

# Orange County School Boards Association

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## MINUTES: DELEGATES' MEETING OCTOBER 7, 2020 VIRTUAL

**In Attendance:** Bill Boss, Ed Estrada, Bill Hecht, Jean Pavek (OU-BOCES), Sandy Nagler (Chester), Larry Berger (Cornwall/OU-BOCES), John Redman (Florida, NYSSBA Area 9), Robert Scheuermann (Florida), Martha Bogart (Goshen/OU-BOCES), Susan Selser (Greenwood Lake), Faith Aprilante (Highland Falls), Karen Brooks (Marlboro), John Williams (Middletown), Joseph Flaherty (Minisink Valley), Dawn Tauber (Monroe-Woodbury), Kristin Graessle (Pine Bush), Linda Van Horn (Port Jervis), Meg Vaught (Tuxedo), Art Fitzgerald, Sarah Messing (Valley Central), Dave Eaton (Warwick Valley/OU-BOCES), Robin White (Washingtonville), Karyn Meier (OCSBA). **Guests:** MaryAlice Kovatch (ADAC Prevention Program Coordinator), Kim Rodriguez (ADAC Family Support Navigator), Lauren Savino (Orange County Stop DWI Educator)

### Call to Order

President Joe Flaherty called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM and led all in the Pledge of Allegiance. Our guests were welcomed and OCSBA attendees were introduced.

### Secretary's Report Approval of Minutes Treasurer's Report

Secretary Robin White asked for a motion to approve minutes from 9/2/20, which was m/s/c.

Treasurer Faith Aprilante reviewed our first quarter financials. She reported that all dues have been collected excepting one district and thanked all our member districts. She reported the current checking account balance of \$32,842.46, and the money market fund balance of \$2,794.85. Faith reported that Nugent & Haeussler prepared our 2019 Income Tax Return which is being electronically submitted. A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was m/s/c.

### President's Report

President Flaherty noted that our November 4th meeting will focus on "Cybersecurity Risk Management" with Brett Carruthers from NYSIR, a review of NYSSBA's virtual Convention, and a continuation of our ongoing conversation with our members regarding pandemic concerns and district operation. He asked everyone to think about legislative issues and our advocacy effort.

### Presentation: Prevention Education for Substance Use & Misuse By the Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Council of Orange County (ADAC)

MaryAlice Kovatch from ADAC presented information on services available to districts to address substance use/misuse, such as the ADAC Impact program. This preventive process helps a district form its own community with a unique prevention plan based on the district's substance abuse issues. The plan is based on data (Youth Development Survey, suspension and truancy rates/causes, etc.), and may include the evidence-based prevention curriculum "Too Good for Drugs". It includes instruction on decision-making, goal setting, recognizing and managing emotions, communication skills, and building positive relationships. Also, ADAC offers school presentations which can be a broad-based, or focus on specific topics such as vaping, or opioid misuse. The presentation "How to Help a Friend" gives students tools to use to recognize what substance use disorder can look like for themselves or in others, and what resources are available within their community. Parent and community presentations are also available.

ADAC partners with eight community coalitions (Port Jervis, Middletown, Newburgh, Warwick, Highland Falls, Monroe-Woodbury, Greenwood Lake, and the Tri County Community Coalition) in an effort to offer safer environs with less access to substances so that children have more opportunities to live healthy and happy lives.

ADAC is also focusing on helping districts develop substance use and misuse policy that is based on restorative justice practices, and less on punitive measures (which can result in greater isolation leading to other mental, emotional, behavioral health issues). One restorative practice in use is Teen Intervene, an early intervention service which works with the student and his/her family.

Kim Rodriguez, a Family Support Navigator, discussed the Community Reinforcement & Family Training program (CRAFT) which teaches and coaches family members in how to take care of themselves and how to change their interactions with a loved one so that he/she may seek treatment. This goal-oriented program recognizes family members as important collaborators when a family member is in need help with a substance disorder.

Lauren Savino, Orange County's STOP DWI and Traffic Safety Program Educator, works with districts through presentations which help educate students regarding the dangers of DWI and distracted driving, as well as presentations about bicycling safety, pedestrian safety, special needs students' transportation safety. She offered information about free car seat installation checks for families, discussed a program for young drivers called "Alive at 25", and the use of Teen Victim Impact Panels.

President Joe Flaherty thanked our guests for their transformative presentation.

#### **Executive Director's Report**

Exec. Director Karyn Meier noted that two board members expressed an interest in participating on NYSSBA's Investment Advisory Committee. She reported on OC'S Complete Count Committee, and provided a County Team update which primarily focused on school districts' efforts to meet students' needs throughout the pandemic, with particular emphasis on social/emotional well-being. She shared information about free webinars of educational interest.

#### **NYSSBA Commissioner's Roundtable**

Washingtonville Board Member Robin White attended a virtual Commissioner's Roundtable meeting on Sept. 24<sup>th</sup> with Interim Commissioner Betty Rosa. She reported board members from around the state discussed digital equity issues as the main topic and that Interim Commissioner Rosa listened carefully and paid good attention to details and concerns.

#### **OU-BOCES Report**

COO Bill Hecht reported that OU-BOCES was doing well. He noted that while conversations about school district management in the pandemic continue during his "Meetings with the Chiefs", it felt great to return to discussions about instruction. He called attention to our OC School District Superintendents' commitment to fight racism with more news to come.

#### **NYSSBA Resolution Review**

There wasn't any updated information regarding resolutions to review yet. It was agreed that information would be shared with Voting Delegates as it was received. A virtual meeting for Voting Delegates to do a final review is scheduled for Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm.

#### **Delegates Comments/Concerns**

Delegates continued conversations about the well-being of our school districts as the pandemic continues. Each district present gave a brief overview of their main concerns or general comments:

- COVID Hot spots are popping up and threaten districts' ability to provide in-person and hybrid instruction. The importance for everyone to follow the rules was stressed
- The possibility of districts having to test students and the considerable expense districts would incur, along with concern as to whether or not districts have the authority to test
- The importance of constant communication with our parents and community to emphasize the part they play in acting responsibly, and what that looks like
- Several districts continue to provide instruction remotely or have had to temporarily go back to remote instruction
- Several districts shared that their hybrid models were working fairly well
- Managing the tumult from social media posts remains difficult
- Managing transportation in larger districts remains a challenge
- The closure of some public parks due to non-compliant behavior is a concern, as is the resultant risk of possible of COVID exposure and spread

#### **Adjournment**

President Flaherty thanked all for attending. Motion to adjourn was m/s/c at 9:08 PM.