

COUNCILGRAM

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL OF SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

Legislature Acts on Budget Bills

Jockeying Takes Precedence Over Governance

After the most acrimonious budget battle in memory, the Legislature has adopted what they characterize as a “baseline” budget. A new maneuver in Albany, the approach was designed less as a budget from which to govern than a tactical exercise with three objectives: eliminate the need for the Legislature to make weekly pilgrimages to Albany to pass emergency spending bills; create an excuse for the Legislature to resume getting paid; and enact a scorched-earth spending plan so distasteful to so many that the Legislative leaders and Governor would have no choice but to return to Albany to undo the potential damage.

The Legislature essentially took the Executive budget bills and removed any

new spending items of interest to the Governor, a move they considered necessary to overcome what they characterized as the Executive’s intransigence. To create urgency, reappropriations and other essential technical devices were also omitted, creating a September 15 time horizon.

The Executive has countered that he has been open to negotiation, but not to capitulation. The exchange is a reminder that perhaps more energy has been put into attempts to affix blame for the extremity of the procedural dysfunction than into the actual budget proper.

Although the Executive claims this budget underfunds state operations by perhaps hundreds of millions of dollars and contains numerous technical defi-

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Employment Bill Becomes Law

Procedures for Conditional Appointments Outlined

Last week, the Governor signed into law legislation permitting school districts to hire employees pending criminal background clearance (Chapter 147 of the Laws of 2001). The law gives school districts the flexibility to offer prospective employees conditional appointments and, under limited circumstances, emergency conditional appointments. The essential information follows.

1. School districts may conditionally appoint prospective employees. However, such employees may not begin working until the district receives conditional clearance from SED. In limited circumstances, school districts may offer

an emergency conditional appointment to a prospective employee. Employees given this type of appointment may work for 20 days without any type of criminal clearance.

2. SED will not be issuing a new form for school districts to request conditional clearance. Instead the department has amended the consent form that prospective employees must sign and submit with their fingerprints to SED. Any prospective employee or school district that mails fingerprints to the department after August 14th should use the new consent form to request conditional clearance. The form is available on the NYSCOSS website.

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**OVER 100 YEARS OF
EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

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NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL OF SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

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Budget

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ciencies, the heightened sensitivity has left tempers brittle and undermined hopes that the supplementation anticipated by the Legislature will come to fruition. On the day the Legislature acted, it rejected over 400 pages of technical amendments from the Executive.

The Legislature has never claimed that this budget was created with an eye toward actual governance, but rather to create a climate of urgency for the adoption of a supplemental budget, at which time they would correct the baseline budget's fiscal and programmatic deficiencies.

The wrangling has left districts in the lurch. While the Executive budget was explicit in its calculation of reductions to various aids, the Legislature has merely adopted the results of the Executive formulas for each district without the underlying formulas themselves. This leaves districts to question whether any distinction now exists between aid streams and whether any linkage remains between expenditures and reimbursements. The budget appropriation would increase school aid by \$382 million, the amount proposed by the Executive, but even this figure is in dispute.

The Legislature rejected all of the Building Aid cost savings measures proposed by the Executive—a move which the Governor claims, and SED estimates, would cost far more than the additional \$382 million, perhaps as much as \$740 million altogether. The Executive failed to provide district-by-district esti-

mates of Building Aid under his proposal, a move which the Legislature has copied, presumably to avoid having to characterize the fiscal impact of rejecting the cost-savings measures.

The budget impasse is complicated not only by the disagreements over spending priorities and amounts, but arcane formatting issues that play a large role in the control of the budget process. Just as the Legislature has sued the Executive for his novel exercise of the line item veto in 1998, the Governor plans to sue the Legislature for their reinterpretation of a 1994 court decision circumscribing their ability to modify Executive appropriations. Since neither case is likely to be resolved in time to affect this year's budget, it is clear that the only budgets in which there can be a great deal of faith are those negotiated with the concurrence of all three parties.

In an environment where the term "memorable" has become synonymous with the achievement of new lows, this will no doubt be one of the most "memorable" years of all. The "baseline" budget is perilously close to becoming the *de facto* budget for the coming year, not only because the fate of the promised "supplemental budget" is so uncertain, but because the Legislature appears unwilling to enact such a supplement until well after most schools would be able to take advantage of it. It is the highest-risk strategy employed yet, using our schools and children as pawns in the budget making game.

