The 2010-2011 Annual Letter: The Leadership Challenge

Navigating the Waters of Change
Introduction

“Leadership is an improvisational art. You may have an overarching vision, clear, orienting values, and even a strategic plan, but what you actually do from moment to moment cannot be scripted. To be effective, you must respond to what is happening . . .

Sustaining your leadership then requires first and foremost the capacity to see what is happening to you and your initiative as it is happening. This takes discipline and flexibility and it is hard to do.”

-Heifetz and Linsky, Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive Through the Dangers of Leading, 2002

Many of you may recall hearing Dr. Ronald Heifetz at The Council’s 2010 Winter Institute where he reinforced the theory that we are all engaged in improvisational activity. Every day, leaders find themselves dealing with imposed conditions and constraints that they must live with but did not create.

The leadership challenge, according to Heifetz, is to be effective given the conditions you find and design within the constraints you have to live with. Stephen R. Covey reinforces this tenant in his book, The Leader in Me (2008) by encouraging us to look within our “Circle of Influence” and to focus on those things we can influence. He asserts that focusing on things we cannot control wastes energy and resources.

A Perfect Storm

Wikipedia defines a perfect storm as “a confluence of events that drastically aggravates the situation.” The current educational and political climate has many unknowns, is rife with tension and uncertainty, and is in essence, a “perfect storm” that educators did not create.

We first experienced a leadership change at the State Education Department 18 months ago with the appointment of Commissioner Dr. David M. Steiner after almost 15 years of leadership under then Commissioner Richard Mills. In May 2011, the commissionership changed again when
the Board of Regents appointed Senior Deputy Commissioner Dr. John King as the new commissioner. On the same day Dr. Steiner announced his plans to step down, New York City Schools Chancellor Cathie Black resigned after only four months of leadership.

These leadership changes are significant given the reform agenda set forth by the Board of Regents (Race to the Top funding, Annual Professional Performance Review, College/Career Readiness, National Core Standards, and other initiatives) and the many unanswered questions that remain as the 2011-2012 school year rapidly approaches.

We have also witnessed significant changes in State government. In 2006, Democrat Eliot Spitzer rode to the Governor’s office in a record landslide, promising, “Day one, everything changes.” Within 432 days everything changed again. After the resignation of Eliot Spitzer, Governor David Paterson faced harsh choices in assembling the state budget considering the economic circumstances. In 2010, Andrew Cuomo found himself dealing with structural deficits projected to reach over 20 percent of expenditures in two years. He faces the same issues and questions superintendents are challenged with - balancing the needs of the taxpayer and their communities.

At the same time The Council’s 2011 Winter Institute was taking place in Albany, Governor Cuomo released a proposal to cap superintendents’ salaries; an attempt to focus debate on the $15 million the Administration said the proposal would save, instead of on the damage the Governor’s $1.3 billion state aid cut would have caused for schools and students. Political rhetoric heated to a point that became misleading and appeared as an attempt to cast superintendent leaders as villains in order to divert attention from the tough choices facing state and school leaders.

In May 2011, Governor Cuomo, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, and Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos announced an agreement on a plan to cap property tax increases by school districts and local governments. The plan ignored the real progress school leaders—and voters—have made in slowing tax increases, as well as the factors that hindered further progress.
Lastly, we are witnessing the unprecedented involvement of the private sector in public education policy. Our federal and state leaders believe competition will improve public education; threatening democratic accountability and equality of opportunity.

All of these changes are placed in the context of the weakest national economy since the Great Depression.

**E + R = O (Event + Response = Outcome)**

As many superintendents have experienced this past year, the challenges they face in education are difficult, but not impossible. Many may feel that they are being pulled in a hundred different directions. Superintendents cannot afford to have these changes distract them from their main mission – providing quality educational opportunities for all children.

“When we can no longer change the situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.”

- Viktor Emil Frankel, M.D., Ph.D. Man’s Search for Ultimate Meaning, 1997

Superintendents have experienced many external events (E) over which they have no control. How they respond (R) to these events will, in large part, determine the outcomes (O) that they will experience. As child advocates, their choice is a simple one. Superintendents need to be proactive and understand that every decision made will impact, in some way, the communities they serve and lead to their ultimate goal – to educate and develop every child.

