

# COUNCILGRAM

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL OF SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS VOLUME XII; ISSUE 6 FEBRUARY 2009

## Stimulating Federal Plan Offers Hope to NY Schools but Longer-term Worries Persist

On February 17, President Barack Obama signed the largest economic recovery plan ever enacted by the United States government and the stock market dropped by nearly 300 points on fears of a deepening global recession. This juxtaposition exemplifies the conflicting messages reaching school districts – hope, accompanied by worry.

In signing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, President Obama said it would give “...aid to states and school districts to stop teachers from being laid off and education programs from being cut.” He added, “In a place like New York City, 14,000 teachers who were set to be let go may now be able to continue pursuing their critical mission.”

The plan is expected to provide over \$24 billion over two years to New York State and its local governments and school districts. Included in that total is over \$2 billion expressly for schools and colleges over the coming year, plus additional funds to provide general budget relief for state government.

Governor David Paterson sent conflicting messages on the impact of the stimulus funds. *The New York Daily News* reported that, speaking at a news conference with U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer, the Governor said that the stimulus bill all but required him to restore proposed state aid cuts – “We have no choice [but to restore the funds], and we are glad we have no choice.”

In a prepared statement the Governor observed, “This funding does not absolve us of our responsibility to bring

spending into line with what our government can afford over the long term.” Noting the prospect of substantial recurring state deficits and the expected two-year lifespan of most stimulus aid, he added, “This federal stimulus legislation therefore does not diminish in any way the need to reevaluate our operations and produce a smarter, less costly, more efficient state government.”

### FEDERAL AID COMING TO NY SCHOOLS

What does this mean for school districts? Some portions of the federal stimulus package are allocated by existing federal formulas, allowing districts a preliminary sense of how much help they will be getting. For example, the U.S. House Education and Labor Committee promptly released unofficial estimates of the aid districts can expect from increases in Title I services for disadvantaged students and for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) programs. New York State schools are projected to receive \$906 million more for Title I and \$760 million more for IDEA over two years. Congressional intent is that half the funds become available starting July 1, 2010.

Though intended to be spent on special education, the IDEA funds are expected to help schools “mitigate the reduction in local revenues and state support” according to the Congressional conference committee report on the legislation. By helping to pay more of the cost of special education, this new federal aid should free existing district resources to preserve general education services.



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## **State News**

Similar language is included in the conference committee report for the Title I increase – that it is intended to mitigate the loss of state or local support. Its value as general relief is apt to be more limited for most districts. First, over 70 percent of the increase is targeted to New York City. Second, more information is needed to understand if and how maintenance of effort requirements might be applied. Also, the conference committee report declares intent that states will use some of the funding for early childhood programs and activities.

The plan also includes funds for school improvement programs (\$260 million), education technology (\$53 million), and homeless student assistance (\$4.5 million).

Potentially, the most helpful component of the stimulus plan is the “state stabilization fund” which the Governor reports will provide \$2.5 billion over two years to help New York State restore proposed reductions in education and higher education.

Under the federal law, state stabilization funds are to be allocated by the Governor – with no explicit formal role for the Legislature. Governors are directed, first, to use the funds to provide the level of aid through the state’s primary School Aid formulas needed to restore funding to the greater of the 2008 or 2009 level for the next three years (2008-09 through 2010-11), and, where applicable, to fund previously enacted aid increases for 2009-10 and 2010-11. The federal law requires similar treatment of higher education, with funds to be allocated between the two levels based on their relative shares of state funding shortfalls each year.

Allocations of the stabilization funds will not be known until Governor Paterson acts, and the U.S. Education Department approves the state’s plan. A few steps will need to be completed: first, to determine the shares of funding for the two education levels, and then to apply the federal mandate on funding state aid formulas to New York’s circumstances.

