

**Massena Central School Board of Education Update
November 17, 2017**



I want to wish all of our families a Happy Thanksgiving. I hope it is a fun and relaxing time with great memories made. Our Thanksgiving recess will begin on Wednesday, 11/22.

HS Mohawk Club on North Country Public Radio

Recently, members of the Massena High School Mohawk Club were interviewed by David Sommerstein of NCPR. They talked about the work of their club and the challenges faced in promoting Native culture. [Here](#) is a link to the article. Native American Day will be held on 11/21 with a variety of activities planned to learn about Mohawk history and culture.

Susan Lambert Woman of the Year

Congratulations to Director of Special Services Susan Lambert who was recently honored as Woman of the Year by the St. Lawrence County Chapter of NYS Women. A dinner was held at the Village Inn with many friends, colleagues and family in attendance. Beyond her years of dedicated service to students with disabilities, Susan is also President of Massena Rotary and is teaching college level courses at Bare Hill and Raybrook correctional facilities. Congratulations Susan!!

[Here](#) is a Courier Observer posting of her award.

Federal Tax Plan Impact on Public Education

In the last couple of Board Updates I have presented a variety of information on issues facing school funding this year including the federal tax plan. [Here](#) is an Education Week story with some further information and perspectives.

NYPA Energy Efficiency Grants

Representatives from the St. Lawrence County Local Government Task Force (LGTF) met recently with the New York Power Authority to discuss projects for energy efficiency. The

LGTF includes St. Lawrence County, the towns of Louisville, Massena and Waddington, the villages of Massena and Waddington and the Massena and Madrid-Waddington school districts. As part of the relicensing review, NYPA set aside \$1.5 million as part of an Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Savings Program for the municipalities to use for energy savings projects. These projects should generate energy savings and or water conservation or offset fuel consumption through renewable power from solar, wind or other renewable generation. The LGTF talked about a variety of projects with a particular focus on the installation of LED lights in each involved school and municipality. Our next step will be to identify specific scope to be included in a project and if other funding can be used to supplement the NYPA funds. I plan to discuss further at our next Facilities Committee meeting on 12/18.

Albany Update

The following is information from the Board of Regents counsel Hinman Straub on some of the latest educational issues impacting public schools in NYS.

Division of Budget's Mid-Year Update Shows Budget Deficit

The state [Division of Budget](#) (DOB) released its [mid-year budget update](#) this afternoon, which shows that the state is facing a budget deficit of between \$1.7 billion and \$4.4 billion in the state's upcoming fiscal year.

DOB's update reports that the state faces a \$1.7 billion budget deficit if state spending increases remain capped at 2 percent, as the state has done in recent years. If the state does not limit its spending increase to 2 percent, the budget deficit could be as much as \$4.4 billion.

The report also finds that deficits in subsequent years could be between \$6 billion and \$8 billion.

Governor Announces New Regulations on Employee Scheduling

Earlier today, Gov. Cuomo announced that the State Labor Department is proposing regulations to limit the use of "just in time", "call-in" or "on-call" scheduling, practices that allow employers to schedule or cancel workers' shifts just hours before or even after they start.

Under the proposed regulations, employers would be required to let employees know their schedules two weeks in advance and provide two hours' extra pay for last-minute assignments. They also will mandate that employers pay for at least four hours for shifts that canceled 72 hours before the scheduled start time.

Gov. Cuomo said:

“In New York, we have achieved nation-leading success in workers' rights, and we will continue to fight to protect all hard-working New Yorkers. The regulations advanced by the Department of Labor will increase fairness for workers and allow employers to retain flexibility.”

If adopted, they would pre-empt a New York City law, scheduled to go into effect on Nov. 26, which applies only to fast food and retail workers.

The [Business Council of New York State](#) has raised concerns about the proposal, calling it “another administrative and financial hurdle for New York employers that it not imposed in many states.”

The full regulation is available [here](#). The formal Notice of Proposed Rulemaking will be published in the November 22, 2017 issue of the State Register, which will begin a 45-day comment period.

Governor Continues to Criticize GOP Tax Reform Plan

On Monday, Gov. Cuomo and U.S. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer [criticized](#) the first draft of Republicans' federal tax reform proposal and urged the state's Republican members of Congress to oppose the proposal. In its current form, the proposal would eliminate the deduction for state and local taxes, cap the property tax deduction at \$10,000, and cap the mortgage interest deduction for newly purchased homes at \$500,000.

The Governor said that the legislation would harm the vast majority of taxpayers in New York State, increasing taxes on state residents by \$16 billion. He said that if it is enacted, it will lead wealthy New Yorkers to leave the state. That would, in turn, force the state and local governments to raise taxes on those who remain, making the state “less competitive.”

The Governor again [criticized](#) the tax reform proposal on Thursday, when he said “This devastating plan is positioned to use New York as a piggy bank to finance the rest of the nation, crippling hardworking families across the state.” Statewide, according to the Governor, taxpayers would pay \$16 billion more under the plan.