**Your Council**

A year ago, when I met with The Council’s Officers and Executive Committee, I asked what expectations they had for their new Executive Director. Their response was straight forward:

- Focus on the big issues.
- Meet and support superintendents.
- Focus on Advocacy.
- Engage our members more fully.
- Provide leadership in these very challenging times.

The success of The Council is fundamentally based on collaboration, our respect for and our belief in one another. These attributes are reflected in the interactions between members, staff, colleagues, partner organizations, and Strategic Partners. Although The Council has limited resources, we have benefited from the synergy among these attributes expanding our capabilities and influence.
Just as our members must adapt to the challenges presented by the changing environment, The Council strives to become a nimble and flexible association that anticipates and responds quickly and thoughtfully to the needs of the field. We recognize that member involvement is one of our key strengths and we continue to value the contributions our members make in education and on behalf of The Council.

This past year we increased our advocacy capabilities; implemented a strategic plan to increase the involvement of the House of Delegates and members; worked toward a greater regional presence; pursued partnerships with outside organizations; provided professional development opportunities to address critical needs and state priorities; and individually and collectively supported our members through our legal services.

**Advocacy**

*The Future is Our Business!*

That theme was emphasized in The Council’s advocacy efforts this year. In part, it was a message to policymakers: our mission as superintendents is to build this state’s future – to give all New York’s children the learning opportunities they must have to thrive in life beyond school.

It was also intended as a message to our members, to superintendents and other school district leaders that no matter how grim today’s challenges seem, we cannot stop thinking about how schools must adapt and change for tomorrow. We must do everything we can to ensure our students finish their schooling prepared to succeed.

The past year presented momentous advocacy challenges:

- The largest cut in School Aid proposed by a Governor;
- Surging momentum to cap school and local government property taxes; and
- A proposal from the Governor to cap superintendent salaries and benefits.

At the same time, the Board of Regents and State Education Department continue pursuing an extremely ambitious reform agenda fueled by a $700 million federal Race to the Top grant, the largest won by any state.

Through advocacy, The Council strives to play the leading role in presenting the facts, explaining how proposed policies are likely to affect schools, the opportunities they provide for schoolchildren, and the costs they ask taxpayers to bear. The perspective of the superintendent is vital to educa-
tion policy. Superintendents must do what policymakers should do: balance what schoolchildren need with what taxpayers can afford. Superintendents play the pivotal role in translating policies enacted for the whole state into practices that can work in the communities they serve.

Despite the threat of the salary cap, The Council stepped up to correct the record when Governor Cuomo asserted that schools could absorb proposed aid reductions without resorting to teacher layoffs or other actions harming student services. We stressed that although it was Governor Cuomo’s first year in office, it was not the first tough year for school budgets. We also explained some of the cost pressures schools face, and the actions districts have been taking to absorb them.

That statement won The Council unprecedented media attention but the Legislature’s budget restoration for School Aid was still among the smallest, proportionately, in many years.

So far, we have dissuaded the Assembly and Senate from acting on the Governor’s proposal to cap superintendent compensation. We engaged more individual legislators person-to-person than on any previous issue. We explained the limits the bill would impose on superintendents – and only on superintendents – then asked legislators if they would advise a family member now serving as a principal or assistant superintendent to pursue the top job if a vacancy occurred in his or her district. We also stressed that superintendent compensation is approved by an elected board, included in a budget the public gets to vote on, and posted on a state website. No other position can make that claim. But any bad news story about superintendent compensation anywhere threatens to reignite the threat of the cap, at anytime.
Public education advocates could not stop the tidal wave that had built a property tax cap. The version adopted by New York lawmakers is particularly onerous.

New York’s new law amounts to a zero percent cap on school tax levies; if districts are unable to gain voter approval for a proposed levy increase, they may not increase their levy from the prior year. Also, to gain approval for a levy increase greater than 2 percent or inflation, whichever is less, 60 percent of voters must approve. The Massachusetts tax cap, widely cited as the model to be followed by New York, permits communities to increase their tax levy by up to 2.5 percent without voter approval, and requires only a simple majority of voters to override the cap.

There have been times of austerity in the past – in the early 1990s, in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, and over the past two state budgets. But now is different. The tax cap is a fundamental change in how schools are funded. Both the willingness of lawmakers to impose so stringent a cap and their unwillingness take actions to significantly reduce proposed state aid cuts suggest diminished sympathy to the needs of public schools.

