



FEH BOCES Staff News and Notes March 15, 2016

*“The Mission of the Franklin-Essex-Hamilton
Board of Cooperative Educational Services
is to provide shared services to its component
school districts”*

Legislative Advocacy – Part Two

You may have noticed a little gap in the distribution of News and Notes. This is largely due to my having spent a significant amount of time in Albany over the past couple of weeks at a District Superintendents’ meeting, the New York Council of School Superintendents’ Winter Institute, and most importantly two separate advocacy days connected to those meetings.

On March 2, BOCES Advocacy Day took place at the state capitol. Organized by BOCES of NY, NYSUT, NYSCOSS and the New York State School Boards Association; the event focuses specifically on issues directly related to BOCES. Jules Comeau, our board member from Long Lake, and I represented FEH BOCES. We had the opportunity to meet with Senator Little, Assembly Members Duprey, Stec and Butler. We also, visited the office of Senator Farley, but were unable to meet with him due to the legislative session schedule.

The number one issue for BOCES is to raise the portion of CTE teacher salaries that can be counted as an aidable expense. That amount has been frozen at \$30,000 since 1992 thereby eroding the aid to our component school districts. Both the Senate and Assembly included an increase in the “one house” budget bills released over the last few days. There is still a lot of work to do for this to be included in the final state budget, but the advocacy effort has paid off as this issue is now a significant element in the state budget negotiations. Our voices need to continue to be heard over the next two weeks as the budget is completed.

In addition to BOCES Advocacy day, I attended the NYSCOSS Advocacy Day on March 8 along with five of our component superintendents. (Donna André – Brushton-Moira, Stanley Harper – Salmon River, Seth McGowan – Tupper Lake, Jerry Griffin – Malone and Roger Catania – Lake Placid). While the GEA and Foundation Aid were front and center, we also focused on the CTE aidable salary item again in meetings with Senator Little, Assemblywoman Duprey and Assemblyman Stec. I would also note that our New Vision class from AEC/Adirondack Health also met with legislators on March 8 as they do each year as part of their program. Our north end New Vision programs also visit and host area legislators.

32nd Annual Committee on Special Education Chairpersons’ Conference

On March 16 and 17, FEH BOCES will be hosting the 32nd Annual CSE Chairpersons’ Conference in Lake Placid. Three other BOCES and the Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Center partner with us on this conference. Our three BOCES partners are St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES, CVES, and Jefferson-Lewis BOCES. This year’s conference will have 190 attendees, the largest turnout in many years.

Cheryl Felt, Kelly Wight and Denise Luka have been fully engaged in the planning for this event. Tina Hammill has been the point person for all of the details that go into an undertaking of this size. Carol Parnapy and Judy Winters will be on site with Tina to greet all of the attendees and to take care of technology needs during the conference. FEH BOCES runs several large conferences each year and it requires a team effort to provide a great conference experience for all attendees. I would also like to extend my appreciation to Leslie LaRose who has continued to play a large role in the conference planning in her new role at Jefferson-Lewis BOCES.