Presumably, the first claims on the elementary/secondary share of the stabilization funds would be to reduce or eliminate the proposed \$1.1 billion “Deficit Reduction Assessment” and to partially relax the freeze on the Foundation formula which would deny districts \$1.4 billion in promised aid. The stabilization funding alone may not be sufficient to fully eliminate the DRA, for example, depending on the share that must be dedicated to higher education.

#### **IMPACT ON STATE AID**

School Aid negotiations are complex undertakings every year but the injection of federal stimulus funding compounds the usual complexity. The Governor wants an on-time budget – there are fiscal payoffs for timeliness – earlier implementation of spending reductions and revenue increases. The Legislature will want to know how the stabilization funds will be distributed among districts before it decides if and how to allocate additional state funds to schools. Federal law appears to give the Governor unilateral authority. If the Legislature were to find his allocation objectionable that could derail chances

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## State News

for a timely budget. So, the Governor may have an incentive to at least consult with the Legislature before making his allocations.

As noted, the stabilization funds alone would not be sufficient to avert all School Aid cuts and the shift of preschool special education costs to school districts. But the stimulus package provides other resources intended to provide general budget relief for state governments.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR FEDERAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

The infusion of funding is an opportunity for the U.S. Education Department and its new leader, Secretary Arne Duncan, but also a challenge.

Discretionary Funding for the Department roughly doubles as a result of the stimulus plan. Comments from past federal Education Department officials suggest tinges of envy over the resources Secretary Duncan will command. *The New York Times* reported that Chester Finn, a Reagan-era assistant secretary said, "It will be like Christmas." "But," Mr. Finn added, "the thing about discretionary spending is that it makes more people angry than happy." Mr. Duncan's immediate predecessor, Margaret Spellings, told the *Times*, "It's hard to imagine moving that much money that quickly ... it's never been done before."

Secretary Duncan faces the added complication of being like a Santa Claus with no elves, or at least few of his own choosing. At this writing he is the only Obama-appointee in his entire department to have been confirmed by the Senate. Only two assistant secretaries have been nominated thus far.

However, large segments of the new funding give federal authorities limited discretion over how it is to be spent. The Title I and IDEA increases will be distributed according to existing formulas. Allocating the state stabilization plans involves more discretion – reviewing and approving plans developed and submitted by the states.

The legislation does give Secretary Duncan one new substantial discretionary pool – \$5 billion in incentive grants to be distributed on a competitive basis to states that "most aggressively pursue higher standards, quality assessments, robust data systems, and teacher quality initiatives." The Secretary is calling this the "Race to the Top Fund."

Assertions are already being made that the infusion of funding dramatically alters conversation over the appropriate role of the federal government in education – that it legitimizes the more assertive federal role in school accountability launched by the No Child Left Behind Act. But how would permanently increased federal policy direction square with statements from the Obama Administration that states and schools cannot count on increased funding past two years?

### WHAT HAPPENS IF THE STIMULUS STOPS?

School leaders and Governor Paterson share a concern over what happens if and when the stimulus funds stop. Some observers **State**

Continued on page 9

## New Snapshot Survey Coming – On-Line !

Every 3 years since 1991, THE COUNCIL has surveyed superintendents (and assistant superintendents) of New York State on issues ranging from contractual provisions to opinions on education policy and reforms. The studies provided policy-makers with a rich sense of the superintendent shortage, demographic changes in superintendents, increasing diversity, and reflections on school board effectiveness. The final results of "Snapshot 2006" are available on THE COUNCIL'S website.

For 2009, the Snapshot Committee has boldly decided to shorten the survey and move the instrument on-line. You will be receiving an e-mail invitation and link from Tom Rogers in early March. The committee hopes the new format will increase the response rate (already high at 70%), be easier to complete, and permit the more rapid analysis of the data. The final study should be available in time for THE COUNCIL and NYSSBA's fall conferences.

Please be sure to watch for and complete the survey invitation, the time you take helps THE COUNCIL serve you better!

