

DATES TO REMEMBER

Wednesday, March 14

Superintendents & Assistant Superintendents
Luncheon Meeting, Dowling College, 12:00 Noon

Wednesday, March 28

Board of Directors Meeting
Eastern Suffolk BOCES, 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday, April 18

Board of Directors Meeting, 10:30 a.m.
General Meeting, 12:00 Noon
Douglas Gerhardt, NYSCOSS
Dowling College

Wednesday, May 23

Board of Directors Meeting
Eastern Suffolk BOCES, 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, June 7

Valedictorian Luncheon
Ed Travaglianti, President Commerce Bank
Hyatt Regency Hotel, 12:30 p.m.

Wednesday, June 18

Board of Directors Meeting, 3:00 p.m.
Convocation, 4:00 p.m.
Villa Lombardi

Friday, June 29

Golf Outing
Great Rock
Lunch - Noon
Tee-Off 1:00 p.m.

JOINT STATEMENT SUMMARY

By the LIA and the LIEC

With the final decision in Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) vs. State having been rendered by the Court of Appeals, the State must now determine what changes will be made in school funding for New York City. Although, by its terms, the CFE decision applied only to New York City's schools, fundamental fairness requires that the State ensure that all schools throughout New York have the resources to provide a sound basic education as defined in that case.

The Long Island Association and the Long Island Education Coalition urge the State to increase and apply education funding statewide in the following manner:

Funding CFE in New York City - The Court of Appeals concluded in CFE that the constitutionally required funding for NYC School District must include additional operating funds in the amount of \$1.93 billion adjusted with reference to the latest version of the Geographic Cost of Education Index (GCEI), using data from 1993-1994, published by the National Center for Educational Statistics, and for inflation since 2004. In order to comply with the final CFE decision, then the State must authorize approximately \$1.244 billion additional funds for the City's schools.

The State should look first to NYC itself to provide that funding. Based on the SCSSA analysis of the estimated per capita tax burden on taxpayers in NYC as compared to those in Nassau and Suffolk Counties, the tax burden on Long Island residents as of 2004 was significantly higher than it was for City residents. On a per capita basis, Long Island taxpayers pay 50% more in local taxes than NYC taxpayers. The per capita income difference between Long Island and NYC residents is only 14% dispelling the misconception that all Long Islanders are wealthy. Requiring Long Island taxpayers to bear any additional tax burden for the State to comply with the CFE decision would exacerbate the inequity. Instead the State should require NYC to generate the additional \$1.244 billion necessary to comply with CFE through its own existing tax revenue sources, in whatever combination the City chooses.

Increasing Education Funding Statewide - Governor Eliot Spitzer advanced a proposal during his gubernatorial campaign that provided significant detailed support for the idea that the State does have the fiscal capacity to increase education funding. He estimated that as much as \$11 billion could be realized over three years by the State from a variety of sources.

Fairly Distributing an Additional \$5 billion in Education Funding - The cost of education currently paid through local tax revenue varies widely around the State. That must change if true reform of education funding is to be realized. Currently, Long Islanders bear almost 65% of the cost of education through local property taxes; whereas NYC taxpayers bear only 48% of the cost of education locally, and taxpayers throughout the rest of the State pay only about 45% locally. Additionally Long Island receives only 12.7% of State Aid to school districts, despite having about 17% of the student enrollment statewide. In short, the State has an obligation to rectify very significant inequities in the State Aid to Long Island. If more or less than \$5 billion is added by the State, we propose that the proportions distribution remain the same. Long Island should receive \$1.5 billion, NYC \$2.0 billion and the remainder of the State should receive \$1.5 billion. We further suggest that 35% of the \$1.5 billion in State Aid Long Island receives be earmarked for increased spending with an emphasis on needy districts, and the remaining 65% should be to relieve this disproportionate reliance on local property taxes to fund public education.

