



22nd Annual MHSSC Legislative Brunch Addresses No District Left Behind

With over 120 people in attendance, MHSSC and Bank of America hosted our 22nd annual legislative brunch in February.

MHSSC Legislative Director Eileen Casey spoke eloquently about our 2007 legislative platform.

In addressing funding issues, Eileen noted the woefully inadequate state aid formula and called upon our legislators to use the CFE decision as an opportunity to develop a new statewide system of funding for public education that is fair, clear, and predictable. She asked our legislators to recognize the urgency of this problem and provide resources that will enable our schools to offer a sound basic education to all students.

Eileen's remarks included statements on two federal issues—NCLB and PL 94-142. As our districts are asked to do more for these mandates, they are receiving less financial aid with more and more of the costs of these programs falling to the local taxpayer.

In a very powerful summary statement, Eileen asked our elected officials in their efforts to develop a new state aid funding system to adopt the mantra of NDLB - **No District Left Behind**. She declared when *districts* are left behind in terms of financial resources, it is inevitable that *children* will be left behind.

It is hoped our elected officials will remember this motto as they fund our schools and pass legislation affecting our children.



Senator John Bonacic with MHSSC Legislative Director Eileen Casey



Assemblywoman Nancy Calhoun with Fred Cook (Washingtonville)



SUNY New Paltz Provost David Lavallee and Dean of Education Robert Michael with Senator Bonacic



Robert Stewart (Monticello) and Ann Fadgen (Wappingers) with Senator Steve Saland

Calendar Highlights

Annual Meeting

May 31, 2007
Inn at Central Valley

Workshop for Newly Elected School Board Members

June 2, 2007
Newburgh Ramada Inn

MHSSC

Executive Committee Meeting

June 13, 2007
Newburgh Ramada Inn

Financial Responsibilities of School Board Members

June 16, 2007
Casarino's Catering in Montgomery

Annual School Law Conference

August 3, 2007
SUNY New Paltz

Workshop for New School Board Members

September 8, 2007
Casarino's Catering in Montgomery

MHSSC

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MHSSC Annual Meeting

MHSSC will host its annual dinner meeting on May 31st at the Inn at Central Valley.

Doug Gerhardt (NYSCOSS) and David Little (NYSSBA) will address The Light Side and The Dark Side of New York State. Using a Star Wars theme for the evening, they will share their insights about our state operations.

Members will adopt a budget, elect officers and executive committee members for 2007-08. The proposed slate of officers for next year include President, Debra Lynker (Livingston Manor), Vice President,

Christopher Como (Dutchess BOCES), Treasurer, Anne Byrne (Nanuet), and Past President, Joseph Zanetti (Tuxedo).

The proposed slate of new executive committee members include the following: Eileen Camasso (Rondout Valley) Lloyd Jaeger (Millbrook), Martha Murray (Minisink Valley), Jane Sandbank (Brewster), Joseph Sciortino (Pawling), Rosemarie Stark (Pine Bush) and Mark Silverstein (Hawthorne-Cedar Knolls).

Executive Committee reappointments are as follows: Nancy George

(Tri-Valley), Frank Pepe (Arlington), Lisa Wiles (Ellenville), Joseph Zambito (South Orangetown), and Peggy Zugibe (North Rockland).

Also, we will recognize the efforts of retiring executive committee members Ann Bogert (O/U BOCES), John DiNatale ((Haldane) and Alan Derry (Sullivan West).

Once again, Turner Construction Company will sponsor our social hour from 6:00 pm until 7:00 pm.

Be sure to join us for an informative and enjoyable evening. Notices were mailed in mid-April.

Legal Update for School Administrators

With sponsorship from Bond, Schoeneck & King, PLLC, MHSSC hosted a legal update for school administrators at the Newburgh Ramada Inn on March 29th. This late afternoon/early evening program gave our school administrators a unique opportunity to meet with school attorneys and discuss a number of legal concerns they face regularly in their schools.

In speaking about the constitutional rights of students, Howard Miller and John Miller (Bond, Schoeneck & King) started our program by addressing student discipline issues concerning religious expression in schools, political



Kerri Stroka (O/U BOCES) and Cheryl Nuciforo (Saugerties) with attorney Jim Drohan



Attendees Deb Heppes (O/U BOCES), Joe Sciortino (Pawling) and Carmine Giangreco (Roscoe)

speeches, and student publications.

After dinner Jim Drohan and Stu Waxman (Donoghue, Thomas, Auslander & Drohan) reviewed guidelines for conducting fair and effective student and staff investigations. In an interactive format, they discussed due process, defamation, confidentiality, and students who serve as witnesses.

This second annual workshop for school administrators was an informative experience for our attendees and our evaluations were very positive. The support we received from Bond, Schoeneck & King allowed MHSSC to offer this program at a reduced cost to our members.

FOCUS ON RESEARCH



In addition to the reports published each year by our study council, MHSSC also issues special survey reports. With the guidance of our research director, Terrence Olivo, our research committee evaluates our research efforts annually and establish initiatives for the coming year.

This year MHSSC issued the following survey reports: Internal Auditor Function, School Board Member Training, and LEP/ESL Services. Also, we distributed the data charts from the Nine County Coalition to our members.

ANNUAL REPORTS

Enrollment
True Tax Rates
Estimated Operating Expense
Cost Per Pupil
Individualized Finance Study

Plus.....

School District Almanac
DATA POINTS
Mid-Hudson Edition

MHSSC Sets School Board Training Sessions

MHSSC has set three important training sessions for our member boards of education.

On June 2nd, we will offer a half day orientation session for newly elected board members at the Newburgh Ramada Inn. The morning's agenda will focus on legal responsibilities, parliamentary procedure, realities of school board service, understanding 'boardsmanship', the July organizational meeting, and building the superintendent/school board relationship.