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# Leading Through Tough Economic Times: What You Need to Know About Terminating Employees

Your board of education recently made the decision to abolish certain teaching positions in a tenure area within the district due to declining student enrollment and revenue and passed a resolution to abolish the positions. Now it is up to you as the superintendent to notify the least senior person in the tenure area of the termination of his or her employment.

### THE PROCESS

No one wants to face the task of dismissing valued staff and many districts do not have a process in place to handle employee layoffs. The process, as required by law, is complicated. Determining the status of the affected employee(s) within the tenure area of the abolished is the critical first step.

An up to date seniority list is key to abolishing positions because Education Law requires that seniority be used as the sole criterion to determine the order that teachers be dismissed when teaching positions are abolished. Seniority rights are earned based on the length of paid, full-time service in the tenure area, within the school district. Only full-time service should be counted toward seniority, which includes paid leaves of absences. Regular substitute services rendered any time prior to a probationary period must be included when calculating seniority credit for a teacher.

Unpaid leave does not count toward seniority and should be deducted from a teacher's seniority calculation. Part-time service does not count towards seniority except in the case of part-time kindergarten teachers and other very limited circumstances. Time spent working outside of a professional educator's tenure area also should not be counted towards seniority credit in the tenure area.

### THE "TIE" BREAKER

In circumstances where employees started on the same date and there is a "tie" between employees on the seniority list within the tenure area, it is up to the district's board of education to determine how such ties will be broken. The board may use any reasonable factor to determine seniority in the case of a "tie" so long as it does so with consistency. Reasonable factors include the date of the original letter of appointment, or if the appointment date is the same, then look to the one who was listed on the Board agenda first as the most senior employee.

### BUMPING

A teacher who has several tenure appointments in separate tenure areas accrues seniority in each area and may have the right to "bump" into other positions. A teacher excessed from one tenure area has

the right to bump back into a position in a prior tenure area if there is someone with less seniority than them in an area he or she previously served. For example, if a teacher holds tenure in science and English and is excessed from her science position, she can "bump" a less senior teacher in the tenure area of English. If the least senior teacher has services in just the tenure area of the excessed position, then the teacher has no bumping rights and will be laid off.

### THE PREFERRED ELIGIBLE LIST

Once a teacher is excessed, he or she must be placed on a preferred eligible list of candidates, and it is the superintendent's responsibility to make sure that the information is given to the civil service agency. The individual excessed is eligible for reappointment to the same or similar position within his or her tenure area for seven years. Recall rights are based on total services within a district and are not specific to service within a specific tenure area. Teachers on the preferred eligible list must be offered regular substitute positions. The teacher's right to be recalled survives his or her acceptance of other employment. Even if the teacher declines a position within the district he or she maintains the right to be on the list.

A teacher's right to be recalled is only extinguished when the seven year period lapses, the teacher retires, or the teacher accepts employment in the same or similar position within the district.

### LOOKING AHEAD

Given the current economic crisis, the decision to excess positions within the district should not be a surprise, but an explanation as to how the district will still meet the needs of the students should be well received by all parties. When there is a strong indication that layoffs are on the horizon, the superintendent can keep the focus where it should be, on the kids.

Effective communication with the board of education, the community and with staff can minimize the demoralizing impact of staff reduction on the district. Identify interest groups, and community leaders and meet with them. Meet with the labor groups that could be impacted by staff reductions and listen to their concerns. Publicize the need for staff reduction in certain areas. And, review collective bargaining agreements for notice provisions and issues related to the transfer of bargaining unit work.

