribution to appropriate school personnel. Completed forms are due in our study council office by February 25th. A committee will review the nominations and announce the recipients in March.

We encourage you to participate in this effort and recognize those individuals who have demonstrated outstanding educational leadership in your district.

collective bargaining in the Hudson Valley. Thanks to all who participated in this endeavor!

Our annual reports on Enrollment and True Tax were mailed to the office of our superintendents in December.

In January we collated and mailed

SADA (State Aid Data Analysis Committee) materials on combined wealth ratios in our region.

Our report on Budget Advisory Committees was mailed during the last week in January, and the Cost per Pupil report was mailed in early February.

Collective Bargaining Forum

School board members, superintendents, school business officials, and district negotiators were invited to attend MHSSC's third annual forum on collective bargaining on December 9th at the Newburgh Ramada Inn. Close to 60 people registered for this event.

School attorneys David Shaw from Shaw, Perelson, May & Lambert, and John Donoghue and Stuart Waxman from Donoghue, Thomas, Auslander & Drohan gave updates on area collective bargaining agreements. Cost saving measures, area trends, and developing a positive negotiations process were discussed as well. Following a buffet supper, those in attendance participated in a discussion of current issues and concerns.

According to the evaluations we received, our attending members found this session informative, helpful, and very useful. MHSSC expects to host another session in the fall of 2010.



MHSSC President Anne M. Byrne with Jim McGuire (No. Rockland) and attorneys John Donoghue and David Shaw



School attorney John Donoghue with Cornwall Board Members Larry Berger and Barbara Manzari

MHSSC
*Our collective voice for
public education
in the Hudson Valley
for*

Research Reports

DATA Points Almanac

Finance Studies

Area Survey Reports

*Cost-Effective
Professional Development
in local settings*

Legislative Advocacy

School Law Updates

Awards for Excellence

*Collaboration with
SUNY New Paltz*

Save the Dates

Workshop For District Clerks

March 18, 2010
9:00 am - Noon
Newburgh Ramada Inn

*FOIL and Open Meetings Law
Annual Meeting Update*

Legal Update For School Administrators

March 24, 2010
4:30 - 7:30 pm
Newburgh Ramada Inn

*Fireside chat with
NYSSBA's General Counsel
Jay Worona*

*What can you say? What can't you say?
To parents, the public, and the press
when faced with custody orders,
subpoenas, separation agreements,
lawyers, and the legal process
Jim Drohan and Stu Waxman
Donoghue, Thomas, Auslander & Drohan*

Workshop For Newly Elected School Board Members

June 5, 2010
9:00 am - 1:00 pm
Newburgh Ramada Inn

*An orientation session for newly
elected board members*

MHSSC Annual Dinner Meeting

April 29, 2010
Inn at Central Valley
6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

*Panel presentation on surviving
and thriving in a difficult economy*

MHSSC

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Annual School Law Conference

August 6, 2010
9:00 am - 1:00 pm
Lecture Center
SUNY New Paltz

*MHSSC's 55th annual
school law conference
with proceedings for all attendees*

MHSSC Executive Committee Members 2009-2010

President - Anne M. Byrne, Nanuet

Vice President - Richard Hooley, Valley Central

Treasurer - Ivan Katz, Fallsburg

Past President - Christopher Como, Dutchess BOCES

Valencia Douglas - Nyack, Richard Feller - Monticello, Leslie Ford - Onteora, Roberta Greene - Washingtonville, Gerard Gretzinger - Kingston, Kenneth Hilton - Sullivan West, Lloyd Jaeger - Millbrook, Edward McCormick, Arlington/Dutchess BOCES, Dean Robert Michael - SUNY New Paltz, Martha Murray - Minisink Valley, Carl Onken - O/U BOCES, Frank Pepe - Arlington, Joseph Phelan - Rhinebeck, Joseph Sciortino - Pawling, Mark Silverstein - Hawthone-Cedar Knolls, Marc Space - Putnam Valley, Michael Vanyo - Liberty, Mark Villanti - Haldane, Lisa Wiles - Ellenville, Joseph Zanetti - Tuxedo, Peggy Zugibe - No. Rockland

Ex-Officio Members

Steven Poskanzer - SUNY New Paltz President

Terrence Olivo - Orange/Ulster BOCES, Larry Thomas - Sullivan BOCES

John Pennoyer - Dutchess BOCES, Mary Jean Marsico - Rockland BOCES

Martin Ruglis - Ulster BOCES, Robert Monson - Southern Westchester BOCES

Honorary Member - William F. Moran

Staff

Eileen Casey - Legislative Director

Lynne Cruger - Assistant to the Director

Terrence Olivo - Research Director

Susan Doyle - Executive Director



