NYSSBA 100th
CONVENTION & EDUCATION EXPO
ROCHESTER • 2019

PREVIEW

Preview Editor: Katie Navarra Bradley

OCTOBER 24-26 • JOSEPH A. FLOREANO ROCHESTER RIVERSIDE CONVENTION CENTER

Celebrating 100 Conventions: then & now

By Cathy Woodruff
SENIOR WRITER

Much has changed in 100 years. Convention-goers arriving at NYSSBA's first Annual Convention in Utica likely traveled there by train – maybe even horse and buggy. It's unlikely they would have chatted over cold pints in the evenings, unless the beverage was root beer. Prohibition had begun a few months earlier.

Beyond the cultural norms and concerns of the time, though, it's hard to guess much about what exactly transpired at the association's first official gathering in 1920, or in the eight years following. Until 1929, no programs, photos or written accounts of the proceedings were preserved for posterity in the NYSSBA archives.

But the earliest surviving accounts show that much has remained the same over the last century, too. School funding, the condition and capacity of school buildings, labor relations, mental and emotional health of students, school consolidations, poverty, racial and ethnic diversity and gender all are topics that have regularly appeared on convention programs.

Even issues that seem like modern additions – like educational technology – were on the minds of board members from the beginning. In 1929 and the early 1930s, the tech buzz was all about an innovation called radio and the educational programming it could provide.

"I believe that our schools should be equipped with radio sets so that advantage may be taken of these programs," association President William F. Seber urged the 119 delegates from 66 boards who gathered in Troy in 1929.

Public schools of the 1920s lacked many of the amenities of today's schools. Surprisingly, many of the issues facing school board members today challenged school board members 100 years ago.

That year's event was held at the Hendrick Hudson Hotel in Troy and featured educational sessions on topics like "How can school boards secure and keep competent teachers," "The needs of girls in public high schools and the function of the dean" and "Character education – a community responsibility."

As fiercely as districts fight for education funding now, that's nothing new, either.

"The present emergency in education demands intelligent and united action in order to insure adequate financial support that will maintain proper standards whereby all the children of the state shall be educated," NYSSBA President Guy W. Cheney wrote in his invitation to attend the 1933 gathering in Syracuse.

In the decades that followed, New York's school board members grappled with the social, political and economic fallout of the times. And in each era, they managed to come together to learn, to collaborate, to encourage one another – and to be inspired by the Annual Convention.

"Convention was a great schooling experience and certainly helped me get the right kind of grounding in what you needed to do to be a good board member," said state Comptroller Tom DiNapoli. He was elected to the Mineola school board in 1972 at age 18 and still recalls the conventions he attended as valuable in building his effectiveness as a board member.

Networking has been as much a selling point for conventions as staying "up-to-date."

"Convention is a place where you network with other board members from across the state and you find out about how things work in different places," said Anne M. Byrne. Byrne was elected to the Nanuet Board in 1981 and served as president of both NYSSBA and the National School Boards Association. She has attended countless conventions.

It is virtually certain that the school board members drawn to that inaugural convention in 1920 were consumed with many of the same meaty issues and fueled by the same drive to collaborate that propels their successors preparing to attend the 100th Convention this year.

"As we look back at all the progress our predecessors have made, it's shocking to see how similar some of the programs and agenda items from long ago are to the issues we continue to face to today," said William Miller, NYSSBA president. "Paying tribute to our 100 conventions is a good reminder of what has been accomplished and the work we must continue to do."

Celebrating 100 years, celebrating members

By Katie Navarra Bradley
MARKETING MANAGER

School board members are at the center of NYSSBA's Annual Convention & Education Expo – an event that has brought together nearly 200,000 school board members, administrators and exhibitors in its 100 year history. On average the multi-day educational event and expo draws 2,500 participants. The 50th in 1969 drew a record breaking crowd of 4,000.

For many members, Convention is a must-attend event they look forward to all year long. This Oct. 24-26, John Woods will participate in his 56th Convention when it's held in Rochester. Woods was elected to the Greece Central School board in 1962. He has attended every Convention since then, except 2018. Even though his board service ended in 1977, shortly after serving two one-year terms as NYSSBA's president, he still makes it a priority to attend Convention.

Woods

Engelbrecht

"You learn so much when you go to Convention," Woods said. "It's not just in talking to the exhibitors where you can pick up a couple of ideas, but the clinics that you can pick out based on your school are a really good learning opportunity."

Longtime school board members are experts at navigating the Convention experience. Richard Engelbrecht was first elected in 1968 to the Madison board and then to the Madison-Oneida BOCES board in 1972. With 51 years of service, the 2017 Everett R. Dyer Award winner is among the longest continually serving school board members.

"Talking with other board members, especially when you're riding the bus to your hotel or you're sitting in the lobby, is when the fine details and personal experiences about serving on a board come up," Englebrecht said. "People will talk about things personally that they won't in a group. One day you'll be sitting in a meeting and it will dawn on you how you can apply that information from a casual conversation at convention."

Newcomers have a lot to explore. Choosing from nearly 100 educational sessions may seem overwhelming. Planning ahead is key to making the most of your experience and the Convention App is your best guide.

"Convention is a great way to learn more about what works for your peers, what and how you can apply new tactics at your board table," said Barry Entwistle, NYSSBA's member relations director. "Convention is the perfect place to network and build relationships and reconnect with those you know."

Convention promises three full days of learning and networking so enjoy yourself and find valuable information relating to your role as a school board member.

Rochester is gonna rock with student musical groups

By Gayle Simidian
RESEARCH ANALYST

Did you know that Rochester is a hot spot for music? The area is known for the famed Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. Notable musicians such as Cab Calloway, David Hochstein and Chuck Mangione were born in the "Flower City." NYSSBA is celebrating the area's musical roots with student musical performing groups at its 100th Annual Convention & Education Expo.