Once a firm decision is made to lay off employees, those affected by the decision, should be told as soon as possible to minimize the possibility of having the teacher hear that his or her position has been

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### Grade 3-8 Assessments

Pursuant to its meeting at the Mid-winter Conference, the THE COUNCIL Assessment Committee raised a number of concerns and provided recommendations regarding Grade 3 – 8 assessments. THE COUNCIL'S Executive Committee accepted and endorsed the report at its February meeting :

1. The State Education Department (SED) should develop new Grade 3 – 8 assessments based on a comprehensive timeline reflecting both systemic and technical issues (e.g. spring or fall testing). Additionally, the SED should solicit input to develop a comprehensive assessment calendar reflecting all aspects of the New York State Testing Program (NYSTP) including but not limited to scoring, reporting, and receiving information from the SED.
2. The current standards-setting process should be aligned with the timetable for developing new assessments. At this time, the timetables do not seem to be synchronized.
3. Teachers and administrators should be given the opportunity to provide meaningful input in the assessments' development.
4. New assessments should inform the instructional process as well as meet State and Federal accountability requirements.
5. New assessments should, at a minimum, have: (a) a true vertical scale, (b) the ability to better assess the performance levels of who achieve at upper and lower ends of the scale, (c) increased emphasis upon “21st Century Skills” and (d) compatibility with growth and value-added models, based on “best practices” currently available in the United States.

### 2009 Spring Conference Announced “The Six Secrets of Change”

The Council and the NYS Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (NYS ASCD) are pleased to announce their second annual joint-conference on April 3, 2009 - “The Six Secrets of Change” featuring Dr. Michael Fullan. This conference is based on Dr. Fullan’s experiences on system reform focusing on school district improvement. The conference will be held at The Desmond Hotel and Conference Center in Albany. Plan to bring a team including superintendent, assistant superintendent, directors of curriculum, principals and teachers. Registration materials have been mailed and are also available at [nyscoss.org](http://nyscoss.org).

Cost: \$175 per person (includes materials and meals)

Questions? Please contact Vren Gonzalez, Programs & Resource Development Associate at [vren@nyscoss.org](mailto:vren@nyscoss.org) or 518-449-1063.

### Appointments

Cynthia Bianco (I) .....Niagara Falls City SD, 01/09  
*Deputy Superintendent*

Susan Z. Guiney (Acting).....Mt. Pleasant CSD, 01/09  
*Director of Curriculum & Instruction*

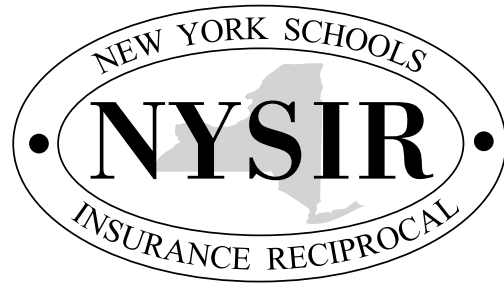
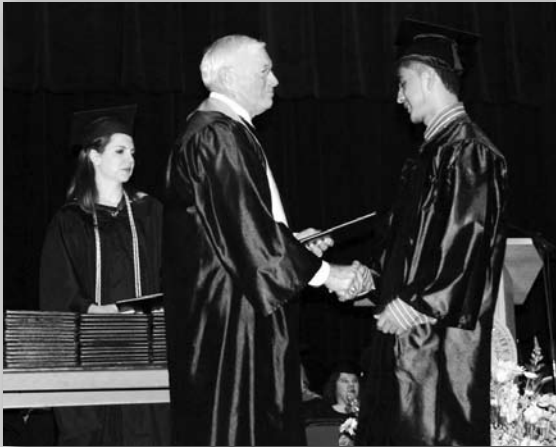
Scott D. Hartman .....Stamford CSD, 01/09  
*Secondary Principal*

John F. Howe .....Hudson City SD, 02/09  
*HS Principal, Pine Plains CSD*

Gerry D. Hudson (I) .....  
Altmar-Parish-Williamstown CSD, 01/09  
*Elementary Principal*

Robert J. Monson.....So. Westchester BOCES, 01/09  
*District Superintendent*  
*Senior Lecturer & Coordinator, Columbia University*

Scot E. Taylor.....Tioga CSD, 01/09  
*High School Principal*



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### **Cuba-Rushford CSD** 950 \$115-130,000