At the same time that schools face the prospect of constrained resources, they will be challenged to meet rising expectations in performance, by policies set forth by the Regents and by demands from the public.

For the preponderance of districts, Race to the Top requirements will vastly exceed any resources that the grant provides. Implementing changes in the teacher evaluation process alone will strain the administrative capacity of schools. The Regents are also considering adding requirements for high school graduation, while schools are groping to maintain present offerings.

...Superintendents must do what policymakers should do: balance what schoolchildren need with what taxpayers can afford...
But if the timing for the Regents’ reform agenda is adverse, and some of the components are debatable, the overarching aim is right. *The future is our business.* The goal for our business should be to ensure that every student finishes school prepared to succeed in college or a career or both and to go on learning. Parents and taxpayers should be justified in believing that a high school diploma signifies that attainment.

All these challenges will require more determined advocacy. This will demand even more extensive and persistent contact with policymakers by Council members and staff. But even more important will be for The Council and our members to demonstrate indispensable leadership in responding to these challenges, with proposals for state policy and by actions at the local level.

Planning for that exercise in leadership will be a key focus for The Council as the 2011-2012 school year begins.

**Leadership for Educational Achievement Foundation, Inc. (LEAF):**

**Creating New Learning Initiatives**

The Leadership for Educational Achievement Foundation, Inc. (LEAF, Inc.) continues to work hard to provide programs that are not only a good value in challenging economic times, but can also make immediate returns in student achievement. As you know, LEAF, Inc., a 501 (c) 3 organization, was established in 2006 as the professional development arm of The Council.

In 2010-2011, the LEAF Board of Directors developed goals focusing on five areas:

- Professional Development
- Communication
- Technology
- Governance
- Fiscal Wellness

This past year, LEAF, Inc. continued to provide high quality professional development opportunities for superintendents and their district teams.

Our successful Leadership for Student Achievement series was held in Albany and provided teams the opportunity to work with renowned experts such as Dr. Pedro Noguera, Dr. Michael Fullan, Dr. Giselle Martin-Kniep, Dr. Grant Wiggins and Dr. Debra Pickering. Teams worked throughout the year on strategies to improve student achievement in their districts.
Another team-based program, *Connecting Content and Kids*, an annual collaboration with the New York State Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (NYSASCD), was attended by over 100 educators over a two-day conference. They heard from Dr. Carol Ann Tomlinson and Jay McTighe on the interrelated needs to address content standards in rich and authentic ways while remaining responsive to the diversity of learners.

The LEAF, Inc. Board of Directors has remained committed to meeting the needs of our Cabinet level members and to those aspiring to the superintendency. On October 13-14, 2010, we offered our Second Annual Leadership Summit for Deputy and Assistant Superintendents featuring Dr. Mike Schmoker. Participants heard from members of the NYS Education Department, participated in skill building sessions and had ample time to network with colleagues.

LEAF, Inc. offered the Future Superintendents Academy to a second cohort of administrators aspiring to the superintendency. Twenty-four fellows from across the state participated in the year-long program that included a curriculum developed by highly experienced superintendents in New York State.

Expansion of our professional development for early career superintendents was a priority. In addition to the New Superintendents Institute, we designed the 2nd & 3rd Year Superintendents Institute, providing sessions in conjunction with our Fall Leadership Summit and Winter Institute. A summer retreat focused on critical issues for early career superintendents is offered in July.

In spring 2011, following a four-year partnership with The Council, the Educorps’ Board of Directors voted to make Educorps a formal service
provided by LEAF, Inc. This distinctive service consists of recently retired superintendents offering customized assistance to current superintendents throughout the state. LEAF resources will be invested to grow this service and expand the levels of support offered to superintendents.

The role of LEAF, Inc. in supporting superintendents will continue to take on greater significance as we move forward. In the summer of 2011, we have planned a series of events to help superintendents comply with the new regulations set under Annual Professional Performance Review legislation (APPR).

LEAF, Inc. is in a position to adapt to the changing education environment. Providing resources and programs to develop the leadership skills necessary to serve New York’s school children is central to the missions of both THE COUNCIL and LEAF.

Conferences

Emphasizing Community, Building Leadership Capacity and Developing an Advocacy Focused Event

Conferences have been designed to offer professional development, emphasize the “Community of Superintendents,” build leadership capacity and convey essential information. They also play an important role with the revenue stream that supports THE COUNCIL’s programs and services. They allow our Strategic Partners to access broader audiences and ensure that the marketing opportunities selected by sponsors justify their substantial investments.

