



Awards Dinner Hosts 800

MHSSC's Awards Dinner at Anthony's Pier 9 hosted over 800 people. Family, friends, and colleagues joined our 39 award winners at this October event. With additional support from Bank of America, we were able to include a guest for each award winner at this dinner. This October event granted 39 awards to individuals who have demonstrated their pursuit of excellence.

Awards were given for excellence in school board service, administration, teaching, support staff service, and our newest category, pupil personnel services.

MHSSC is proud of this regional effort to recognize those outstanding people in our schools who have provided exceptional service to our children. We congratulate this year's winners, and we thank them for their exceptional work on behalf of our

school children.

It's not too early to start thinking about nominating someone from your district for MHSSC's 2006 awards for excellence. Nomination forms will be mailed in May with a return date in mid-July. The Dean of Education will mail nominations for excellence in teaching in March.

We invite your district to participate in this year's awards program to recognize and reward exceptional individuals in your schools.

Winners of the 2005 Awards for Excellence in Pupil Personnel Services

Winners of the 2005 Awards for Excellence in Support Staff Services

Winners of the 2005 Awards for Excellence in Administration

Winners of the 2005 Awards for Excellence in School Board Service

Winners of the 2005 Awards for Excellence in Teaching

Calendar Highlights

Mentoring Program for New Administrators

Newburgh Ramada Inn
February 8, 2006

MHSSC - Bank of America Annual Legislative Brunch

Hotel Thayer, West Point
February 11, 2006

Legal Issues for Middle Management

Newburgh Ramada Inn
March 14, 2006

MHSSC Executive Committee Meeting

Newburgh Ramada Inn
March 22, 2006

Workshop for District Clerks

Newburgh Ramada Inn
March 30, 2006

MHSSC Annual Meeting

Inn at Central Valley
April 5, 2006

MHSSC

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MHSSC Legislative Platform for 2005

Demonstrate A Statewide Commitment

Our elected officials must legislate a statewide solution to the CFE decision that assures adequacy and equity for all students in the state.

The state must provide aid to all schools that is fair and equitable, timely, and understandable.

We must have accurate state aid information before we present our budgets for a community vote on the state mandated school budget voting day in May.

Expense driven aids (e.g. excess cost aid, building aid, and BOCES aid) must be maintained in the state's final determination of aid to our schools at levels based on actual expenditures.

A moratorium needs to be declared on the initiation of unfunded mandates as well as the provision of relief from existing unfunded mandates.

We must remember that public education is the foundation that supports our state and our future.

Deliver Budget and Funding Reform

While we recognize the timeliness of last year's budget adoption, the need for budget and funding reform remains necessary.

To plan responsibly for the delivery of educational services to our students, our schools need sufficient funding that can be accurately forecast and is adopted in a timely manner.

If we are to serve successfully the diverse needs of our student population, our schools require increased flexibility in spending.

Enact Contingency Budget Reform

If we are to be efficient educationally, our elected officials must reform the current regulations governing contingency budgets.

We seek contingency budget reform to remove artificial spending limits in areas over which our schools have little or no control.

Areas of increased expenses that must be considered for removal from the contingency budget cap include:

- Employee Health Insurance
- Employee Retirement
- Energy
- Academic Intervention Services
- Special Education

Address Federal Issues NCLB and P.L. 94 -142

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Public Law 94-142 (special education) impose unfunded mandates on our schools. While the intentions are laudable, the laws should be reformed and funded.

NCLB is the significant federal mandate that has been and continues to be under funded. Other than high needs districts, the average NY school district will receive limited funding; yet, the program and cost impacts will be dramatic. The provisions of NCLB will drain funds from public education and ultimately limit opportunities for our children.

While our schools embrace high standards for all, we are wary of the encroaching role of the federal government in our schools. We are concerned about NCLB legislation that is vague in some areas and overly restrictive in others, curtails staffing during a time of critical staffing shortages, overemphasizes standardized assessment, and removes local education decision making as the historic foundation of public education.

Under the banner of raising standards in education, NCLB creates another layer of bureaucracy, erodes local control, and burdens local taxpayers unnecessarily.

P.L. 94-142 must meet its stated goal of 40% funding reimbursement.

*MHSSC and Bank of America
Annual Legislative Brunch
VU
February 11, 2005
Hotel Thayer at West Point*

Legal Update for Middle Management

A full day session on the practical applications of school law for principals, assistant principals, directors, and all interested school administrators

On Wednesday, March 15, 2006, MHSSC will host a one day program on school law for middle managers at the Newburgh Ramada Inn.