Sally Nenno  
Robert Olczak, District Superintendent  
Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES  
1825 Windfall Road  
Olean, NY 14760  
[sally\\_nenno@caboces.org](mailto:sally_nenno@caboces.org) Reply By: 3/6/09

### **Fishers Island UFSD** 65 \$145-160,000

Cooperative Educational Services  
Fishers Island Superintendent Search  
40 Lindeman Drive  
Trumbull, CT 06611  
[ExecutiveSearches@ces.k12.ct.us](mailto:ExecutiveSearches@ces.k12.ct.us) Reply By: 3/13/09

### **Great Neck PS** 6,260 \$ Competitive

Ronald Friedman  
Great Neck Public Schools  
PO Box 220375  
Great Neck, NY 11022  
[rfriedman@greatneck.k12.ny.us](mailto:rfriedman@greatneck.k12.ny.us) Reply By: ASAP

### **Liverpool CSD** 7,800 \$160-185,000

Jessica Cohen, Ph.D.  
Onondaga Cortland Madison BOCES  
PO Box 4754  
Syracuse, NY 13221  
[jcohen@ocmboces.org](mailto:jcohen@ocmboces.org) Reply By: 3/6/09

### **Medina CSD** 1,900 Up to \$150,000

Vincent J. Coppola  
WNY Educational Service Council  
University at Buffalo  
222 Baldy Hall  
Buffalo, NY 14260-1000  
[paulson2@buffalo.edu](mailto:paulson2@buffalo.edu) Reply By: 4/10/09

### **Otsego-Northern Catskill BOCES**

19 Component Districts \$150-155,000  
Geoffrey H. Davis  
Mary E. Finocan  
Executive Secretary / Board Clerk  
ONC BOCES  
159 W. Main St.  
Stamford, NY 12167  
[gldavis@hfmbooces.org](mailto:gldavis@hfmbooces.org) Reply By: 3/6/09

### **Thousand Islands CSD** 1,125 \$125-135,000

Jay Boak, District Superintendent  
Jefferson-Lewis BOCES  
20104 State Route 3  
Watertown, NY 13601  
[placlair@mail.booces.com](mailto:placlair@mail.booces.com) Reply By: 3/31/09

### **Wappingers CSD** 12,560 Competitive

John C. Pennoyer  
5 BOCES Rd.  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601  
[john.pennoyer@dcboces.org](mailto:john.pennoyer@dcboces.org) Reply By: ASAP

### **Westport CSD** 250 \$95-110,000

Craig King  
CEWW BOCES  
P.O. Box 455  
Plattsburgh, NY 12901  
[cking@cves.org](mailto:cking@cves.org) Reply By: 4/17/09

### News Continued from page 3

doubt that federal leaders would be able to summon the will to inflict what would be 50 percent cuts in some major programs.

In any event, hopefully the national economy will be in recovery by then. But most economists expect a long, shallow recovery, not a sudden return to boom times.

Even if the state recovers its ability to deliver strong aid increases more quickly than anticipated, schools face mounting concerns on their expense side: the prospect of a steep jump in employer contribution rates for pensions, the continued accumulation of retiree health insurance costs that must eventually be funded, and the loss of turnover savings in many districts due to a slackening in retirements. State leaders will need to become more proactive in helping schools grapple with these cost pressures.

## Retirements

Patrick M. Dougherty .....01/09  
*Tioga CSD*

Carmen A. Grant.....12/08  
*Niagara City SD*

Alfred J. Lodovico .....12/08  
*Mt. Pleasant CSD*

Christopher B. Manaseri .....11/08  
*Brighton CSD*

Gregory J. Sanik .....12/08  
*Stamford CSD*

Marilyn Skermont..... 01/09  
*Utica City SD*

Richard A. Stein..... 01/09  
*Gates-Chili CSD*



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# Qigong: West Meets East

Cindy Stachowski, Superintendent, Hopevale UFSD

It has taken years for us to realize the benefit of massage therapy. I suspect it will take even longer to embrace the increasingly interesting practice of Qigong. What is Qigong? Qigong (pronounced Chee-gung) is composed of two words. “Qi” means vital energy, air, and breath of life that flows through all things. “Gong” means work or practice, cultivating a self-discipline or work applied to a discipline. Qigong is defined as a system of exercises promoting the flow of chi; a training of energy to promote health.