In 2009, a committee composed of members of the Executive Committee, BOCES superintendents, Council staff and Strategic Partners met to reevaluate and improve the conference experience for both superintendents and Strategic Partners. During the 2009-2010 year, the Fall and Mid-Winter Conferences were completely redesigned and renamed as the Fall Leadership Summit and the Winter Institute in order to emphasize the importance of leadership work and the value of the conference programs.

Implementation of the various redesign changes occurred over several years with the last portion this past winter. In 2011, THE COUNCIL combined our Winter Institute with our annual lobby day and moved it from early January to late February to permit a greater focus on advocacy, as recommended by the Redesign Committee.
Timing was especially important this year from the advocacy perspective. With a new Governor, the proposed state budget was released two weeks later than usual – February 1. In addition, our Conference Redesign Committee recommended changes based on the following:

- incorporating more time between fall and winter events;
- combining two key events (The Council’s Winter Institute and lobby day) to lessen expense and travel time; and to encourage greater superintendent involvement in advocacy, which is now a primary focus of the Winter Institute.

With the mounting financial challenges confronting schools and their leaders, promoting greater superintendent participation in advocacy is a paramount goal for The Council. Superintendents’ perspectives must be heard.

Our conference attendance in fall 2010 remained steady though higher food prices and technology costs impacted overall profits. The 2011 Winter Institute saw an increase in attendance by almost 24 members after a five year trend of declining attendance. Lobby Day participation increased 50 percent after combining it with the Winter Institute.

As with anything The Council pursues, this change was not made lightly. Extensive feedback from surveys guided decisions about summit and institute planning. After the combined Winter and Lobby Day event, we conducted a survey to analyze participant reactions; over 63 percent of survey respondents preferred having the Winter Institute in late February while 18 percent had no preference. To accommodate two different February school vacation schedules next year, the 2012 Winter Institute will be hosted the first weekend in March followed by lobby day on Tuesday, March 6, 2012.

This fall our keynote speakers include Vicki Phillips, Director of Education, College Ready for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Mary Cullinane, Director for the US Partners of Learning at the Microsoft Corporation. The summit will feature presentations on measuring teacher effectiveness with Assistant Professor of Economics at New York University, Sean Patrick Corcoran; principle-centered leadership with Sean Covey; and Dr. David Hyerle, Founding President and Thinking Foundation Developer of Thinking Maps.
Strategic Partners:

Providing Revenue to Support Programs Benefiting Superintendents

Our Strategic Partnership Program provides opportunities for outside organizations and companies to develop strategic and sustainable alliances and connections with K-12 educational leaders and school districts across New York State. Our partners promote and support trends in education while connecting leaders to the most current and effective tools and services in education.

It is important for superintendents to support this program since our Strategic Partners provide a significant revenue stream, separate from those generated by dues and other Council activities, that funds legal services, advocacy and professional development programs for superintendents that otherwise would not be available.

Our Strategic Partnership revenue has remained steady due to the merits of our partnership program and the opportunity for Strategic Partners to develop relationships with our members. Due to the economic downturn in 2010-2011, the landscape of our Strategic Partner program shifted. We found that many of our partners continued their partnerships with THE COUNCIL but dropped their level of support to lower contract amounts; thereby increasing the total number of partnerships needed overall to reach previous years’ level of support.
Strategic Partners 2010-2011

The New York State Council of School Superintendents recognizes the following organizations for their support of The Council, our mission and our members:

**Signature Partners**

K12 *Insight*

Ferrara, Fiorenza, Larrison, Barrett & Reitz, P.C.

New York Schools Insurance Reciprocal (*NYSIR*)

The Pike Company

**Premier Diamond Partners**

Ameresco, Inc.

Ashley McGraw Architects, P.C.

C&S Companies

Campus Construction Management Group, Inc.

Core BTS, Inc.

ECG Engineering, LLC

The Greenwood Corporation

Harris Beach, PLLC

HSBC Bank USA, N.A.

HUNT Engineers, Architects, & Land Surveyors, PC

Infinite Campus/Custom Computer Specialists

Mosaic Associates Architects

SEI Design Group

Siemens Industry, Inc.