Report Finds School Enrollments Down, Increasing Student Poverty

A [report](#) issued on Thursday by the [New York State Association of School Business Officials](#) finds that a majority of school districts in New York State are seeing enrollment declines, and that levels of poverty and economic hardship among students are increasing.

Statewide, 89% of school districts saw lower enrollment over the last decade, with 68% seeing enrollment declines in excess of 10%. High-need rural districts had the largest declines.

The statewide average spending per pupil in 2015-16 was \$23,361, while low need districts spent \$27,109 and high need urban/suburban districts spent \$21,255 per pupil respectively.

The group is seeking in the state's Foundation Aid formula to provide more state funding to districts with high poverty rates.

Massena Central School in the News

[Jefferson Elementary School holds successful dessert drive for Neighborhood Center](#)

[J.W. Leary staff, students celebrate student's signing to Clarkson hockey team](#)

[Massena School Climate Committee recommends keeping 'Red Raiders,' but creating new mascot](#)

[J.W. Leary Junior High School names October Students of the Month](#)

Massena Village Obtains High Speed Internet

On Wednesday, I attended the unveiling of the 1 gigabyte high-speed internet service obtained by the Village of Massena for promoting business activity in the community. Mayor Currier led the event which included comments by Mark Scarano, co-chair for the Northern Border Regional Commission and Kevin Lynch, chief operating officer for Slic Network Solutions. The investment by all parties is expected to support existing businesses and attract others to the village

[Here](#) is a Courier Observer article about the launching of the 1 GB project.

Board of Regents November Meeting

The following is information about the November Board of Regents meetings provided by the Empire State Supervisors and Administrators Association.

The November, 2017 Board of Regents meeting began with a review of some of the work being done across the state in the area of Social Emotional Learning (SEL).

Last year, a School Climate Testing Pilot was carried out in six districts across the state. NYSED staff members were joined by representatives from two participating districts (Schenectady and Buffalo), staff from the NYS Division of Criminal Justice, and the Director for the Social and Emotional Learning Center at the Children's Institute in Rochester. They shared lessons learned from administering the US Department of Education's School Climate Survey as well as their experiences with implementing Social Emotional Learning, Restorative Justice Practices and Trauma-Informed Approaches in their schools. Asst. Commissioner Stan Hansen also talked about the impact that "implicit bias" plays in a child's social emotional health.

It is increasingly clear that the Board of Regents and Commissioner Elia are in favor of fully implementing a school climate measure as part of school accountability in the near future. For the 2017-18 school year, the pilot has been expanded to 35 districts who have agreed to administer the school climate survey. The New York State Safe Schools Task Force is

recommending that model materials on Social Emotional Learning be distributed to all schools in NYS during 2017-18, with full implementation across the state in 2018-19. More detailed information on the presentation and a link to the USDOE School Climate Survey site are available through the links below.

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/FB%20Monday%20-%20Promoting%20Healthy%20School%20Climates.pdf>

<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/edscls>

At the December Board of Regents meeting, the State Aid Subcommittee will present their recommended budget. On Monday, they provided an update of their draft proposal and outlined their priorities which include:

- Full Phase-in of Foundation Aid
- Early Learning
- Supporting Early Language Learners
- Implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/1117sad1.pdf>

Senior Deputy Commissioner Jhone Ebert updated the Board on the status of the Smart Schools Funding requests. She indicated that 78 plans are ready for the review board and that 373 plans have already been approved.

Board members were updated on current NYSED initiatives aimed to improve transition planning and employment outcomes for students with disabilities.

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/P-12-ACCES%20-%20Transition%20Planning%20and%20Services%20for%20Students%20and%20Youth%20with%20Disabilities.pdf>

The Higher Education Committee presented a proposed amendment which would:
Expand the subject areas in which teaching candidates can obtain Transitional G Certification
Provide flexibility for pre-professional teaching assistants to complete their student teaching requirements.

Currently, the Transitional G Certificate is only available in the areas of science, technology, engineering or math. The amendment would expand the certification options to include all subject areas for which there is a certificate title.

With regard to the pre-professional teaching assistant amendment, candidates currently have to complete their student teaching requirement through a registered teacher education program. If approved, the amendment would allow candidates to carry out their student teaching in the school they are working at while employed as a teaching assistant, provided the institution ensures that the experience is in compliance with the Commissioner's Regulations. It is anticipated that the proposed amendment will be presented to the Board for adoption at the

February, 2018 meeting to become effective on February 28, 2018.
<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/1117hed2.pdf>

District Upcoming Events

11/21—Policy Committee Meeting—6:30 pm—CAB

11/22-24—Thanksgiving Recess—No School

11/28—All Elementary Band/Orchestra Concert—7:00 pm—HS Auditorium