



Calendar Highlights

Attracting Quality

Administrators

Newburgh Ramada Inn
May 19, 2005

Workshop for Education Office Professionals

Newburgh Ramada Inn
May 25, 2005

Workshop for Newly Elected School Board Members

Newburgh Ramada Inn
June 4, 2005

MHSSC Executive Committee Meeting

Newburgh Ramada Inn
June 8, 2005

Leadership in the Millennium

August 1 - 5, 2005
SUNY New Paltz

50th Annual School Law Conference

August 5, 2005
SUNY New Paltz

MHSSC

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Slate of Officers and Budget Approved

At the council's annual dinner meeting on April 13th, members approved the 2005-06 MHSSC budget and elected the proposed slate of officers and executive committee members. The council's budget for 2005-06 maintains the current dues schedule.

Elected officers include the following: President, Marilyn Pirkle (Rondout Valley), Vice President, Joseph Zanetti (Tuxedo), Treasurer Mark Lewis (Brewster), and Past President, Edward McCormick (Arlington/Dutchess BOCES).

New executive committee members include Jason Friedman (East Ramapo), Walter Milton (Fallsburg), Frank Pepe (Arlington), Marilyn Terranova (Carmel), Lisa Wiles (Ellenville), and Justine Winters (Onteora).

Members reappointed to the executive committee include Ann Bogert (O/U BOCES), Anne Byrne (Nanuet), Lynn Cybulski (Wallkill), Alan Derry (Sullivan West), Vito DiCesare (Beacon), Joseph Natale (Warwick), and Peggy Zugibe (No. Rockland).

At this meeting, the council recognized two executive committee members who are leaving the council's governing board this year. Donald Andrews (Wallkill) and George Will (Roscoe) were honored for their service to MHSSC's executive committee.

Vincent Coppola, Executive Director of the Western New York Educational Services Council in Buffalo, NY, gave an enjoyable and informative talk about the school board-superintendent relationship.

Law Conference Celebrates 50th Anniversary

MHSSC is set to celebrate the 50th anniversary of our annual school law conference on August 5, 2005, at SUNY New Paltz.

With an extended program, outstanding speakers, and issues of critical concern, this law conference is an event our school personnel should not miss.

NYSSBA's general counsel, Jay Worona, will begin our program with a presentation highlighting landmark cases from the past 50 years that have had the biggest impact on our districts and remain of critical importance today.

Vanessa Sheehan (Guercio and Guercio) will provide an important update on the significant decisions of the commissioner and the courts.

During another segment of our program, Craig Olivo and Mark Reinharz from the law firm of Bond, Schoeneck & King, will talk about the historical and current significance of the Taylor Law.

They will provide a review of how the law has changed through the years and discuss current Taylor Law issues.

Ed Sarzynski (Hogan, Sarzynski, Lynch, Surowka & DeWind LLP) will deliver an expert presentation on the reauthorization of IDEA. His talk will include classification/eligibility criteria, changes in procedural safeguards and components of an IEP, new disciplinary procedures, and revisions in the complaint and hearing process.

Our program, at the Lecture Center on the SUNY New Paltz campus, will begin at 9:00 am and conclude by 2:00 pm. Morning refreshments and lunch will be included. On the day of the conference all participants will receive a copy of the presentations.

Thanks to the support we received for this event, we will be able to offer this commemorative event to our members without a significant increase in fee.

MHSSC ~ Bank of America
Annual Legislative Brunch
Hotel Thayer at West Point
February 5, 2005

MHSSC President Ed McCormick, Senator Thomas Morahan, Senator Vincent Leibell, Senator Stephen Saland, Ralph Caruso (representing Senator Larkin), and Christine Armstrong (Highland Falls)

Senator John Bonacic, Assemblywoman Nancy Calhoun, and Senator Thomas Morahan

Anthony Argulewicz (Wallkill) and Senator John Bonacic

Senator Stephen Saland and President McCormick

MHSSC Legislative Platform for 2005

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, predictable, 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.

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

BUDGET REFORM

The present Albany budget adoption process is dysfunctional and must be reformed.

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

If we are to serve adequately the needs of our diverse student populations, our schools need flexibility in spending.

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

CONTINGENCY BUDGET REFORM

We seek contingency budget reform to remove artificial spending limits in areas over which our schools have 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*

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

FEDERAL ISSUES NCLB & P.L.94-142

No Child Left Behind and Public Law 94-142 impose unfunded mandates on our schools.

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 inevitably drain funds from public education.

While our schools embrace high standards for all, we are wary about 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 educational 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 has never met its stated goal of 40% funding reimbursement.

Schools in our area receive much less than the 40% reimbursement funding promised in the original law.

Advocacy Efforts

While budget issues are a major concern for our school districts, they are not our only legislative concern. MHSSC expects to maintain our advocacy efforts with our elected of-

ficials throughout this legislative session. We will continue to inform our legislators about the effects of future and current legislation on the children in our schools.

Our work with the Nine County Coalition and the State Aid Data Analysis Committee will continue as needed. As appropriate we will send updates to our superintendents.

Executive Committee Member Profile Mark Silverstein

A relatively new addition to our study council's executive committee, Mark Silverstein was elected to serve on MHSSC's governing board in 2004. Mark is the Superintendent of the Hawthorne Cedar Knolls UFSD. Hawthorne Cedar Knolls is a special act district in Hawthorne, New York. Certainly not a stranger to his district, Mark was principal of the Hawthorne Cedar Knolls High School before assuming the superintendent position.