Tetra Tech Architects & Engineers

Turner Construction Company

Utica National Insurance Group

**Premier Platinum Partners**

Bearsch Compeau Knudson Architects & Engineers, P.C.

Cannon Design

CSArch Architecture/Engineering/Construction Management

VALIC

**Premier Gold Partners**

Centris Group (IEP Direct/RTIm Direct)

College Board

New York State Financial Planning Network

Pupil Benefits Plan, Inc.

Teachscape

U.W. Marx Construction Company

Verizon Wireless
Legal Representation

Supporting Superintendents through a Two-Tiered System

The Council plays an active role in providing effective legal representation for superintendents. In-house legal services are provided directly from The Council and are considered the “first level.” These services include, but are not limited to, contract reviews and renewals, contract negotiations, general questions, retirement planning, pension determinations, and separation agreements. Council attorneys worked on over 230 cases this past year; some requiring a significant number of hours.

We also represent new superintendents even before they join The Council as members. We offer a model contract that serves as a base for negotiating new agreements or a way to evaluate a current contract. We also have a model interim contract for superintendents who work on a per diem or short-term basis.

Our legal services department has looked strategically into the future by assessing emerging legal trends and needs of superintendents. The Executive Committee explored the expansion of our litigation services as part of strategic planning. Expanding services was intended to increase the value of membership and address emerging legal issues that challenge our profession such as human rights violations.

As a result, another level of legal services, Level 2 Legal Services, was introduced in March 2010. The Council had 75 members subscribe to this new service during its inaugural year with 10 percent of those members taking
advantage of this extended legal service. The Direct Legal Representation Service includes in-person representation of a superintendent during mediation, arbitration and due process proceedings, including one appeal either to the Commissioner of Education or at the state court level.

In spring 2011, The Council’s Executive Committee reviewed important program and made minor adjustments in order to provide this valuable service at a reasonable fee to members while ensuring a good investment of Council staff time. As a result, our legal services will continue to be offered in 2011-2012 through a two-category approach.

The Council has also developed a model evaluation for a superintendent by a board of education. This model is easily adopted by a district and is adaptable based upon local needs. The evaluation includes instruments and a recommended process. The Council has available several other sample evaluations for reference.

Beyond representation, our legal service department prepares legal publications and articles to update superintendents on the latest court cases and regulatory changes, including monthly articles prepared for our Councilgram newsletter and an article that was published by AASA in the June 2011 edition of the School Administrator. In fall 2010, we introduced two legal briefing workshops that provided timely and valuable legal information to members. Held in Westchester and Syracuse, the legal briefings hosted over 140 members.

The Council’s legal services department evaluates legal issues for individual superintendents on the basis of what it means to that superintendent. In addition, our counsel evaluates legal issues and takes appropriate steps when a particular issue also has greater application to the superintendency or to the ability of the superintendent to lead a district.

**Finances**

*Holding Steady in a Perfect Storm*

Like a school district’s budget, The Council’s budget is a plan to carry out its mission. Likewise, there is financial accountability through budget planning. The process for budget approval includes review by a budget committee of members determined by the House of Delegates. There is further review and required approval by both the Executive Committee and the House of Delegates. The Executive Committee receives and discusses a Treasurer’s Report at each of its meetings. Budget planning has taken the future into consideration by assessing economic conditions, understanding the entrepreneurial and business aspect of an association, and carrying out strategic financial planning.
Over the last 10 years, The Council has worked hard, and successfully, to diversify its revenues to include more revenue sources than dues income and to build its reserve fund. Major revenue sources other than dues include Strategic Partner support, summit and institute profit, professional development workshops, and philanthropic grants. Membership dues compose approximately one-third of our revenues.

The Council has also pursued an aggressive cost containment agenda as we were sensitive to the economic downturn, perhaps more so than other associations since Council programs exist almost entirely in the discretionary portion of school district budgets.
Based on our current estimates for The Council and LEAF, Inc., and assuming the auditors concur, we are anticipating a combined loss of $90,000 for the 2010-2011 fiscal year. This anticipated loss was due to several economic factors:

- higher food and technology costs at conferences and LEAF, Inc. programs;
- lower attendance at professional development training sessions due to major mid-year cuts in school budgets;
- the hiring of a professional lobbying firm to assist our advocacy team to counter proposals to cap superintendents’ salaries and cap property taxes;
- fewer opportunities to secure grant funding; and
- the engagement of outside counsel to support individual superintendent members through our Level 2 Legal Services to remedy legal decisions that could impact everyone.