Fall Conference Has Illustrious Speakers

Kneale, Brooks and Shepherd Bring Range of Expertise

The Council is gearing up for Fall Conference 2001 September 30 through October 2 at the Sheraton Saratoga Springs.

This year's conference has an outstanding lineup of speakers.

Mike Kneale speaks about "Expanding Personal Power and Vision" at the first general session Sunday, September 2, at 5 p.m.



Mike Kneale

As president of Kneale Enterprises, Dr. Kneale speaks all across the country on the importance of valuing people and the institutions that develop them. Positive, listening, enlightened people can profoundly impact any environment, he says.

Dr. Kneale is a former president of the Nebraska Association of School Administrators. He also

served as superintendent in Nebraska, then in Colorado Springs Public Schools.

Robert B. Brooks is slated to speak on Monday, October 1 at 9 a.m.

In his session, "Creating a Positive School Climate: The Mindset of Effective Educators", Dr. Brooks will examine the outlook needed to develop a constructive school environment.



Robert Brooks

Dr. Brooks has lectured nationally and internationally on the topics of motivation, resilience, self-esteem, family relationships and effective leadership.

He is on the faculty of Harvard Medical School and has served as director of the Department of Psychology at McLean Hospital, a private psychiatric hospital.

Margaret Jo Shepherd is the speaker Tuesday, October 2 at 9 a.m.

An expert in the field of special education, Dr. Shepherd will present "The Concept of Scholastic Aptitude Reconsidered".



Margaret Jo Shepherd

Dr. Shepherd is director for special education at the Center for Social/Emotional Education in New York City.

She is also professor emeritus at Teachers College, Columbia University, where she has worked as a professor, director of the Learning Disabilities Program, and co-founder of the Child Study Center in the Department of Special Education.

As part of a panel discussion on Tuesday, Kevin McGuire, Les Loomis and Michael Conte will address leadership issues.

BOCES Conference Set for November 16-17

New York State School Boards Association is teaming up with NYSCOSS and the School Administrators Association of New York State to offer The BOCES Conference.

Last year titled "BOCES: Challenges, Opportunities and Directions", the event received high marks.

This year district superintendents are again urged to attend and to bring business officials and board members.

The dates to remember are Friday, November 16 in the evening, and Saturday, November 17 from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. More information to follow.

Council Seeks Address, Area Code Changes

As it prepares the 2001-02 Directory, NYSCOSS asks school districts to let us know of any changes in members' addresses or telephone or fax numbers.

The Council especially needs to hear from Western New York districts whose area code will be changing from 716 to 585 on November 15.

Council Salutes Retirees at Conference

Newly Retired Members Asked to Share Life Stories

Attention newly retired members: even if you are not planning to attend Fall Conference 2001, the Council would still like to share your professional accomplishments with your colleagues. Please complete and return the retiree

questionnaire so that we may include your biography in a booklet to be distributed at the conference.

If your name does not appear on the accompanying list of retirees, please notify NYSCOSS as soon as possible.

The **Commissioner's Advisory Council** is slated to meet with Commissioner Mills Thursday, November 15 at 9 a.m. at the State Education Department. Members will confer Wednesday, November 14 at 5:30 p.m. at The Univesity Club.