"These are some of the finest student musical performers that I've ever heard," said Michael Bieber, a professional musician and NYSSBA member relations manager. This year's selection includes four groups: the Rochester City School District's School of the Arts Concert Choir, Freeport High School's Select Chorale of Freeport Public Schools, the Broome-Tioga BOCES PALS/Oak Tree Handbell Choir and Penfield Central School District's Monday/Wednesday Jazz Ensemble.

Each year, school districts submit tapes of musical performances to the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA), which reviews the performances and sends NYSSBA a selection of recordings for consideration.

The Rochester School of the Arts Concert Choir, above, will perform before the Opening Session. Left: Freeport High School's Select Chorale will provide the music for the Opening Session in the Convention Center Grand Lilac Ballroom on Thursday, Oct. 24.

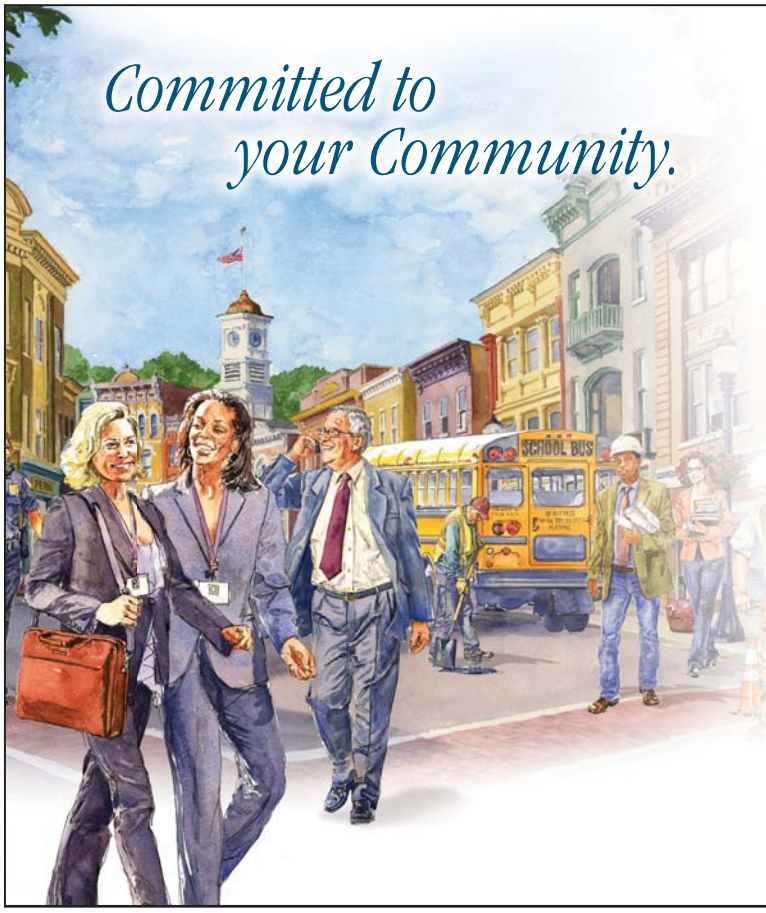
For the past two years, Bieber, who attended the Juilliard School of Music and performs weekly with a band in the Capital District, listens to the selections and recommends the instrumental and choral groups to perform. This year's student performers are traveling from near and far.

Local students from the Rochester City School District's School of the Arts Concert Choir will kick things off on Thursday, Oct. 24 from 4 – 4:30 p.m. They will perform in the Rochester Riverside Convention Center Galleria prior to Opening Session. The choral group consists of about 45 sophomore, junior and senior students who practice daily. The choir will feature musical styles that range from jazz to gospel to a spiritual mix, says John Gabriele, the group's director. The choir has traveled as far as New York City, Washington, D.C. and Toronto to perform.

Freeport High School's Select Chorale will also perform Thursday. This group will perform in the Convention Center Grand Lilac Ballroom during Opening Session. This talented group of singers has performed at venues such as Madison Square Garden, Radio City Music Hall and Lincoln Center in New York City. The group also sang the national anthem before Governor Cuomo's 2017 State of the State address, said choral director, Monique Campbell Retzlaff.

There are two opportunities to listen to student performances on Friday, Oct. 25. The PALS/Oak Tree Handbell Choir, a three octave choir will kick off the 1 p.m. session, A Conversation with the New York State Board of Regents Chancellor Betty A. Rosa. The group consists of about 20 special needs students between the ages of 14-21 years. The group will perform two or three arrangements using English handbells. Selections may include such classics as "Amazing Grace" or "Hallelujah."

The local Penfield Central School District Monday/Wednesday Jazz Ensemble will conclude the student performances. These students will also play during the chancellor's session. You might hear some Miles Davis or John Coltrane-inspired riffs. The ensemble, led by Brian Bricco, is aptly named because the 18-member group practices on Mondays and Wednesdays. The group plays a variety of jazz styles, according to Bricco, including blues, rock and funk and is a regular at the annual Rochester International Jazz Festival.



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Are there Communists among us?

Plenty of controversy in 100 years of Annual Business Meetings

By Eric D. Randall
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The Association's Annual Business Meeting has been a lively event for 100 years.

While no records exist of the first decade of meetings, it's clear that delegates have never shied away from controversial issues.

Here's a highlight of issues delegates have voted on over the last century:

1930

Should women be allowed to teach after getting married?

A bill introduced in 1930 would have prohibited schools from employing female teachers who were married and receiving financial support from their husbands. NYSSBA delegates took the opposite view and adopted the position that: "The employment of married women as teachers should be based solely on MERIT," according to a summary that appeared in the associations' *Bulletin.*

1956

Are there communists among us?