The Council has built a $1.3 million reserve fund over the past 10 years that will be used to offset this year’s loss. The economic downturn is not a time for retrenchment, but rather one to explore opportunities to serve schools in new ways, occupy vacuums left by other enterprises, and expand current activities.

**Looking Toward the Future:**

**Riding Out the Storm**

Though we experienced a financial loss in 2010-2011, we recognized that it was critical to upgrade our technology systems in order to serve our members efficiently and to create new services and educational opportunities. To that end, we developed a technology vision statement, created a plan and engaged a firm to assist us with a technology needs analysis, design and implementation of these goals.

The Council took further strides to improve and automate processes to meet its members’ expectations. For example, for the first time, the 2011 AASA Governing Board Election was converted to an electronic format. By using an automated system already being provided by K12 Insight, a Signature Partner of The Council, we were able to execute an election electronically at a cost savings. As we look to improve and update our
systems, technology will play a critical role in our ability to support, communicate and provide services in a more timely and efficient manner.

Finally, our year-long engagement with the State Education Department’s initiative in teacher/principal effectiveness has taught us several important guiding lessons:

1. The creation of a Council Task Force on Teacher/Principal Effectiveness promoted the direct involvement of superintendents across the state.

2. We found there is no substitute for superintendents communicating directly with their colleagues.

3. Lastly, the four white papers the task force developed had significant influence with superintendents, the State Education Department and members of the Board of Regents.

Our approach to this challenge proved to be both sustainable and effective. It is a model we will use to engage the membership in the future.

The future economic and political environment will continue to be a challenge to our leadership and we must face these challenges together.
As you may recall, in 2007, The Council adopted a strong child-centered advocacy agenda entitled: *Education is a Civil Right*. The agenda honored three promises:

- We will assure all students learn what they need to know and be able to do to succeed throughout life beyond school.
- We will assure all students have the best teachers and school leaders possible.
- We will assure all children have the resources and programs they need to succeed.

These promises continue to remind us what to believe in and fight for every day. It helps to maintain focus and navigate through “the perfect storm.” The Council is here to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with each superintendent as we strive to keep our promises to our children.

With every challenge comes opportunity.

We will find these opportunities because we are child advocates and we are leaders.

Thank you for all you do for the children of New York State.

Respectfully yours,

Robert J. Reidy, Jr., Ph.D.
Executive Director
New York State Council of School Superintendents

References


Annual Awards

2010 Distinguished Service Award

The Distinguished Service Award, for which only retirees are eligible, is given in recognition of that one individual who has shown exemplary commitment to public education. Veteran school leader Walter J. Sullivan, an associate professor in educational leadership at The College of New Rochelle, and retired superintendent of Skaneateles Central School District received The Council’s highest honor for his exemplary standards of educational service and leadership at the Annual Banquet. The 2010 Distinguished Service Award was sponsored by Signature Partner New York Schools Insurance Reciprocal (NYSIR).

2011 New York Superintendent of the Year Award

The 2011 New York State Superintendent of the Year was presented to Bernard P. Pierorazio, Superintendent of the Yonkers Public Schools at the 2011 Winter Institute. Mr. Pierorazio was then eligible to compete for the National Superintendent of the Year, presented by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) at their annual conference in February. The award pays tribute to the talent and vision of the men and women who lead our nation’s public schools.

2011 Friend of the Council Award

At the 2011 Winter Institute, Joseph P. Frey, Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Higher Education and Robert G. Bentley, Assistant Commissioner of Office of Teaching Initiatives, both from the New York State Education Department were each awarded Friend of The Council Awards. This award is given every year in recognition of a non-member’s contribution to The Council and the field of education. The 2011 Friend of The Council awards were sponsored by Premier Silver Partner Cisco Systems.