2001 Retirees

George Aman	Amagansett	Muriel B. Lanciault	New Lebanon
William J. Bassett	Orange-Ulster BOCES	Marya R. Levenson	North Colonie
Perry Berkowitz	Vestal	William H. Lister	Stamford
Thomas E. Boedicker	West Islip	Kevin N. McGuire	Half Hollow Hills
Paul E. Bristol	Marcellus	Richard C. Malone	Southampton
Gary J. Buehler	Oswego	George Mikolajczyk	Westhampton Beach
Wayne M. Chesbrough	Lisbon	William Miller	Auburn City
Donald R. Conning	Marion	Francis Murphy	Rome City
Salvatore J. Corda	Peekskill	Robert W. Murphy	Bainbridge-Guilford
Gilbert C. DeCicco	Shelter Island	Ann P. Myers	Questar III
Lewis DeFilippo	Duanesburg	John T. Oates	Taconic Hills
Gerard W. Dempsey, Jr.	Farmingdale	Donald C. Parker	Chappaqua
W. Edward Ermlich	Chenango Forks	Larry R. Pedersen	Rockland BOCES
Audrey N. Farnsworth	Mohonasen	James J. Powers	East Rockaway
Judith R. Fox	Byram Hills	Peter Robbins	Bath
Clinton B. Freeman	Hadley-Luzerne	Gary H. Schneider	South Manor
James Granozio	Scio	H. Barry Spink	Williamson
Patrick Hamill	Port Jervis City	Richard G. Thom	Brocton
Edmund J. Harvey	Southwestern	James B. Torrance	Clinton
Thad Hetherington	TST BOCES	Laurence S. Trzaskos ..	Amsterdam City Schools
Harry Jaroslaw	Mineola	David Updegraff ...	St. Mary's School for the Deaf
Estelle Kamler	North Merrick	James B. Van Hoven	Blind Brook Rye
Paul Kelleher	Lawrence	Richard M. Wachter	Franklinville
Dennis J. Kirst	Byron-Bergen	Yvonne E. Watkins	Geneseo
Gordon C. Klumpp	Groton	Thomas Wolf	Windham-Ashland-Jewett
Donald R. Kusel	Tarrytown	William H. Wormuth	Lowville

Oatman Shares Know-How with China

Retiree to Serve as Consultant to Schools in X'ian

Al Oatman, who retired as superintendent of Harpursville CSD in 1993, will be heading to X'ian, China, in February, 2002, to serve four months as an educational consultant to schools there.

This trip is an outgrowth of

Al's earlier visit to the area as a member of Global Volunteers. During that stay, he served for three weeks in a university setting working with students on their conversational English.

X'ian is the ancient capital of China, Al says, and the site of the famous terracotta warriors.



Exquisite Terracotta Statues were unearthed in X'ian, China, the ancient capital city where Al Oatman will serve as an educational consultant.

College Honors Professor Natale

Superintendent Called Linchpin of Grad Program

The Educational Administration Department at SUNY New Paltz paid tribute to Warwick Valley CSD Superintendent Joseph L. Natale, an adjunct professor in the program since 1983.

The department presented Dr. Natale with a plaque recognizing "outstanding service and significant contribution" to the program.

Over the years, Dr. Natale "has been the glue that has kept the School Business Administra-

tion program alive and well, at a time when other colleges have had to discontinue their SBA programs," said Jan Hammond, chairman of the Department of Educational Administration.

A former assistant superintendent at Newburgh City School District and Yorktown CSD, Dr. Natale has been superintendent at Warwick Valley since 1988.

He teaches courses in educational leadership, governance and accountability.

Retiree Enjoyed Second Career: Acting

Thomas G. Rooney, retired superintendent of New Hyde Park-Garden City Park UFSD, died July 8 at the age of 78.

After serving in the European Theatre of World War II, he was a

grade school principal before becoming superintendent. Dr. Rooney's theatrical sensibilities helped transform school libraries into jungles, castles and circuses.

In Memoriam

After retiring from education in 1978, he entered the theatre and was a character actor until the time of his death. Dr. Rooney

created a one-man show about Benjamin Franklin, toured the country in leading roles, and appeared on soap operas.

Condolences may be sent to his wife of 52 years, Marjorie Barton Rooney of New Hyde Park.

Superintendencies

BROOKFIELD CSD

Stephen J. Kalies, District Supt.
Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES
Box 70, 4747 Middle Settlement Road
New Hartford, NY 13413-0070

\$75,000-\$85,000
Enr: 300
Reply by:
8/30/01

CLINTON CSD

J.A. Roy Associates
Clinton Search
P.O. Box 582
Dennisport, MA 02639-0582

\$120,000
Enr: 1,800
Reply by:
10/13/01

EASTERN SUFFOLK BOCES

Eastern Suffolk BOCES District Supt. Search
NYSSBA Search Services
119 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12210-2292

\$125,000+
Enr: 53 districts
Reply by:
9/7/01

FORT PLAIN CSD

Geoffrey H. Davis, District Supt.
Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery BOCES
25 West Main Street, Suite One
Johnstown, NY 12095

\$87,500-\$97,500
Enr: 925
Reply by:
8/24/01

LOCKPORT CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Peter T. Kachris
Search Consultant
49 East Girard Boulevard
Kenmore, NY 14217