In 1956, during the Cold War era, a resolution entitled "Communism" sought legislation to ensure school board members be disqualified if they are involved in "subversion." *The Journal of the New York State School Boards Association* summarized the debate:

"Considerable discussion took place with respect to the proposed resolution on Communism with several attempts to amend the original resolution. All such amendments failed to secure the necessary support from voting delegates and the resolution was adopted as originally proposed by the committee."

1964

Should schools be racially integrated?

In 1964, (the same year that the U.S. Congress passed the Civil Rights Act), a resolution read, "Resolved, the New York State School Boards Association, Inc. support the efforts of the State Education Department in helping local school boards bring about integrated schools …. avoiding the rigid adherence to traditional policies, *such as is exemplified by the neighborhood school policy,* where such polices are clearly a variance with sound educational goals" (italics added). The Resolutions Committee did not recommend the resolution be adopted, but it was adopted with an amendment that deleted the italicized words.

1970

Is there too much "permissiveness"?

In 1970, when there was a Temporary State Commission to Study Causes of Campus Unrest, the Pine Valley School Board submitted a resolution that stated that despite "the so-called permissiveness … which has been recommended by certain sociologists and the members of the Board of Regents … the primary goal of education is teaching our children to be constructive and valuable assets to our communities through behavior patterns which reflect obedience, discipline, honesty, and respect for people, property and duly enacted rules and regulations of society."

The resolution called upon the Regents and commissioner of education to "re-examine the permissive attitude they recommend and develop a realistic and practical position … to accomplish these positive behavioral patterns which are vital to our continued progress in America."

The Resolutions Committee did not recommend adoption, and the resolution failed.

1975

Can a teacher be a school board member in another district?

In 1975, delegates voted to bar teachers from sitting on school boards. Two years later, there was a revote that ended in a tie, 201-201, and the parliamentarian declared the motion defeated. "This did not terminate debate," according to the *NYSSBA Journal*. "Several attempts to have the issue revoted were overruled."

In 1978, the policy was revised to say that "no person shall be denied the opportunity of seeking the election to, or serving on, a school board because of race, religion, sex, or occupation. Only those employed by the school district in which they may wish to serve should continue to be excluded from seeking election to, or serving on, the school board."

1995

Should teachers and administrators receive violence prevention training?

In 1995, a resolution was presented by NYSSBA's Ad hoc Committee on Violence and Crime seeking legislation that would require teachers and administrators to receive training in the prevention of and alternatives to violence prior to receiving provisional or permanent certification. Ultimately, it was not recommended by the committee or adopted by the delegates.

This year's Annual Business Meeting is reflective of the times and the pressing issues facing New York's public schools. Delegates have 26 resolutions and 1 bylaw amendment to consider in addition to any that may be proposed from the floor. Here's a highlight of what will be voted on Oct. 26 during the 2019 Business Meeting, which starts at 8 a.m.

2019

An expanded definition of diversity

For the last decade NYSSBA has had a position statement on the books emphasizing the importance of understanding differences. A newly proposed resolution calls on NYSSBA and its members to invite discussion among students, parents, staff and the community about how hatred and bigotry based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability status and religion endanger the pluralistic and diversity principles for which this nation stands.

Addressing timely issues

Vaping or E-cigarette use among teens increased by 900 percent between 2011 and 2015 and it's considered an epidemic by the FDA. School districts are tasked with finding effective ways to discourage vaping and educate students and their parents on its dangers. The Resolutions Committee is advancing two separate resolutions to address the rampant use of these products.

- The first, if approved, calls on NYSSBA to support legislative action in the regulation of vapor products.
- The second, if approved, supports legislation for increasing penalties against any business that sells vaping products to or adult purchasing vaping products for any person who is under age.

A typical NYSSBA Annual Business Meeting in the 1990s.

Technology sessions well represented at NYSSBA Annual Convention

By Paul Heiser
SENIOR RESEARCH ANALYST

One hundred years ago, the pop-up toaster was invented and pilots celebrated the first crossing of the Atlantic Ocean by air. School administrators battled smudges left by fountain pens, and chalkboards were a new educational "technology." Board members who attended NYSSBA's first Annual Convention likely couldn't have imagined today's classroom technologies. One thing that hasn't changed in the last century – discussions of how current technology impacts public schools.

This year's technology strand features multiple sessions. Mark Snyder, leadership development manager at NYSSBA, will discuss the pros and cons of school board members' use of social media. The session, "Social Media Guidance for School Board Members," will help board members recognize potential risks to the district from their use of social media and provide school board members with guidance for creating and managing social media accounts.

"Social media is an important means of communication and offers opportunities for board members to connect with the community," Snyder said. "But board members have to consider the impact of the Open Meetings Law, among other things."

From 1:1 initiatives to security, technology is a hot topic at this year's Convention.

Technology is also changing the way teachers and others receive professional development. "Rethinking Professional Learning in the Digital Age" explores how 'micro-credentialing' is poised to transform professional development. Micro-credentials are like mini-degrees or certifications in a specific topic area.

"Micro-credentials offer staff choices and allow them to learn in smaller pieces so they aren't overwhelmed and require that they submit evidence of their learning," said presenter Karen Soanes, director of instructional technology and professional development in the Bloomfield Central School District in Ontario County. "I'm going to talk about our micro-credential system Learning Blooms, explain what it is, how it is set up, things to think about, etc."

A session called "Building a School Community through Technology" will show how technology can foster a greater sense of community. Students in the Abbey Lane Elementary School in the Levittown Public Schools run a weekly morning news program called "Abbey Action News." The news crew is comprised of about 60 fifth grade students who rotate through different roles.

"Our news show has created a real buzz in our building and has created a school community by reporting on all of the great things that we do here," said George Maurer, principal of Abbey Lane Elementary School.

The Convention's technology strand also includes sessions focusing on protecting student data and privacy, one-to-one computing and incorporating art into the STEM subjects of science, technology, engineering and math. Check the Convention App for a full listing of sessions.