Having acquired migraines a few years ago, I was in search of a more holistic method to ease the debilitating pain and nausea. Medication did not work and I was desperate. During this quest I joined a meditation class, started a regular exercise program coupled with healthy eating and stumbled upon Qigong. Good exercise and healthy eating is a matter of self-discipline. It is hard but you can do it if you put your mind to it. Meditation was more difficult for me because it seemed a little too “crunchy granola” for my math/science logical brain. I had to really go beyond my comfort zone to embrace the practice of meditation. Shame on me! The benefits of meditation (once you acquire a “beginner’s mind”) are endless. One day, upon leaving my meditation class, I overheard the Qigong instructor talking about a student with cancer but was doing really well. Since I had been practicing having a “beginner’s mind”, I became intrigued. Can she help me with my migraines? What is Qigong? Is it a form of Tai Chi? Some movements seemed to resemble Tai Chi. I stayed for a class that day and have been practicing qigong every morning for over a year now. Each morning my routine consists of:

**BA DUAN JIN** (Eight Strands of Brocade) It takes about 1/2 an hour.

1. *Supporting the Sky with Both Hands*
2. *Drawing the Bow to Each Side*
3. *Holding up a Single Hand*
4. *Looking Back Like Cow*
5. *Lowng Head and Hips Removes Excess Heat From Heart*
6. *Touching Feet with Both Hands:*
7. *Clenching Fists*
8. *Shaking the Body Wards Off All Illnesses*

Over a million Chinese begin each day with Qigong and are obsessed with the purported health benefits derived from this daily practice. Medical Qigong treatments have been a standard technique in Chinese hospitals since 1989. It has been very difficult for Western culture to embrace some of the Eastern methods for healing. I am a perfect example of a reluctant Westerner.

I truly feel better. I have energy and have had only two migraines in the past year where I used to get them every month or every other month. My healthy results may very well be from eating correctly, exercising and meditation. There are too many variables and I suspect diet plays a major factor. The first few times I did Qigong I actually felt very nauseous. So, it did have a physical effect on me. I thought I needed to eat a bigger breakfast but had the same response after eating more. It was determined that I was not breathing correctly during the excises. Can I scientifically prove any health benefits? No, but I feel 100% better. Is it worth it? Even if my only benefit is a 1/2 hour of quiet time before I start my day, it’s worth it.

### Legal News Continued from page 5

eliminated through “the grapevine”.

While it is clear that the board of education has broad latitude to abolish positions, it must act in good faith and use reasonable judgment when taking the action. Abolishing a position cannot be used to fire unwanted teachers in contravention of tenure rights. Superintendents must be in command of the process and must be able to communicate the process effectively to stakeholders in the district. A well-informed superintendent keeps the district focused on making kids the number one priority.

*This article is intended as a snapshot of the process to excess teaching positions within your district, and is not intended to be legal advice. While THE COUNCIL staff is available to answer general questions, superintendents should seek the advice of school district counsel on personnel related issues.*



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When superintendents contact The Council for assistance, they often identify unique situations or issues that require external intervention beyond that which can be provided through the “informal/confidential” service model. Such situations require direct involvement of consultants over time. The length and depth of the intervention would be determined and associated costs projected. Services include:

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- Policy/Regulation Review
- Facility Utilization
- Long-Range Planning
- Fresh Perspective (in collaboration with NYSSBA)

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# Your 2009 Lesson Plan: How to Do Your 403b Homework

Written by Signature Partner New York State Financial Planning Network

It is not only students who have much to learn this year. With all of the changes taking place in the world of 403bs, teachers and administrators are also going to have to be very diligent in keeping up with their studies. With all of the plans and protocols in a state of flux, it has never been more important to understand your options and have the right tools to evaluate your options.