The association has argued that regional cost of living factors should be applied to additional State Aid to education. The Board of Regents has calculated that one dollar of State Aid in upstate New York buys only 66 cents of goods and services downstate. The lack of regional adjustment to the State Aid to school districts is an additional inequity that Long Island has had to bear. When State funding for education is reformed in this State, it is time that Long Island get its fair share, a share we have defined in this statement.

LAUNCH OF CORPORATE PARTNER PROGRAM

The SCSSA is pleased to announce the launch of its Corporate Partner program to support the association's programs and initiatives, and annual scholarship distribution. The association wishes to thank the following corporate partners for their support:

GOLD LEVEL PARTNERS

ARF Financial Services, Inc. Juma Technology Corp.
Jericho, New York Farmingdale, New York

BBS Architects & Engineers Syntax Communication
Patchogue, New York West Sayville, New York

ECG Engineering, LLC. The Thomas Group
Smithtown, New York Farmingdale, New York

JJ Stanis & Company, Inc. Triton Construction
Jericho, New York Garden City, New York

SILVER LEVEL PARTNERS

Lamb & Barnosky, LLP McGraw Hill Education
Melville, New York New York, New York

For more information on the Corporate Partner Program, please contact Candee Swensen (516) 524-0613.



SUFFOLK COUNTY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION

Winter 2007

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A Message from *Neil Lederer, President*

Recently, Governor Spitzer offered his executive budget to the State Legislature. In this proposal he added \$1.4 billion in new aid to education. About half of these funds are appropriated to New York City.

I am concerned that much of the \$1.4 billion increase came from health care, which will result in that industry's lobbying long and hard to have those funds restored, hopefully not at the expense of education.

School budget concerns are not a spending issue; School Boards and Superintendents work diligently to keep costs down. The problem is a funding issue. More has to come from Albany. Long Island sends \$3 billion more income and sales tax to Albany than the island receives back in aid.

The Governor will infer that an enhanced STAR Program will alleviate property tax costs and this may be true; however, that figure should not be tied to State Aid to Education. State reimbursements do not come to school districts, they go to the property owner, who can use the funds as they see fit. All too often elected officials will combine school aid with STAR and imply that the total support for education is a higher figure than it actually is. STAR is great for the property owner, but does nothing for school districts, that must fund ever-increasing mandated costs, to lower the tax levy.

Please continue to lobby elected officials for more aid to our Long Island school districts. Our voices must continue to be heard, both locally and in Albany, as we continue to make every effort to educate children in a fiscally responsible manner.

2007 Plan of Action *One Voice for Education*

**The SCSSA has developed a Five-Point Plan of Action
to address the needs of Suffolk County school districts and communities.**

Equal and Fair Funding for all Suffolk County School Districts - The association endorses the concept of revised formulas to establish fair and equitable distribution of State Aid to Suffolk County's school districts, and works diligently to encourage our elected officials to explore ways to more fully fund costly education mandates.

Preservation of First-Rate School Districts - The association recognizes that through the precedent of consistent community support, Suffolk County schools are recognized among the finest in the country, and this lofty position is critical to the economy of Suffolk County. The SCSSA endorses managerial transparency, integrity, and accountability, and encourages the collaboration of business leaders, elected officials, and communities to realize this goal.

Serving as Visionary Leaders - The association endorses the need of our school leaders to serve as

"visionaries" for the school systems through identification of technological, instructional, programmatic, and financial means to allow districts and communities to evolve "ahead of the curve."

Reauthorization of No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

While the association endorses some of the underlying concepts of NCLB, such as closure of the achievement gap, the SCSSA believes elected officials must provide funding to realize the aims of the legislation which currently forces unwelcome reallocation of resources.

Responding to Changing Demographics

- Suffolk County schools are among the "first responders" to the changing demographics of Long Island especially with regard to the growing immigrant community. The association endorses an embrace of this change through consistent education of communities on its impact to instruction, finance, and community culture.