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The importance of knowing your ancestral lineage

By Paul Heiser
SENIOR RESEARCH ANALYST

In 1977, the mini-series "Roots" sent countless Americans scrambling to find who their ancestors were. That phenomenon continues today, as evidenced by numerous genealogy websites such as Ancestry.com that give people of all races the ability to trace their ancestors through oral histories, documents and even DNA.

Shannon LaNier is one whose curiosity about his heritage led him to an exhaustive search of his family tree. What he found was life changing and the outcomes affected his experiences in school.

LaNier, anchor of "Morning Dose" on channel CW39 in Houston, is the author of a book that details his trip across the country to learn about his maternal ancestor Madison Hemings. LaNier is the sixth great-grandson of President Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings. Early historical accounts tell how Jefferson, following the death of his wife Martha, had sexual relations with Hemings, an African-American slave the couple had inherited.

His journey began when he was a first-grader, according to an article in the *Berkshire Eagle,* a newspaper that covers western Massachusetts. He stood up and pronounced to his classmates that he was the sixth great-grandson of Thomas Jefferson. His incredulous teacher told him to sit down and stop lying. "That hurt," said LaNier. This fueled LaNier's desire to research the offspring of Jefferson and Hemings and their descendants.

LaNier

LaNier will share his journey during a featured session at NYSSBA's 100th Annual Convention & Education Expo in Rochester. The session is titled, "Jefferson's Children: The Story of One American Family," to be held Friday, Oct. 25 from 10:30 a.m. to noon.

In school presentations across the country, LaNier emphasizes the importance of learning about family history and heritage. The *Berkshire Eagle* noted that his family connections were augmented through documents, gravestone rubbings, family heirlooms like bibles with inscriptions, photographs and letters.

LaNier and his co-author Jane Feldman told the *Berkshire Eagle* their research unveiled how people aren't always as they seem. For example, many light-skinned members of the Jefferson-Hemings lineage were able to "pass" in society, meaning they could take advantage of the social statuses that came with looking like a white person, including freedom from slavery. However, the down side of passing is that future generations grew unaware of their black blood lines.

Asked by the *Berkshire Eagle* what he hopes listeners think about after hearing his presentation, LaNier said, "I want them to know about their own families. There might not be someone famous in their line, but maybe they'll find someone who made a great difference in their community."

Providing students with resources to succeed

Student experiences outside the classroom often influence their academic experiences. School leaders are faced with creating environments that take students' background into account. In addition to LaNier, two other featured sessions will offer strategies for providing students the resources they need to succeed.

Friday, Oct. 25 • 8 - 9 a.m.
Trauma Informed Schools - Understanding the Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences
Isaac Collins, LMSW, CAS, Assistant Principal, Webster Central School District
and Shameka Collins, LMSW
The married couple are both licensed psychotherapists at Collins & Collins Clinical Services.

Isaac and Shameka Collins

Friday, Oct. 25 • 9:15 – 10:15 a.m.
Reducing Stereotypes & Promoting Inclusivity In Childhood
Laura Elenbaas, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, University of Rochester

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2019 Convention Sessions

Note: Schedule is subject to change.

THURSDAY – OCT. 24

School Law Seminar

8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

23rd Annual Pre-Convention School Law Seminar
Rochester Riverside Hotel, Grand Ballroom

Communications Workshop

11:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

11th Annual Pre-Convention Communications Workshop:
Leveraging Creativity & Emotional Intelligence
Hyatt Regency Rochester, Grand Ballroom

Education Expo

11:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Expo Opening Dessert Reception: 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

Educational Sessions

1:45 – 2:45 p.m.	3:00 – 4:00 p.m.
A Culture Of Love	Planting SEEDS Of Diversity & Equity
Keeping Our Schools Safe: A Comprehensive Approach	Restorative Practices: Establishing Policy & Systemic Implementation
Personalizing Learning To Meet ESSA Expectations	Protecting Student Data & Privacy In Today's Digital Classrooms
Using Complex Data To Enhance Strategic Planning	Find A Superintendent In Six Months
Data Use For Accountability & Student Achievement	NYSSBA Advocacy Liaison Network
Space & Its Impact On Academic Success	Why My School Spends Less Than Yours
Re-Writing The Renewable Energy Playbook For Schools	Navigating Cybersecurity Threats
US Army Educational Outreach Program (AEOPO)	Long Range Financial Planning

Convention Opening

4:30 – 6:45 p.m.	6:45 – 8:00 p.m.
Opening Session/Keynote: Robert J. Duffy Closing the Skills Gap **Convention Center: Grand Lilac Ballroom**	Opening Reception **Convention Center: Galleria**

FRIDAY – OCT. 25

Featured Sessions

8:00 – 9:00 a.m.	9:15 – 10:15 a.m.	10:30 – 11:30 a.m.	10:30 a.m. – Noon	1:00 – 2:30 p.m.	4:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Trauma Informed Schools: Understanding The Impact Of Adverse Childhood Experiences *Speaker: Isaac Collins, LMSW, CAS & Shameka Collins, LMSW*	Reducing Stereotypes & Promoting Inclusivity In Childhood *Speaker: Laura Elenbaas, Ph.D.*	Government In The Sunshine *Speaker: Kristin O'Neill, Esq.*	Jefferson's Children: The Story Of One American Family *Speaker: Shannon LaNier*	A Conversation With The Chancellor: *Betty A. Rosa*	Panel Discussion: Are School Board Members In Touch With What's Happening In School Today? *Moderator: Timothy G. Kremer*