2011 Appreciation Awards

We recognized three superintendents with our Appreciation Award at our 2011 Winter Institute, in recognition of active members’ efforts on behalf of the organization and its initiatives. This year, the award was presented to Jere I. Hochman, Superintendent of Bedford; Jon G. Hunter, Superintendent of Fairport; and Howard S. Smith, Williamsville for their dedication to The Council and their exemplary work on the Regents Teacher/Principal Evaluation Task Force. The 2011 Appreciation Award was sponsored by Premier Diamond Partner C&S Companies.
2010 - 2011 Officers

Robert W. Christmann
President
Grand Island

Marilyn C. Terranova
President-Elect
Eastchester

James T. Langlois
VP/Treasurer
Putnam-Northern Westchester BOCES

L. Oliver Robinson
Past President
Shenendehowa

2010 - 2011 Executive Committee

Jean-Claude Brizard ...................... Rochester (July 2010 – May 2011)
Wendell Chu ................................................................. East Islip (2011)
Maureen E. Donahue ................................................ Friendship (2011)
Mary Beth R. Fiore .................................. Elmira Heights (2012)
Henry L. Grishman .............................................. Jericho (2011)
Patricia Sullivan-Kris .................. Hauppauge (May 2011 – June 2012)
Cosimo Tangorra, Jr. .......................................................... Ilion (2012)
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<td></td>
<td>Silver Creek CSD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Franklin-Essex-Hamilton</td>
<td>Jane A. Collins</td>
<td>Salmon River CSD</td>
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<td>Genesee Valley</td>
<td>David V. Dinolfo</td>
<td>Caledonia-Mumford CSD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genesee Valley</td>
<td>Scott A. Bischoping</td>
<td>Livonia CSD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## House of Delegates 2010-2011

### Greater Southern Tier
- Kyle C. Bower  
  Hammondsport CSD
- Ralph Marino, Jr.  
  Horseheads CSD

### Greater Southern Tier (Alternate)
- David Dimbleby  
  Hilton CSD

### Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery
- Douglas C. Burton  
  Fort Plain CSD

### Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego
- Robert A. Barraco  
  Richfield Springs CSD

### Jefferson-Lewis
- Douglas E. Premo  
  South Lewis CSD

### Madison-Oneida
- Cynthia B. DeDominick  
  Madison CSD

### Monroe 1
- Jon G. Hunter  
  Fairport CSD

### Monroe 2-Orleans
- Garry F. Stone  
  Brockport CSD

### Monroe 2-Orleans (Alternate)
- David Dimbleby  
  Hilton CSD

### Nassau
- Ranier Melucci  
  Merrick UFSD
- Henry L. Grishman  
  Jericho UFSD

### Oneida-Herkimer-Madison
- Kathleen M. Davis  
  Holland Patent CSD

### Onondaga-Cortland-Madison
- Corliss C. Kaiser  
  Fayetteville-Manlius CSD
- Laurence T. Spring  
  Cortland City SD

### Orange-Ulster
- Daniel T. Connor  
  Goshen CSD
- Philip G. Steinberg  
  Pine Bush CSD

### Orleans-Niagara
- Roger J. Klatt  
  Barker CSD

### Oswego
- Marshall Marshall  
  Pulaski CSD

### Otsego-Northern Catskill
- David P. Rowley  
  Edmeston CSD

### Putnam/N.Westchester
- Phyllis Glassman  
  Ossining UFSD
House of Delegates 2010-2011

Putnam/N.Westchester
Jere I. Hochman
Bedford CSD

Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga
Sandra R. Sherwood
Dryden CSD

Questar III
Karen McGraw
New Lebanon CSD

Ulster
Maria C. Rice
New Paltz CSD

Questar III
Sally M. Sharkey
Cairo-Durham CSD

Ulster
(Alternate)
Deborah A. Haab
Highland CSD

Rockland
Margaret Keller-Cogan
Clarkstown CSD

Washington-Saratoga-Warren-Hamilton-Essex
Stanley W. Maziejka
Stillwater CSD

Southern Westchester
Kathleen L. Matusiak
Irvington UFSD

Washington-Saratoga-Warren-Hamilton-Essex
Douglas W. Huntley
Queensbury UFSD

Southern Westchester
Christopher P. Clouet
White Plains City SD

Wayne-Finger Lakes
David G. Sholes
Red Creek CSD

St. Lawrence-Lewis
Rolf Waters
Harrisville CSD

Wayne-Finger Lakes
Donald W. Raw
Canandaigua City SD

St. Lawrence-Lewis
(Alternate)
Lynn M. Roy
Madrid Waddington CSD

Western Suffolk BOCES
Micheal J. Mensch
Western Suffolk BOCES

Sullivan County
Michael Vanyo
Liberty CSD

Western Suffolk BOCES
(Alternate)
Thomas C. Shea
South Huntington UFSD

Sullivan County
(Alternate)
Ivan J. Katz
Fallsburg CSD
The Council’s 2010-2011 Commissioner’s Advisory Council (CAC) Members