\$Competitive
Enr: 5,800
Reply by:
9/24/01

MOUNT MARKHAM CSD

John L. Stoothoff, District Supt.
Herkimer BOCES
352 Gros Boulevard
Herkimer, NY 13350

\$90,000 minimum
Enr: 1,525
Reply by:
9/25/01

NEWCOMB CSD

Gerald Carozza, District Supt.
Wash.-Sara.-Warr.-Ham.-Essex BOCES
10 LaCrosse Street
Hudson Falls, NY 12839-1415

\$88,000+
Enr: 70
Reply by:
11/1/01

ONONDAGA CSD

Lee G. Peters, District Supt.
Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES
P.O. Box 4754
Syracuse, NY 13221

\$95,000-\$105,000
Enr: 1,128
Reply by:
9/30/01

ORANGE-ULSTER BOCES

Martin Ruglis, District Supt.
Ulster County BOCES
175 Route 32N
New Paltz, NY 12561-1034

\$Negotiable
Enr: N/A
Reply by:
10/1/01

OTSEGO-NORTHERN CATSKILLS BOCES

Lawrence A. Kiley, District Supt.
Broome-Tioga BOCES
435 Glenwood Road
Binghamton, NY 13905-1699

\$120,000 range
Enr: 12,000-14,000
Reply by:
10/1/01

QUESTAR III BOCES

D.S. Search Committee
Renss.-Col.-Greene BOCES (Questar III)
10 Empire State Boulevard
Castleton, NY 12033

\$120,000-\$128,000
Enr: N/A
Reply by:
8/24/01

ROCKLAND BOCES

Vincent Beni
Focus Consulting Associates
P.O. Box 516
Carmel, NY 10512

SN/A
Enr: N/A
Reply by:
12/1/01

TULLY CSD

Lee G. Peters, District Supt.
Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES
P.O. Box 4754
Syracuse, NY 13221

\$105,000-\$115,000
Enr: 1,281
Reply by:
ASAP

WEST SENECA CSD

William Silky/Suzanne Gilmour
Castello & Silky
P.O. Box 100
Syracuse, NY 13215

\$130,000
Enr: 7,500
Reply by:
11/23/01

WHITESBORO CSD

Steven J. Kalies, District Supt.
Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES
Box 70, 4747 Middle Settlement Road
New Hartford, NY 13413-0070

\$120,000-\$135,000
Enr: 4,000
Reply by:
9/30/01

Out-of-State Opportunities (Contact NYSCOSS For Further Information)

Executive Director: Confederation of Oregon School Administrators, Salem, OR. 2,500 members. By: 10/12/01. \$110,000-\$114,000.

Superintendent: Livingston Educational Service Agency, Howell, MI. Enr: 27,199. By: 10/1/01. \$Based on qualifications.

Superintendent: Sumter County Schools, Americus, GA. Enr: 5,650. By: 8/21/01. \$Competitive.

Middle School Principal: Marlboro Township School District, western Monmouth County, NJ. Enr: N/A. By: 8/31/01. \$Based on experience.

Other NYS Administrative Positions (Contact District For Further Information)

Business Administrator for the Cooperative Business Office: St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES. Enr: N/A. By: 9/8/01. \$Competitive.

Associate Superintendent for Educational Services: Eastern Suffolk BOCES. Enr: 53 districts. Reply by: 9/21/01. \$Competitive.

Associate Superintendent for Management Services: Eastern Suffolk BOCES. Enr: 53 districts. Reply by: 9/21/01. \$Competitive.

Assistant Superintendent for Business: Connetquot CSD. Enr: 6,800. By: 9/15/01. \$Competitive.

Middle School Principal: Galway CSD. Enr: 300 (6-8). By: 9/14/01. \$Competitive.

Business Administrator: Delhi CSD. Enr: 1,152. By: ASAP. \$Competitive.

Director of Secondary Programs: Madison-Oneida BOCES. Enr: N/A. By: 9/15/01. \$85,000-\$90,000.

Assistant Superintendent for Instruction: Baldwinsville CSD. Enr: 5,800. By: 8/31/01. \$Based on experience.

Middle/High School Principal: Hunter-Tannersville CSD. Enr: 300. By: 10/12/01. \$70,000-\$80,000.

High School Principal: Locust Valley CSD. Enr: N/A. By: ASAP. \$112,876-\$137,730.