Educational Sessions

8:00 – 9:00 a.m.	9:15 – 10:15 a.m.	10:30 – 11:30 a.m.	EXPO	1:30 – 2:30 p.m.	EXPO	4:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Building Diverse Teams Through Visioning & Mentoring	Activating The Power Of Student Voice		TASTE OF ROCHESTER LUNCH *11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. • Expo Floor*	Disproportionality In Suspension In NYC	EXPO NETWORKING RECEPTION *2:45 – 3:45 p.m. • Expo Floor*	The Whole Child Approach: Through Immigrant Eyes
Mental Health First Aid Training For Employees	School Security	Accepting & Celebrating The LGBTQ Student		The Mental Health Initiative: Leading The Way		Creating A Diversion Program For Disruptive Students
A Legal Guide To School Board Meetings Do's & Don'ts	What's New & What's The Same In Collective Bargaining	Responding To Allegations Of Child Abuse In School		Free Speech In The Era Of Social Media		The Legal Framework Of School Board & Superintendent Relations
Inoculate Your District From "The Just Disease"	Anatomy Of District Goal Setting	Board Officers Roundtable		Focusing On Competence: Developing Superintendent Interview Questions		Managing Conflict: The Courage To Listen
The Academic Impacts Of Dual Enrollment	Making Cost Effective Staffing Decisions	Enhance Health Career Programs With Virtual Reality		A Neuropsychological Perspective On Social Emotional Learning		Establishing Quality Education For English Language Learners
Promoting Community Engagement In A Rural District	Using STEM Partnerships To Increase Student Experiences	C.O.L.T.S. Days Educational Programming		Implicit Bias: Who Knew?		Navigating Probationary Appointments & Tenure
Multi-Dimensional Wellness & Mental Health: Ignite Potential	SuperEval: Evaluations For School Boards & Superintendents	Community Engagement: How Well Are We Doing?		Securing Our Schools In An Uncertain World		
Communicating ESSA Report Cards To Improve Schools	Making Sense: Generating Better Board Decisions	Taking Cooperative Procurement To The Next Level		Taking "Career Ready" To The Next Level		
Implementing The New NYS School Counseling Regulations	Crisis Communication: Monitoring & Securing Social Media			Burying The "I" In Leadership		Meeting Expectations: Communicating With Parents In 2019
Removing Non-Academic Barriers To Success	Problem Based Learning. An Evolving Initiative.	Odds-Beating Research & Continuously Improving School Systems		School Board: Are You Listening?		Rebranding A District: Our New Story
Star Wars, Robo Cop & Star Trek: Artificial Intelligence & Student Safety	Vaping & Marijuana: What's The Connection?	Delegate Orientation				
School Facilities: Invest One Dollar, Save Four	Understanding School Finance: Foundation Aid	District Cost Savings Through Shared Services & Collaboration		Reading & Understanding The District's Financial Statements		Designing A Successful Capital Project Vote
Redefining Ready! New York Style	A New Look At Homework	Hot Topics In Policy		Raising Student Voice & Participation		Measuring School Climate
Demystifying The School Psychologist's Role	Better Attendance, Grades & Behavior With Food	Telemedicine: The Future Of Student Health Care		Student Leadership In An Elementary School Setting		Mental Health/Safety In 21st Century Schools
Rethinking Professional Learning In The Digital Age	Utilizing 1:1 Devices In Inclusive Classrooms	Full STEAM Ahead		Building A School Community Through Technology		Social Media Guidance For School Board Members
Advancing Learning Environments From The Inside Out	District Data Reporting For Finances	Building A Systemic Equity Framework				Animal Assisted Interventions For Improved Student Outcomes

SATURDAY – OCT. 26

Annual Business Meeting

8:00 a.m. – Conclusion

Annual Business Meeting
Convention Center, Grand Lilac Ballroom

Educational Sessions

8:30 – 9:30 a.m.	9:45 – 10:45 a.m.	11:00 a.m. – Noon
Creating A Culture Of Equity	My Brother's Keeper Movement: Equity In Action	Leading Organizational Transformation Related To Inclusivity
Mental Health Task Force: Support Through Collaboration	Threat Assessment Teams To Prevent School Violence	Developing Scenario-Based Emergency Response Drills
Student Cyberbullying: School District Responsibility & Liability	Avoiding District Election & Budget Vote Challenges	The Varying Landscape Of Employment Discrimination
Conducting Fair & Unbiased Superintendent Evaluations	Shared Leadership: The School Board/Superintendent Partnership	Responding To The Toughest BOE Questions
The Fab-5 That Sent Graduation Rates Soaring	Industry & Academics: Partnerships For Student Success	Standards-Based Grading Meets Next Gen Standards
Leveraging Personal Connections For District Partnerships	Differences & Commonalities Of IDEA & Section 504	Farm To School: Planting Seeds Of Success

2019 EXPO HOURS

THURSDAY, OCT. 24: 11:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

FRIDAY, OCT. 25: 8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.

The convention educational sessions, pre-convention events and featured sessions (excluding *Opening Session* and the *Commissioner Session*) have been approved for CTLE credits.

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Pre-Convention School Law seminar to consider immunization, data privacy

By Eric D. Randall
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Legal issues involving immunization and data privacy will be among the topics discussed at NYSSBA's 23rd Annual Pre-Convention School Law Seminar on Thursday, Oct. 24 in Rochester.

A new law prevents parents from seeking religious exemptions from the requirement that children be immunized before attending school. This relieves school principals of the duty to determine whether parents who refuse to immunize their children are doing so out of a "sincere religious belief."

Legal curve balls could be ahead, according to NYSSBA General Counsel and Deputy Executive Director Jay Worona. "Religious groups have already brought legal actions to contest the constitutionality of this new legislative act," he said.

Schools still must consider submissions of medical exemptions, but there are legal pitfalls. For instance, in New York State, each medical exemption must be reviewed annually, according to the state Department of Health. The principal or person in charge of the school may require additional information supporting the exemption. But what kind of informational requests are proper?