I. Western

- Erie I, Erie2-Chautauqua, Orleans-Niagara, Cattaragus-Allegany
  *Representative: Whitney K. Vantine, Tonawanda*

II. Central Western

- Genessee Valley, Monroe 1, Monroe 2-Orleans, Wayne-Finger Lakes
  *Representative: Scott A. Bischoping, Livonia*

III. Southern Tier

- Steuben-Allegany, Broome-Delaware-Tioga, Otsego-Northern Catskills, Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga, Delaware-Chenango
  *Representative: Gerardo Tagliaferri, Susquehanna Valley*

IV. Central

- Cayuga-Onondaga, Oswego, Onondaga-Cortland-Madison, Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga
  *Representative: Corliss C. Kaiser, Fayetteville-Manlius*

V. Mohawk Valley

- Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton, Madison-Oneida, Oneida-Herkimer-Madison
  *Representative: Robert A. Barraco, Richfield Springs*

VI. Ontario

- St. Lawrence-Lewis, Jefferson-Lewis-Hamilton
  *Representative: Douglas E. Premo, South Lewis*

VII. North Country

- Franklin-Essex-Hamilton, Clinton-Essex
  *Representative: Jane A. Collins, Salmon River*

VIII. Capital District

- Capital Region, Washington-Warren-Saratoga-Hamilton, Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery, Questar III
  *Representative: Sally M. Sharkey, Cairo Durham (Susan M. Swartz, Scotia-Glenville, Alternate)*

IX. Mid Hudson

- Orange-Ulster, Dutchess, Ulster, Sullivan
  *Representative: Philip G. Steinberg, Pine Bush (Daniel T. Connor, Goshen, Alternate)*

X. Lower Hudson

- Putnam-Northern Westchester, Rockland, Southern Westchester
  *Representative: Kathleen L. Matusiak, Irvington (Phyllis Glassman, Ossining, Alternate)*

XI. Nassau County

- *Representative: Ranier Melucci, Merrick (Herbert R. Brown, Oceanside, Alternate)*

XII. Suffolk County

- *Representative: Patricia Sullivan-Kriss, Hauppauge Thomas C. Shea, South Huntington (Alternate)*

New York City

- *Representative: None*
Council and LEAF, Inc. Staff

Executive Team
Robert J. Reidy, Jr., Ph.D.
Executive Director

Venerina T. Greco
Administrative Assistant to Executive Director

Advocacy/Legal Team
Kyle McCauley
Belokopitsky, Esq.
Assistant Director for Government Relations

Michele V. Handzel, Esq.
General Counsel

Robert N. Lowry, Jr.
Deputy Director

Operations/Membership Team
Karen C. Dooley
Membership Services Coordinator

Dena A. Gauthier
Senior Graphic Designer (Part-time)

Joanna Douglas
Administrative Assistant

Deborah N. Orsini
Assistant Director for Finance and Human Resources

Professional Development Team
Vreneli G. Banks
Programs & Resource Development Associate

Kacey G. Feldman,
Program Associate (Part-time)

Deidre G. Hungerford
Program Associate

Kelly O. Masline
Senior Associate Director, Director of LEAF, Inc.

Robert B. McClure, Ed.D.
Superintendent-in-Residence (Part-time)

Theresa A. Wutzer
Associate Director/Director of Marketing & Communications
Leadership for Educational Achievement Foundation, Inc.

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Mary Alice Price
Superintendent
Pittsford CSD

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Neil F. O’Brien
Superintendent
Port Byron CSD

Treasurer
John E. Bierwirth
Superintendent
Herricks UFSD

Past President
Henry L. Grishman
Superintendent
Jericho UFSD

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Port Jervis City SD

Laura Feijoo
Deputy Senior Supervising Superintendent
NYC Department of Education

Kevin N. McGuire
Retired Superintendent

Staff

Director
Kelly O. Masline
Senior Associate Director
NYS Council of School Superintendents

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Robert J. Reidy, Jr.
Executive Director
NYS Council of School Superintendents
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