Supervisor of Community Education: Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga BOCES. Enr: N/A. By: 8/24/01. \$49,000-\$51,000.

Retirement

Richard Brodow Somers 7/1/02

Raymond F. Fell Patchogue-Medford 6/30/01

Christine Neal Lockport 7/6/01

Maria Santory-Guasp NYC #9, 7/01

Lawrence J. Zacher Whitesboro 1/31/02

Chief School Officer Appointments

Julie V. Amodeo I., Marlboro 7/16/01

Beth Virginia Blau I., West Islip 8/1/01
Assistant superintendent in the district

Peter Cardamone Southern Cayuga 7/1/01
High school principal in Honeoye Falls-Lima

Donald K. Carlisle Miller Place 7/1/01
From Hudson City School District

Douglas Chappell Deputy, T-S-T BOCES 7/12/01

James Clark I., Hudson 7/1/01

Patrick J. Curtin I., Clinton 8/6/01

Robert DeFilippo I., Depew 8/1/01
Assistant superintendent in the district

Roy Dexheimer I., South Seneca 7/12/01

Theodore Grocki Bridgehampton 7/1/01
From Rensselaer City School District

Katrina Jacobson Canton 8/27/01
Assistant superintendent in Ithaca City School District

Richard N. Johns Newburgh 9/1/01
Superintendent in Ames, IA

Peter Litchka Kingston 9/1/01
Assistant superintendent in Brunswick, GA

Veronica A. McDermott Patchogue-Medford 7/1/01
Assistant superintendent in the district

Jerome Melvin I., Onondaga 8/1/01

Stan Mims A., NYC #9, 7/11/01

Joyce Montalbano Amagansett 7/1/01
Principal in West Babylon UFSD

Raymond Morningstar I., Lockport 7/9/01
Assistant superintendent in the district

Carl Neubert I., Canton through 8/27/01

Robert D. Olczak Cattaraugus BOCES 8/1/01
From Depew UFSD

Gordon Reynolds Rensselaer 7/1/01
High school principal in Watervliet City

Myrta Rivera A., NYC #7, 3/27/01

John Semeniak I., Brookfield 7/9/01

Celia Thomason Germantown 7/1/01
From Questar III

Leaders Rethink School Accountability

President, Committee Shift Focus of ESEA Renewal Talks

President Bush softened the tone of his education rhetoric as a joint Congressional committee worked out the differences in the House and Senate **school reform bills**. The president called on the committee not to set school accountability standards too high so as not to label too many schools as “failing”, *The Washington Post* reported August 2.

The president’s address followed the release of a Congressional Research Service report showing that the vast majority of schools in Texas, North Carolina and Maryland—whose accountability systems are considered exemplary—would be labeled “failing” under the standards being considered by Congress.

Federal negotiators are moving away from the idea of punishing or rewarding districts based on a single year’s test results, *The New York Times* reported August 13. Also, a letter signed by 21 House members advocated giving states the flexibility to use a combination of state and local data—in lieu of annual tests—to meet federal requirements.

President Bush’s education reform plan was chief among several federal initiatives that troubled **state governors** at the annual meeting of the National Governors Association. School reform led a list of initiatives that the governors viewed as the federal government encroaching on their authority, according to *The Washington Post*, August 6. Oklahoma Governor Frank A. Keating, a Republican,

said a number of states may “opt out” of the federal standards and accept what he termed the minor financial penalty.

More than a quarter of surveyed students attributed **school violence** to a dearth of parental attention and involvement in students’ lives, second only to bullying by others. The annual “State of Our Nation’s Youth” survey, published by the Horatio Alger Association, indicated that almost half American teens would pick a family member, not a sports star or pop idol, as a role model, the Associated Press reported August 8.

Math performance improved slightly among fourth and eighth graders, while fewer high school seniors showed proficiency in such basic mathematical processes as fractions, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress

results for 2000. The percentage of New York children rated “proficient” rose from 20% to 22% in the fourth grade, and from 22% to 26% in the eighth grade from 1996 to 2000, *USA Today* reported August 2.

The number of high school drop-outs who earned a **GED** dropped 3.1% last year, *The New York Times* reported August 2. The American Council on Education, which represents 1,800 institutions, groups and companies involved in higher education, released the report on GED statistics. Testing officials said they expect a surge in recipients before the testing program is revamped in January.