The answer to this question and others will be addressed by Beth Sims, a partner with Shaw, Perelson, May & Lambert and Kathy Ahearn, a partner at Guercio & Guercio.

The Pre-Convention School Law Conference is a popular event among board members and administrators because it provides practical answers to some of the most challenging legal issues facing public schools. Other sessions in the day-long seminar include:

Data privacy – how secure are your technology systems to properly protect the privacy of students and staff?

Erin D. Gilsbach, an attorney who serves as executive director of EdLaw Interactive, and Julie Shaw, a partner with Shaw, Perelson, May & Lambert will provide answers to common questions pertaining to data privacy of students and staff. The speakers will address protecting student information contained on employee cell phones and other electronic devices. The presenters will also explain how a district can determine if its contracts adequately protect the schools' data, including against misuse of collected data.

Communication in a crisis – striking the right balance

A panel of legal and communications experts will share their experiences and advice as to how districts can best develop effective strategies to respond in a crisis, such as a school shooting or an allegation of inappropriate conduct by a school employee. Speakers include David Albert, NYSSBA's director of communications, marketing and research; Keshia Clukey, a reporter for Bloomberg Law; and Donald E. Budmen, a partner with the Ferrara Fiorenza law firm. NYSSBA's Worona will serve as presider and moderator.

The legal landscape related to providing services to students with mental health and substance abuse issues

Identifying, evaluating and properly supporting students with mental health or substance abuse issues can involve legal issues such as confidentiality and agreements with mental health care providers. Panelists Andrew J. Freedman, a partner with the Hodgson Russ law firm; Laura Granelli, a partner with the Jaspan Schlesinger law firm; and Kelly M. Zimmerman, principal/director of special programs and pupil services for the Pine Valley Central School District will share best practices for supporting students.

The school board's role as an employer

Questions often come up as to what constitutes the full scope of a board of education's role in making employment decisions. Attorneys Gregory J. Guercio, a partner with Guercio & Guercio; John H. Gross, a partner, with the Ingerman Smith law firm, and Frank W. Miller of the Frank W. Miller Law Firm share their experiences helping boards navigate this area. Eugene R. Barnosky, a partner with Lamb & Barnosky will moderate the discussion.

The full day event will conclude with a summary of important court decisions and administrative rulings affecting P-12 public education. NYSSBA senior staff attorneys Jeffrey Mongelli and Kimberly Fanniff will provide insight into how districts may need to adapt to satisfy new legal changes.

A separate registration fee is required for the law seminar, which includes a luncheon. Register at convention.nyssba.org.

Emotional intelligence and creative thinking focus of communications workshop

By Paul Heiser
SENIOR RESEARCH ANALYST

Are personality conflicts, differences of opinion and distrust affecting your relationship with other members of your school board or administration?

Two experts from the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, including one who is an experienced school board member, will dive into the characteristics of good interpersonal communication during NYSSBA's 11th Annual Pre-Convention Communications Workshop on Thursday, Oct. 24 from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The event begins with a discussion about emotional intelligence and how it impacts communication with others. Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to identify and manage one's own emotions and the emotions of others. Identifying, harnessing and managing emotions allows people to improve how they think, solve problems and empathize with others.

"Both speakers, Mark Brackett and Scott Levy, are international experts in teaching leaders how to develop strategies to manage emotions and resolve differences of opinions," said David Albert, NYSSBA's director of communications, marketing and research. "Scott Levy also has the added benefit of being the board president in the Byram Hills school district."

Creativity is another key component to making decisions at the board table.

Marc Brackett, Ph.D., is founding director of the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence and professor in the Child Study Center at Yale University.

Scott Levy is president of the Byram Hills School Board and the executive director of the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence.

Gerard J. Puccio, Ph.D. was a featured speaker at a TEDx event and is the department chair of the International Center for Studies in Creativity at Buffalo State.

Gerald Puccio, an international expert in creativity who has worked with numerous school districts and large corporations, will demonstrate how school boards can apply creative problem-solving techniques to the decisions they make.

"For many, the link between creativity and leadership may not be so obvious," said Puccio, chair and professor of the International Center for Studies in Creativity at SUNY-Buffalo State. "However, in my opinion, there is an inextricable and crucial bond between these two constructs."

Puccio believes leadership success in the 21st century hinges on an individual's ability to think and act creatively, as well as facilitate the creative thinking of others. Puccio will show attendees of this year's workshop how to apply creative problem-solving to the decisions they make. The session, "How Creative Problem Solving Can Help Your District," is the second half of a two-part program.

For some, creativity and leadership may seem at odds. Creativity is boundless and chaotic. Leadership is orderly and precise. Creativity is traditionally associated with artistic professionals, such as writers, painters or musicians. It has, however, become increasingly important for organizations to think creatively as the pace of change accelerates.

Puccio plans to make several points about creativity:

- **Creativity trumps intelligence.** Intelligence is a weak predictor of creative achievement. A better predictor? The capacity for divergent thinking, which can be taught.
- **Creativity solves "wicked" problems.** Some problems are predictable and can be addressed by things like organizational procedure manuals. But it takes creative thinking to solve unpredictable and complex problems.
- **Creativity builds community.** Creative problem-solving can bring out a sense of ownership and mission.
- **Creativity makes you "future-proof."** Robots can perform repetitive tasks, but they can't be creative.

Creative thinking and creative problem solving are now considered core leadership skills, but leadership development programs rarely incorporate creativity, according to Puccio.

"Rigorous studies over the years have shown that not only do all people have some degree of creative ability, creativity skills can be developed and even deliberately applied," he said. "In other words, it is a trainable ability. And there is still more good news: proven methodologies for developing creativity skills already exist."

A separate registration fee is required, which includes lunch. Register at convention.nyssba.org

Convention snapshots: 100 years of history

Compiled by Cathy Woodruff, Senior Writer

1920s

Radio is the hot new technology, touted for its ability to deliver "inspiring voices of great men and women" and "intellectual sunshine" to students and teachers (1929).