I know that it sounds intimidating. It's like bringing your car in for service for years and worrying about what they found under the hood as long as the problem was taken care of at a reasonable price, you were happy to drive off. Then one day the mechanic tells you that from now on, you will personally need to look under the hood and make decisions about how you want to handle the repairs. Where do you start?

The first lesson plan for 2009 is to look under the hood to become familiar with 403bs and the best ways to manage your investment choices. The good news is that you have time to acclimate. As you may have heard, there was a recent IRS announcement regarding your plan sponsor's new deadlines.

Previously, plan administrators had to have everything in place and approved by January 1. Effective with this new ruling, however, they will have until December 31. This will allow them more time to identify sponsors, review, evaluate, assemble and present their plan choices to you. In the long run this is a good thing.

In light of the economic downturn, the severe state budget cuts and the desperate need to modernize a forty-year old program, extended time is the best antidote for fixing what is under the hood. Districts were struggling to put new plans into place and now this postponement will allow administrators a chance to select better plan choices, lower costs and to create greater tax savings for surviving spouses and children.

### How to Do Your 403b Homework

To make informed choices once you are presented with your options, there are important criteria to be aware of for understanding and evaluating the investment choices in your 403b.

These are some of the most important:

- Financial solvency of the company
- Performance history and track record not just over the past year, but a three-to five-year average that spans a variety of market conditions
- 5-Risk ratings
- Annual fees and service charges
- How do you gather this intelligence? There are a number of ways:
- Meet personally with representatives of the companies and ask them to design a custom plan for you based on your age, financial goals and risk tolerance.
- Work with a financial advisor who can guide you, rather than relying on friends and colleagues to help you choose based on their decisions.

As for the learning curve, it is just like what students hear every day. Take one step at a time, don't be afraid to ask questions, and give it your best shot. In time, you will be very pleased with your progress.

*This article was prepared by our Signature Partner New York State Financial Planning Network. For more information, please contact Lee Rosenberg at ARS Financial Services, Inc. at 516-932-5130 / jericho@arsfinancial.com, 500 N. Broadway, Suite 260, Jericho, NY 11753.*

## Aspiring Superintendents' Workshop Date Change

The Leadership for Educational Achievement Foundation's Aspiring Superintendents' Workshop is being held in Albany, Long Island and Rochester on Thursday, April 30, 2009. **The program date for the Rochester program has been changed to Thursday, April, 30, 2009.**

The Aspiring Superintendents' Workshop provides an excellent overview of the superintendency including: roles and responsibilities in rural, suburban, and urban districts, conducting a job search, dealing effectively with boards of education, as well as a session on leadership. If you have any questions regarding this program please contact:

Kacey Feldman at 518-449-1063  
or email [kacey@nyscoss.org](mailto:kacey@nyscoss.org).

## **NYSED Commissioner Search Announcement**



### **Commissioner Of Education And President Of The University**

The New York State Board of Regents seeks applications and nominations for the position of Commissioner of Education. Our goal is to find an accomplished leader who will bring New York State to the forefront in educational achievement. We need a visionary to manage the State's educational resources to raise achievement for all students, close the achievement gap, and raise the State's graduation rate.

This person must have:

- Demonstrated experience in identifying, developing and implementing creative solutions to challenges confronting education at all levels; success in the urban setting is a plus.
- Proven experience leading a complex organization where staff development, organizational change, fiscal accountability and technology have been used to improve service delivery and customer satisfaction.
- A commitment to diversity; an ability to work effectively with and value the perspectives of all groups and individuals.
- An ability to effectively communicate with, motivate and lead staff and stakeholders toward excellence.
- Proven experience working with a board to effect change through policy development and shared governance.
- Demonstrated commitment to enhancing the role of education in economic development.
- Experience working with local, state and federal elected officials.

Appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Board of Regents, the Commissioner is the Chief Executive Officer of the State Education Department and President of The University of the State of New York (USNY). The University is one of the largest and most comprehensive educational systems in the world.

Incorporated by the Legislature in 1784, the Board of Regents is the oldest continuous policy-making board of education in the nation. Under the State Constitution, the Regents head the State Education Department and The University of the State of New York which oversees and assists more than 7,000 public and independent elementary and secondary schools; 270 public and independent colleges and universities; 7,000 libraries; 900 museums; 25 public broadcasting facilities; 3,000 historical repositories; 436 proprietary schools; 48 professions encompassing more than 761,000 licensees plus 240,000 certified educators; and services for children and adults with disabilities.

Competitive salary commensurate with experience.

For more information: [NYSED.Gov](http://NYSED.Gov)

Qualified candidates should send a resume and letter of interest to:

Commissioner Search  
P.O. Box 127  
ALBANY, NY 12201-0127

*Nominations may be sent to the same address.*

*Review will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.*

### Council Opens Nominations for Officers

THE COUNCIL is accepting nominating petitions for the offices of "Vice President/Treasurer" and "President-Elect" for the 2009-10 year. By operation of THE COUNCIL'S Constitution, the current Vice President/Treasurer (Robert Christmann, Grand Island) is automatically nominated as a candidate for the position of President-Elect.

Petitions to nominate candidates may be obtained by contacting THE COUNCIL offices. Original petitions for either office must be received by April 1, 2009 at:

**Nominating Committee Chair c/o  
The Council of School Superintendents  
7 Elk Street, Third Floor  
Albany, NY 12207-1002**

Once a candidate has accumulated at least 35 signatures of active, paid Council members (on one or more petitions), s/he will be placed into nomination. In the event of a contested election, balloting will be conducted between May 1 and May 15. Runoff elections (if required) will be conducted between May 15 and June 15.

The remaining slate of officers will be appointed by operation of the Constitution: President-Elect Oliver Robinson will become President, President Clark Godshall will become Past President.

### AASA Governing Board Elections

New York State has 7 seats on the AASA Governing Board. Each seat has a 3-year term, and the terms are staggered to ensure a similar number of vacancies each year. Two terms will expire this year and both incumbents (Clark Godshall and Cliff Moses) have indicated an interest in running for another term. Other nominations are welcome and should be forwarded to THE COUNCIL offices. Governing Board members are responsible for attending 3 meetings per year – at the National Conference on Education, and at the summer governance meetings in July (locations involve national travel).

### Send Us Your News...

Let us know what your district is doing that may inspire and inform your colleagues. Send items of interest to Theresa Wutzer at THE COUNCIL or email [theresa@nyscoss.org](mailto:theresa@nyscoss.org).

### Welcome New Superintendents

Martin D. Cox..... Fillmore CSD, 01/09  
*HS Principal, Geneva CSD*

Karen M. Donahue ..... Lyme CSD, 01/09  
*Principal, Camden CSD*

Gary M. Kuch ..... Worcester CSD, 01/09  
*Principal, Cooperstown CSD*

Laura J. Marlow Northern Adirondack CSD, 01/09  
*HS Principal, Ausable Valley CSD*

Douglas Premo ..... South Lewis CSD, 01/09  
*Elementary Principal*

James Willis ..... Utica City SD, 01/09  
*Assistant Superintendent, South Country CSD*

### Thank you to our Newsletter Underwriters



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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## The Council's Conferences

### **Fall Conferences**

October 4-6, 2009 .....Rochester  
September 26-28, 2010 .....Saratoga Springs  
September 25-27, 2011.....Saratoga Springs

## LEAF Programs

### **Leadership for Student Achievement**

March 26, 2009 ..... Albany  
May 8, 2009 .....Albany

### **Spring Conference**

April 3, 2009 ..... Albany

### **Aspiring Superintendents' Workshops**

April 30, 2009 ..... Albany  
April 30, 2009 ..... Long Island  
April 30, 2009 ..... Rochester