On September 10,

2004, Mark, along with other leaders, was honored at the CBC Education Braintrust Awards Gala. Mr. Silverstein was recognized for the contributions he has made to improve the school environment for underserved, emotionally disabled students. Congressman Major R. Owens, Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus Education Braintrust, in recognizing the award recipients stated, "These honored partnerships demonstrate the ability of diverse or-

ganizations to collaborate in new and visionary ways to empower students and communities alike. This year's winners represent partnerships creating multi-disciplinary approaches to critical and often complex needs of our nation's communities and their youth."

On behalf of the officers and members of MHSSC, we extend our congratulations to Mark, and we look forward to working with him on the study council's executive committee as we address the needs of the school districts in the Hudson Valley.

*Mark K. Silverstein
Superintendent of the Hawthorne Cedar Knolls UFSD*

Council Hosts Workshop for District Clerks

MHSSC's annual workshop for district clerks was held on April 6th at the Newburgh Ramada Inn.

This morning breakfast session provided our clerks with an important legal update on the annual district meeting. Attorney Stephanie Roebuck, from the law firm of Keane and Beane, delivered a comprehensive presentation on the legal responsibilities of the district clerk.

Experienced district clerks Sonnia Ferb (Wallkill) and Maureen Krieger (Pine Bush) contributed to the program by sharing their practical knowledge, seasoned skills, and valuable guidance with those in attendance.

The final segment of the workshop included a discussion of the roles and responsibilities of school boards, maintain-

ing a positive working relationship with the board, and the importance of the role of the district clerk.

Over 35 area district clerks attended this annual event, and the evaluations we received indicated they found the program informative as well as enjoyable.

MHSSC is pleased to provide this important annual update for our district clerks.



*The best minute you spend
is the one you invest
in people.*

Ken Blanchard

Workshop for Education Secretaries

MHSSC's spring workshop for education office professionals will be held on May 25th at the Newburgh Ramada Inn.

This full day of professional development will feature the return of nationally recognized educational consultant, Brenda McGuire. Brenda spoke at last year's conference and received outstanding evaluations. She returns to

the Hudson Valley with new program materials and a new agenda.

For individuals who are over-scheduled, over-worked, and over-loaded, Brenda will talk about managing stress in a stressful world. She will teach stress reducing activities that can be incorporated into our own everyday lives.

In the second part of

her presentation, Brenda will address anger management. She will help participants recognize the signs of anger and learn specific skills to deal effectively with anger.

We are looking forward to a productive workshop with Brenda, and we encourage our school office professionals to join us on May 25th. Reservation forms were mailed in April.

*Brenda McGuire
Educational Consultant*

Looking back.....

*The following true tax rate medians were reported in a 1983/84 MHSSC study:
Orange County - \$21.37
Sullivan County - \$17.82*

*In 2003/04, MHSSC reported the following median true tax rates:
Orange County - \$18.33
Sullivan County - \$17.72*

*Visit our website
www.newpaltz.edu/mhssc
to get calendar updates,
view our upcoming program notices,
review newsletters, and learn more about us.
E-Mail
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***Register for all
MHSSC workshops
and conferences
Online***

***Visit our website and
open the calendar to
the specific event.***

***Send the e-mail, and
you are registered!***

**Mentoring Sessions for
New Administrators**

MHSSC held 6 mentoring sessions for new school administrators during this school year.

Over 30 new school leaders participated in this program. Because we received financial support from a legislative grant, we were able to offer six sessions (instead of 4) and purchase a number of publications for each participant.

Each session focused on a particular theme and a panel of experienced school leaders addressed the specific topics with those in attendance. Following a question and answer session, our presenters continued to dialogue with our new administrators during dinner.

The evaluations we received were outstanding, and we expect to host another series of mentoring sessions for new administrators during the 2005-06 school year.

**Newly Elected School
Board Members**

Once again, MHSSC will offer a Saturday morning program for newly elected school board members. In cooperation with the county school boards associations in the area, we will host this workshop on June 4th, at the Newburgh Ramada Inn.

This session is designed to orient newly elected board members to service on a board of education. Agenda topics include the following: governance and oversight, legal responsibilities, understanding *boardsmanship*, school board realities, and building relationships.

Attendees will meet with representatives from their county school boards associations during lunch.

We encourage strongly all newly elected board members to attend this important orientation session.

**MHSSC Executive Committee Members
2004-2005**

President - Edward McCormick, Arlington, Dutchess BOCES
Vice President - Marilyn Pirkle, Rondout Valley
Treasurer - Joseph Zanetti, Tuxedo
Past President - Jason Friedman, East Ramapo

Donald Andrews - Wallkill, Ann Bogert - O/U BOCES, Anne Byrne - Nanuet, Eileen Casey - Monticello, Christopher Como - Dutchess BOCES, Lynn Cybulski - Wallkill, Alan Derry - Sullivan West, Vito DiCesare - Beacon, Matthew Frumess - Liberty, Debra Jackson - Bedford, Mark Lewis - Brewster, Michael Mahoney - Millbrook, Dean Robert Michael - SUNY New Paltz, Joseph Natale - Warwick Valley, Carl Onken, O/U BOCES, Mark Silverstein - Hawthorne-Cedar Knolls, Jan Volpe - Red Hook, Dodge Watkins - North Rockland, George Will - Roscoe, Peggy Zugibe - No. Rockland

Ex-Officio Members

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

Honorary Member - William F. Moran

Staff

Chris Bergner - Research Associate
Lynne Cruger - Assistant to the Director
Terrence Olivo - Research Director
Ed Stoddard - Legislative Director
Susan Doyle - Executive Director