1930s

The Great Depression prompts thrifty pre-convention tips. Presentations focus on controlling school expenses and the social costs of unemployment and poverty. Convention housing rates are $3 for a single room and $5 for a double.

1940s

World War II brings another type of austerity. Gas rationing and other patriotic sacrifices prompt NYSSBA President Jessie Zoller of Schenectady to limit Convention attendance to two delegates from each member board.

1950s

Women represent a mere 18% of all elected school board officials, statewide. (Today, it's nearly a 50-50 split.) NYSSBA adopts resolution deploring racial segregation and discrimination (1950); U.S. Supreme Court decides *Brown v Board of Education* (1954).

1960s

The 1968 Convention in Syracuse is held amid a New York City teachers strike; National Urban League Executive Director Whitney Young Jr. is a featured speaker; Gov. Nelson Rockefeller speaks at two conventions on "education's fiscal crisis" and "a virtual taxpayers' revolt."*

1970s

Conventions move to new locales after 41 consecutive years in Syracuse, starting with New York City in 1974 and expanding to include Kiamesha Lake (The Concord) in the Catskills, Rochester and Niagara Falls.

1980s

Both Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton and Rudolph Giuliani, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, speak at the 1987 Convention.

1990s

Speakers at the 75th convention in Buffalo include psychologist and TV advice show pioneer Dr. Joyce Brothers, UPI White House Correspondent Helen Thomas and Washington Post writer Juan Williams (1994).

2000s

Convention returns to New York City in 2006 for the first time since 1974, returns seven more times, and NYSSBA visits Lake Placid for the first time in 2017.

* Photo credit: Archival image of United Federation of Teachers

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Getting beyond *just* to exceptional

By Katie Navarra Bradley
MARKETING MANAGER

Good is okay. Better is great. Find the power to transform your district.

How many times have you heard someone say *just* before describing an action or outcome? Ask some people what they do for a living. How many preceded their job title with the qualifier?

Patrick Longo, a member relations manager for NYSSBA, calls it the "Just Disease." He says it can be found everywhere in society if you listen and know where to look. "How do you feel when you are no more than *just* your job title, or *just* your socio-economic status? Or when someone asks "Who's coming?" and you say "*just* me."

Think back to how many times you've heard, "That's *just* the way we've always done it." Preceding anything you say with the word *just* screams, "I'm not doing anything terribly exciting or extraordinary, I'm doing *just* as in *just* enough to get by." It says, "I put my head down and *just* do as I am told" or, "I can't change things, because this is *just* the way it is." "I can't change things, I'm *just* a (your job title)" or "I'm *just* one person."

At Convention, you can find tips for defending against accepting the status quo. In Longo's presentation, "Inoculate Your District from The Just Disease," on Friday, Oct. 25 from 8 - 9 a.m., he'll encourage attendees to take a look at their district's belief system in a uniquely personal way. Then he'll offer tips to help individuals implement sound, impactful changes to their district culture.

"We all suffer from this 'disease,' some more than others," he said. "I first became aware of it when, in my senior year of high school, we were encouraged to sign our name on the cafeteria wall, along with the university/college we'd be attending. It was the first time in my life I felt *just*. I was *just* going to a small SUNY school, but it was the right fit for me."

Many years later, Longo taught literature at Schenectady County Community College. A student shot him dirty looks throughout class. Longo peppered him with questions to see what was bothering him.

"You're up there teaching like this is Princeton," the student said. "Give us a break! It's just Schenectady Community College."

"It was clear that my student was angry that I had the audacity to elevate the beliefs I had for them, rather than accept that a strong percentage of them were actually expected to fail out or squeak by without learning much," Longo said. "In NYSSBA's leadership development training offerings, we talk about elevating vs. accepting beliefs and that's what I was expecting of the student."

Of course, *just* has multiple meanings. It can mean "fair, righteous, mighty, exactly" or "recently." The closest you'll get to the negative connotation is "only." Unconsciously or not, too often it is used to show feeling "lowly, defeated," "complacent," or "passive," and lacking accountability for feeling or acting that way.

Many people, groups and organizations are okay with being just good. Good is okay. But great is better.

"We don't have to be the stereotypical hypercompetitive, step-over-others, A Players to be great, and we certainly don't want to teach our kids that, but we should always be working toward great," Longo said. "Anything else is just. And it's just unacceptable."

Longo believes that in a district with elevating beliefs, the full board and the majority of the staff always do their best to ensure their students are doing what is best for them as individuals, "that no student is just going in the only direction they have left, their school or career of last choice, but in the direction that's most right. That is the positive connotation of just. Mighty. Fair. Elevated."

At this session, attendees will learn how board members can be part of the cure and not part of the disease.

Longo will reinforce that change is hard, but change is good. "Believe you can do it and you're more likely to do it. Believing that everyone has greatness starts from the top, the board," he said.

Plan a visit to NYSSBA's Member Lounge

By Barbara Bennett
COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATE

Start your Convention & Education Expo experience with a warm welcome in NYSSBA's Member Lounge. After you check in, pick up a convention bag and head over to the Riverside Court. The location features natural lighting and doors that exit out onto a patio overlooking the Genesee River which runs through the heart of Rochester and offers a scenic view of the surrounding landscape.

NYSSBA staff will be waiting to greet you, answer your questions and make your Convention experience unforgettable. The cozy space, sponsored by Guercio & Guercio, LLP., provides an opportunity to network with colleagues and meet NYSSBA representatives. Staff can answer your questions on topics such as school policy, advocacy, training, custom board retreats or just about anything pertaining to services the Association offers. Brochures and informational publications will also be on hand for you to take home.