At noon attendees will have an opportunity to have lunch with representatives from their county school boards associations.

MHSSC and Nugent & Haeussler will sponsor the mandated six hour training session on the fiscal respon-

sibilities of school board members. This program will take place on June 16th, from 8:30 am until 4:00 pm at Cascarino's Catering on Route 208 in Montgomery. With Nugent & Haeussler's generous support, we are able to offer these 5 required courses for a fee of \$40. This includes all workshop expenses, materials, refreshments, and lunch.

On September 8th, MHSSC will provide a full day of training for new school board members. Focusing on board roles and responsibilities and the school board-superintendent leadership team, this program is also being offered as an excellent refresher course for nearly new and veteran board members alike.

With experienced, articulate presenters and important agenda topics,



these sessions will provide our school board members with outstanding professional development opportunities that are close to home and cost-effective.

Program notices and reservation forms will be mailed to our superintendents and district clerks approximately 6 weeks before each event.

Workshop for Education Office Professionals

On April 26th, education office professionals gathered at the Newburgh Ramada Inn to attend a full day professional development workshop sponsored by MHSSC.

Margo May (Shaw, Perelson, May, and Lambert) opened our program with a legal update for our attending school secretaries. She ad-

dressed sexual harassment issues, hostile work environment, FERPA, and confidentiality issues.

Our second speaker was educational consultant Susan McNeil. Susan has been an instructor and keynote presenter throughout New York State talking about adult and children's health issues.

Bringing a different twist to her programs, Susan welcomed laughter and encouraged participation as she spoke about stress, communication, and humor. She shared valuable insights for effectively handling our everyday challenges.

Our attendees gave many positive evaluations for this conference.



Presenter Margo May is surrounded by attendees from East Ramapo, June Salerno, Maureen Morgan, Loraine Knabe, and Teresa Keaveny



Marianne Policella (Beacon) Theresa Simone (Beacon) and Gloria Valle (Newburgh) pose with Margo May (Shaw, Perelson, May & Lambert)



Presenter Susan McNeil (second from left) stands with attendees from Fallsburg, Michele Telesky Sandra Salovin and Tracie Magie

Thank you Senators Larkin and Morahan!

This year, MHSSC received two legislative grants to upgrade our council's technology. We extend our thanks and appreciation to Senator William J. Larkin and Senator Thomas Morahan for their assistance in obtaining these grants.

Leadership Symposium

At an invitational conversation sponsored by MHSSC and the School of Education at New Paltz, area educators gathered at SUNY New Paltz to discuss school leadership issues and concerns. Faculty from the Department of Educational Administration at New Paltz and school leaders from the region met on April 20th to identify and address different aspects of school administration. Eileen Casey, MHSSC Legislative Chairperson and retired superintendent from Monticello, chaired this event.

Symposium participants began by examining the face of school administration in 2007. They discussed recruitment, retention, diversity, salaries, and job descriptions. Discussion continued with predictions for future trends in school administration.

The heart of the symposium focused on what we can do to foster quality leaders for our schools - for today and for the future. Participants focused on improving the candidate pool in quality as well as quantity and retention efforts.

Following a similar symposium in 1998, MHSSC issued a white paper entitled, *Who Will Lead Our Schools?* Participants from this year's conversation expect to issue an updated white paper later this spring.

Annual Law Conference

MHSSC's Annual School Law Conference will take place on the SUNY New Paltz campus on Friday, August 3, 2007. This prestigious program will highlight current legal issues affecting our schools.

Representatives from Donoghue, Thomas, Auslander & Drohan will begin our program with a presentation entitled, *Clearing My Space* and will cover student/staff discipline concerning inappropriate electronic communications both in and out of school.

The agenda continues with an important update on special education issues by Howard Miller of Bond, Schoeneck & King, PLLC.

NYSSBA's General Counsel, Jay Worona, will give us an update on recent decisions of the courts and the commissioner. Jay will continue in our program and moderate a point-counterpoint debate between Stephanie Roebuck (Keane & Beane) and Beth Sims (Shaw & Perelson). In debating civil rights actions against school districts, Ms. Sims will serve as legal representative for the parents and Ms. Roebuck will serve as legal representative for school districts.

This conference will provide timely information for all school personnel. Mark your calendars now and plan to attend this important program.

MHSSC Executive Committee Members 2006-2007

President - Joseph P. Zanetti, Tuxedo

Vice President - Debra Lynker, Livingston Manor

Treasurer - Mark Silverstein, Hawthorne-Cedar Knolls

Ann Bogert - O/U BOCES, Anne Byrne - Nanuet, Christopher Como - Dutchess BOCES, Alan Derry - Sullivan West, John DiNatale - Haldane, Valencia Douglas - Nyack, Richard Feller - Monticello, Nancy George - Tri-Valley, Carmine Giangreco - Roscoe, Richard Hooley - Valley Central, - John McCarthy - Highland, Edward McCormick, Arlington/Dutchess BOCES, Dean Robert Michael - SUNY New Paltz, Carl Onken, O/U BOCES, Frank Pepe - Arlington, Joseph Phelan - Rhinebeck, Marilyn Terranova - Carmel, Lisa Wiles - Ellenville, Joseph Zambito - South Orangetown, Peggy Zugibe - No. Rockland

Ex-Officio Members

Steven Poskanzer - SUNY New Paltz President, Martin Handler - Sullivan BOCES, Robert Hanna - Orange/Ulster BOCES, John Pennoyer - Dutchess BOCES, James Ryan - Rockland BOCES, Martin Ruglis - Ulster BOCES, Ronald Smalls - 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