Top Priorities: *School Safety, Efficiency, and Effectiveness*

Once again this year, the focus of the association's Legislative Committee is on the system the state uses to finance education. The SCSSA strongly endorses "Long Island's Priorities for Statewide School Finance Reform," which were identified as part of the Long Island Association's (LIA's) *Innovate Long Island* initiative. The association also endorses the proposal of the Long Island Education Coalition and LIA to increase state funding to Long Island schools by \$1.5 billion to enable poor districts to dedicate additional resources to instruction and provide much-needed tax relief for all Long Islanders.

In addition to school finance reform, the association supports several legislative initiatives that will enhance school safety, efficiency, and effectiveness including: Establishing School Safety and Security Aid, Re-establishing the School Efficiency Grant Program, Increasing Fund Balance Limits, Reforming the Taylor Law, Ending Unfunded Mandates, Repealing the Wicks Law, and Seeking Greater Federal Support of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) by the federal government.

Legislative Committee Members

Chairperson, Mr. Gary D. Bixhorn, Eastern Suffolk BOCES
Dr. Janet Ceparano Wilson, Harborfields CSD
Mr. Wendell Chu, Fire Island UFSD
Dr. Allan Gerstenlauer, Longwood CSD
Mr. Melvin S. Noble, West Babylon UFSD
Mr. Thomas Quinn, Springs UFSD

Professional Development Committee *Focuses on Leadership*

The primary responsibility of the PDC is to develop and support Suffolk County School Superintendents, the educational leaders of Suffolk County, and to highlight and reinforce that leadership role. The PDC works on the following objectives in order to meet its responsibilities: to be a source of professional development for the educational community; to assist our colleagues in remaining current on research, programs, etc., through professional development opportunities to attract intelligent, responsible individuals to our profession, and to facilitate learning conversations for all colleagues.

PDC Committee Members

Chairperson, Dr. Roberta A. Gerold, Middle Country CSD
Dr. Brian M. De Sorbe, Amityville UFSD
Mr. Neil Lederer, Lindenhurst UFSD
Dr. Allan Gerstenlauer, Longwood CSD
Mr. Dennis Maloney, East Islip UFSD
Dr. Donald A. James, Center Moriches UFSD
Dr. Stuart Racklin, Bridgehampton UFSD
Dr. Ellen Best-Laimit, Babylon UFSD
Ms. Linda Rozzi, Tuckahoe Common SD
Dr. Thomas C. Shea, Huntington UFSD

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The Facts Speak for Th

The association strongly believes that it is important that m Suffolk County be corrected. The facts do not necessarily mat

- Recognize that over half (53%) of the students in Suffolk Co the state average in income and property wealth. This repres nearly 142,000 students.
- Recognize that the cost of education on Long Island, when state median.
- Recognize that Suffolk County is diverse, with schools and available resources. There are many schools that outperform need far more support to meet the established standards.
- The local share of school district funding, which is raised pr Island. This is 44% higher than the 45% average local share

Working Together to Improve Safety

Community residents and school district officials throughout Suffolk County participated in the pandemic influenza Point of Distribution (POD) Vaccination Clinic demonstration at Islip High School, sponsored by the Suffolk County School Superintendents Association and the Suffolk County Department of Health.

The purpose of the exercise was to demonstrate how POD clinics would operate in the event of a public health emergency, where public health professionals, together with government officials, have determined it necessary to offer medication and/or vaccinations to some or all Suffolk County r

Public schools are easily accessible to local communities mak PODs would provide triage, education, medical screening, and,

A demonstration was presented for all those who came to lea in the event of a real medical emergency. Volunteers and memb vests simulated the various screening, processing, and treatment the POD.

"By co-sponsoring this event, the Suffolk County School Su many school districts as possible to participate and become bett President of the SCSSA Neil Lederer. "Many school districts we continue to participate in events such as this one."

Other POD locations are available in Suffolk County includ campuses in Riverhead, Brentwood, and Selden. Additional site