"The comfortable atmosphere is designed to encourage members to stop by and meet with specialists in their respective fields," said Barry J. Entwistle, NYSSBA's director of member relations.

This year NYSSBA is celebrating its 100th Convention and the Member Lounge will be brimming with celebratory activities. A 40-foot commemorative wall will feature NYSSBA's 100 years of Convention. Photos and text will take you on a journey through the years by highlighting the important historical events that affected discussions and actions at previous gatherings.

Snap a selfie (or a group photo) beside a larger-than-life 3D sculpture celebrating NYSSBA's 100 Conventions. Upload the pictures to your favorite social media sites and use #nyssba19 and you'll have a souvenir of this once-in-our-lifetimes event. Make sure you save the free Wi-Fi passcodes listed inside the program book so you don't have to use your phone's data.

Visit the member lounge at any time, but staff will be available on Thursday from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

Don't miss the refreshments!

Nearly half of NYSSBA's Conventions were held in Syracuse.
To honor the Association's time there, appetizer-type finger foods in the flavors of Syracuse barbeque will be available at the member lounge during the times listed below:

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1:30 - 3 p.m. – Appetizers	1 - 2:30 p.m. – Appetizers	8:30 -11:30 a.m.
1:30 - 4 p.m. – Beverages	1 - 2:45 p.m. – Beverages	Appetizers and beverages

Innovation and efficiency has always been Expo focus

By Gayle Simidian
RESEARCH ANALYST

Did you know that 1930 was the first year NYSSBA had an Expo at Convention? At that time, NYSSBA's Convention featured 23 exhibitors – a far cry from the roughly 200 coming to Rochester this year. To date, there are more than 40 first time exhibitors joining the event. This growth has made NYSSBA's Annual Education Expo one of the largest in the Northeast.

The products exhibited at this year's Expo are in sharp contrast to those featured 89 years ago. In 1930, school board members browsed a selection of typewriters manufactured by L.C. Smith and Corona Typewriters, Inc. At this year's Expo, attendees can learn about a hotspot device available from Kajeet. The devices create a "SmartBus" so students have access to filtered Wi-Fi access to and from school.

Exhibitors' offerings have always reflected the changing themes of education and with a focus on civic readiness. First-time exhibitor Passport for Good offers solutions for meeting a variety of curriculum requirements. The company links schools and other organizations to community service and provides data on the impact of those efforts.

"Exhibitors continue to bring innovative products to the Education Expo," said Archa Wachowicz, NYSSBA's deputy director of business development.

New this year, exhibitors have a dedicated educational strand called School Solutions, which highlights corporate solutions to help school districts. The 12 School Solutions sessions can help your school district find products for improving safety and security, student achievement and cost-savings via sessions on finance and facilities, mental health, cybersecurity and school climate.

The Expo floor has always been a popular gathering place for networking and enjoying refreshing breaks. This year's receptions, continental breakfast and lunch will feature regional themed refreshments from Utica, Rochester, Syracuse and New York City – each of the cities where NYSSBA has held a Convention.

"NYSSBA's 2019 Education Expo is a rewarding and exhilarating experience, full of leading-edge products and services to assist decision-making teams achieve their mission," Wachowicz said.

This year, the Education Expo will be open from 11:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 24 and from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 25.

In 1952 reel projectors were emerging as the newest classroom technology.

An Education Expo Timeline

1930
Education Expo debuts.

1949
School bus exhibits are introduced.

1969
Mosaic Associates Architects attends first Expo and is longest, continuously participating partner.

1976
Student displays are added.

2019
Record number of Expo booths sold. 197 as of press date.

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Meet Mary Jo O'Hagan

NYSSBA's 2019 Dyer Award Winner

By Katie Navarra Bradley
MARKETING MANAGER

Mary Jo O'Hagan has been an advocate for public education since her early 20s. She started her career as a teacher then left the profession. When she had her two children she got involved with education-related groups and found her passion. Prior to serving on the Baldwin school board, where she has served for 25 years, she was involved in the Parent Teacher Association, where she was a committee chairperson, treasurer and president.

During her tenure with Baldwin she has served as the president and vice president multiple times. In 2016 she received the NYSSBA Lifetime Achievement Award and is being honored again this year with the Everett R. Dyer Distinguished School Board Service Award.

You clearly have a passion for education. What sparked your commitment to public education?

I was an English major at SUNY Oneonta and taught for a few years. I quickly realized I was not a good fit in the classroom. I went to work for NBC in a public relations role. When I had kids I realized I could be involved in education in a different role. I volunteered for the Cooperative Nursery Association and eventually became president. Then I got involved with the PTA and school board service.

O'Hagan on a whitewater rafting trip on Sacandaga River in New York's Adirondack Park.

Tell me about an accomplishment related to your school board service that you are most proud of.

Right now we have very innovative programs and we have remained on the cutting edge of progressive education. Our extensive academy programs offer every student with a career focus a place to study. They could want to be an EMT or a doctor and our program supports their goals. I'm proud of how innovative we have continued to be despite demographic changes.

What state issue is most important to you?

Funding. Our communities want robust programs, but the combination of regulations – which don't allow us to spend money the way we would like to – and the tax cap eliminate the flexibility school boards need to best serve their students.

You have more than two decades of experience serving as a school board member. What advice do you have for others?

Understand your role. It's the board member's responsibility to allow the educational and administrative professionals to do their job in a way that represents the community. School board members are not there to run the district.

It sounds like your education work – most recently school board service – must keep you busy. What do you enjoy outside of that role?

O'Hagan

I'm an avid reader. Before I decided on an English major, I wanted to study history. The books I most enjoy speak to some period of history or reflect what is going on in the political climate. My favorite author is Daniel Silva because of the international intrigue. Because of my interest in history, Italy is my favorite place to visit. You can't beat the combination of history, beautiful sights and good food.

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