Because our school administrators are constantly dealing with situations that can have serious legal implications, MHSSC is presenting this important legal update for all school leaders. Designed to acquaint all attendees with changes in the law that occur through Commis-

sioner's decisions, Regents regulations, legislative action, and court law, the program will focus on the practical applications of the laws with interactive roundtable discussions dominating the agenda.

John Donoghue and James Drohan (Donoghue, Thomas, Auslander & Drohan) will focus on student discipline issues and include the discipline of special education students.

Mark Reinharz and Howard Miller (Bond, Scheneck & King) will discuss avoiding employment discrimination lawsuits and the evaluation, documentation, and discipline of employees within the

framework of the Taylor Law.

David Shaw (Shaw & Perelson) will host a roundtable session on student welfare issues that will include the following: attendance, grading, promotion, child abuse in an educational setting, and child abuse in a community setting.

While this program is tailored for front line school administrators, all directors, central office staff and superintendents are also welcome to attend.

Mark your calendars now and plan to join us for this important legal update for school administrators. Registration announcements will be mailed to your district office in early February.

Council To Host Workshop for District Clerks

MHSSC's annual workshop for district clerks will be held on March 30, 2006 at the Newburgh Ramada Inn. Registration notices will be mailed at the end of February.

Our program will begin with a presentation on the laws governing open meetings and freedom of information. Robert Freeman, Chairperson of the Committee on Open Government will be with us to speak to our clerks and answer their questions. He will provide hand out

guides for each attending clerk.

Our agenda will include also a segment on how to maintain a positive working relationship with the members of your board of education.

This popular annual morning breakfast session provides important professional development for the district clerks in our schools. Also, it is an excellent opportunity to network with area district clerks and discuss issues of common concern.

*Now....
Register online
for MHSSC
workshops and conferences.
Visit our site at
newpaltz.edu/mhssc
and open the calendar
to the specific event.
To register, complete the
registration form
and send the e-mail.*

School Counselors Conference

MHSSC will host its second annual professional development workshop for school counselors on May 4, 2006, at the Newburgh Ramada Inn. This will be a full day of in-service training, and the agenda will focus on the topics suggested by a committee of school counselors.

The day will begin with school attorney, Jillian Cass, from the law firm of Shaw & Perelson. A former law guardian, Jill will give us a 'virtual tour' of the youth legal sys-

tem. She will explain the procedures used in a DFY facility, review the PINS process, and talk about probation and family court.

Rebecca Walters, Director of Child and Adolescent Psychodrama Service at Four Winds Hospital will give an introduction to psychodrama and sociodrama, action methods for

working with children and adolescents in group settings.

Following a buffet lunch, educational consultant Brenda McGuire will spend the afternoon discussing bullying and teasing. She will address how to identify, prevent, and address bullying and teasing behaviors.

We are looking forward to an exciting workshop with our school counselors. Notices and reservations forms will be mailed to the office of your superintendents in late March.



MHSSC Provides School District Almanac for Member Districts Distribution Set for February

MHSSC has authorized the purchase of an almanac of school district facts for its member districts in the Hudson Valley. In a publishing agreement with Long Island's SCOPE, MHSSC contracted to have the almanacs delivered in early 2006.

The almanacs will be distributed to member superintendents in February. As an initial effort this year, MHSSC superintendents will receive the almanac as a benefit of membership without any additional fee. In late spring, the executive committee will evaluate the benefits of the almanac and make decisions on future purchases and distribution.

The information contained in the almanac was compiled by Dr. Jonathan T. Hughes from the Center for Educational Leadership and Accountability at St. John's University. Dr. Hughes has assembled various data in the almanac for the school districts in Long Island and in western New York. School officials have found the information contained in the almanac comprehensive, succinct, and well-organized. We believe this publication

will be a useful tool for all school board members, superintendents, and business officials.

This comprehensive guide to educational statistics includes four sections. While not a complete listing, the first section deals with finance history and includes data in areas such as general fund expenditures, district enrollment, per pupil expenditures, total state aid, STAR figures, property tax revenues, and transportation.

The second data section includes district enrollment indicators, ethnicity indicators, at-risk factors, student demographics, and special education.

Section three of the almanac focuses on student achievement data (grades 4, 8, and regents), and the fourth and final segment of the almanac gives community demographics including (but not limited to) total populations by village, income statistics, employment, student population numbers, owners/renters, and household income.

With an anticipated distribution date of early February, our districts will find the data in the almanac useful in budget preparation and budget publications.



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