Move follows study indicating most schools would be labeled ‘failing’ under proposed accountability systems.

Governors Call for Full IDEA Funding

State Leaders Lend Might to Growing Campaign

The nation's governors have thrown their weight behind the effort to win full federal funding of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The National Governors Association voted at its meeting in Rhode Island to fight for congressional approval of the 40% federal funding level promised when IDEA was first enacted in 1975.

The association, a powerful force on Capitol Hill, also seeks greater flexibility for states to reduce their share of the IDEA funding burden. AASA will campaign for maintenance of state effort in IDEA funding. Nevertheless, the organization is pleased to have an ally as powerful as the governors' association in its fight for full IDEA funding.

The campaign got another shot in the arm from 54 Republicans and 134 Democrats in the House. As the House-Senate conference committee works to iron out differences between the chambers' versions of education reform, their colleagues in the House wrote letters calling for full funding.

Meanwhile, the Republican House leadership and the White House have advanced some weak and rather ironic arguments against full funding. Too many minority students are identified as learning-disabled under IDEA, they say, and the program creates excessive paperwork and administrative burdens.

While it may be gratifying for administrators to hear these

leaders echoing their complaints about the program, AASA sees no reason to use these drawbacks as an excuse to delay full funding. During the years it takes to reform the program, schools will be left shouldering the enormous financial burden of special education. Schools cannot wait for IDEA reforms to pay for special education services; Congress should not have that option either, says AASA Legislative Representative Jordan Cross. Congress, he says "wrote IDEA, they passed IDEA, they should pay for IDEA."

President Bush has argued that his Reading First initiative will dramatically reduce special education placements. Again, while enhanced reading instruction will benefit many students, those benefits are years off. And specialized reading instruction is only one of a range of services that most learning-disabled students require.

In the larger matter of **Elementary and Secondary Education Act renewal**, the conference committee is rethinking accountability measures which use single, snapshot tests and set such narrow parameters for success that almost all schools in the country would be labeled as "failing".

AASA is pushing relentlessly for the conferees to adopt an evaluation system that uses multiple indicators and that factors in family income, parents' education and the level of resources available to each school.



AASA welcomes the governors' assistance, but continues to fight for state maintenance-of-effort.

New Members Invited to Learn the Ropes *Veterans Share Knowledge with New Superintendents*

It's not too late to register for the **New Superintendents' Conference** set for Sunday and Monday, August 26 and 27, 2001 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel and State Education Department in Albany.

Sponsored by the Council and the State Education Department, the conference is open to those new to the position of superintendent or to New York State.

Veteran superintendents and high-level SED officials introduce participants to the most crucial aspects of educational leadership in New York State.

Events on Sunday, August 26 begin with registration and a welcome address, followed by remarks on "Leadership and the Superintendency" by NYSOSS President Donald Trombley (Corning-Painted Post CSD). Round table discussions with superintendents follow, focusing on issues facing

the superintendency. David Gee, district superintendent of Western Suffolk BOCES, then addresses "The Financial Responsibilities of the Superintendent". A reception and dinner, sponsored by The Thomas Group, concludes the day's events.

Events on Monday, August 27 take place at the State Education Building. Coffee and introductions are followed by a presentation by Commissioner Richard P. Mills and SED staff. After participants have their photo taken with the commissioner, Edward McCormick, president of the New York State School Boards Association, speaks. Lastly, participants enjoy a luncheon at SED before heading home.

Please use registration materials mailed earlier, or go to www.nysoss.org and click the link labeled "Attention: New Superintendents". Fax completed registration forms to (518) 426-2229.



The New York State Education Department

Gardner Highlights Outstanding Institute *Top Education Figures Chat Cordially with Participants*

Thirty educational leaders from across New York State gathered in a small room with Howard Gardner last month.

The Summer Institute at Harvard, July 22 to 25, gave attendees an opportunity to hear from and interact with the pedagogy luminary in a small-group setting.

Dr. Gardner was "very approachable and forthcoming, willing to answer our questions," reports Marcia Schwarz (Sullivan BOCES), chairwoman of this year's Summer Institute.



Howard Gardner

Hearing from Arthur Levine of Teachers College, Columbia University, was another highlight of the session, Marcia says. Dr. Levine,

a gifted speaker, shared his visionary idea of what education should look like.

The Institute format allowed participants to exchange ideas with such authorities and with one another. Many at-

tendees described the sessions as the best in the seven-year history of the Summer Institute.

Other excellent speakers were Evans Clinchy of Northeastern

University, Richard H. Goodman and William G. Zimmerman, Jr. of the New England School Development Council, Alan

Price of the Global Leadership Initiative at the Harvard Business School, and Paul Reville of the Pew Forum on Standards-Based Reform.

Leading Cracker Barrel sessions were William Brosnan (Nothport-East Northport UFSD), Tho-

mas Rogers (NYSOSS), James Mills (Silver Creek), J. Briggs McAndrews (Niskayuna) and Kevin McGuire (NYS Center for School Leadership).



Arthur Levine

Regents Meet with Assembly Critics

Lawmakers, Educators Agree to Disagree

In an unusual move, the Regents' Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education Committee invited Assemblymen Brodsky (Westchester County) and Green (Kings County) to discuss legislation that would alter state graduation requirements. The Assemblymen's proposals would require SED to develop portfolio-based alternative assessments (A.9052) and require students enrolled in career education programs to pass the English and math Regents exams to graduate from high school (A.9053). The meeting was construed as an attempt by the Regents to avoid Assembly action on the bills before the scheduled end of session by giving the Assemblymen a forum to discuss their proposals.

Both legislators said the bills were not meant to

lower standards but to acknowledge that a single high-stakes test is not the only way to measure learning. Assemblyman Brodsky said the current system fails students who are not really failing.

In response, Commissioner Mills and Chancellor Hayden said the state had spent many years and significant dollars to study and develop the state standards. They stressed that the only way to ensure the assessments' reliability and validity is to standardize them. The Chancellor added that the pressure of the standards has helped the state identify the achievement gap and focus on closing it.

Several Regents acknowledged there may be a need to develop portfolio-based assessments, but said this action may be cost-prohibitive. One board member suggested exploring the idea of tapping into private funds. However, the Commissioner and Chancellor demurred, emphasizing the expense of developing these assessments and the difficulty of ensuring their reliability and validity.

Expressing his frustration with their apparent inflexibility on this issue, Assemblyman Brodsky replied, "That is the first time in my life I have ever heard the Regents say something is too expensive".

What was intended to be an outlet for frustration may in the end have heightened it. In closing comments, Assemblyman Brodsky stated that some Regents' openness to exploring alternatives may not be representative of the majority of the board, or its leadership. He said the meeting only reinforced his belief in the need to forge ahead with legislative remedies.

Employment

Continued from page 1

3. School districts seeking conditional clearance for prospective employees who have already submitted their fingerprints for review should send a request letter to SED. The letter must include the employer's name and school district code, and the applicant's name, address and Social Security number. The letter may be faxed to (518) 473-8812 or e-mailed to OSPRA@mail.nysed.gov.

4. To date, SED has not developed a signed-statement form for prospective employees to sign as part of the conditional appointment process. In the interim, a school district may use its own form. This document should be filed with the school district. It does not need to be forwarded to SED.

5. School districts must adopt a policy for the safety of children who have contact with employees holding conditional appointment status. Districts may determine the content of the policy.

6. Once a district receives favorable notification of any type of criminal clearance for a prospective employee, the employee rolls to the next type of appointment. (E.g.: An emergency conditional appointment automatically becomes a conditional appointment, and so forth.)

Please send any questions on the fingerprinting process to kristen@nyscoss.org.

Section 415 Limitations Removed by IRS

The New York State Teachers Retirement Service received approval from the IRS for its Excess Benefit Plan.

The plan affects the pensions paid to retirement system members whose retirement benefit was improved by legislation passed after October 14, 1987 as well as members who join the retirement system on or after January 1, 1990. For more information, visit www.nyscoss.org.

CALENDAR

2001-2002

New Superintendents' Academy
August 26 & 27 Albany

NYS COSS Fall Conference
Sept. 30-Oct. 2 Saratoga

NYS COSS Mid-Winter Conference
Jan. 13-15 Albany

AASA Federal Advocacy Conference
Sept. 18-20 Washington, D.C.

NYS COSS Superintendents' Academy
Nov. 2 Seven Sites

AASA National Conference on Education
Feb. 15-17 San Diego, CA



High Standards:

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2001

There's still time to register!

Registration materials available online at www.nyscoss.org.



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