Dolgeville Principal Selected as NYS High School Principal of the Year and NASSP NYS Principal of the Year

Timothy Jenny, principal at James A. Green High School in the Dolgeville Central School District, has been selected as the 2019 New York State High School Principal of the Year by SAANYS. This award is given annually to a member of SAANYS to recognize outstanding principals who have succeeded in providing high-quality learning opportunities for students as well as demonstrating exemplary contributions to the profession. Jenny will also represent New York as the NASSP NYS Principal of the Year sponsored by SAANYS' national affiliate, the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

A dedicated leader in the district, Jenny is known as a principal who truly cares about all students. He notes, “As a principal, I am always looking for ways to let students and staff know that we genuinely care about them, that we well as demonstrating exempla-ry contributions to the profession. Jenny will also represent New York as the NASSP NYS Principal of the Year as sponsored by SAANYS’ national affiliate, the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).”

Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES Educator Honored as Leader in Digital Education

Dr. Gregory Brown, regional coordinator of social studies and blended learning at Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES has been selected as the recipient of the SAANYS 2019 Leader in Digital Education Award. This award recognizes a SAANYS member who has demonstrated exceptional, creative leadership in harnessing the potential of technology to further teaching and student achievement. The candidate will have demonstrated excellent organizational and communication skills in supporting and promoting such innovative digital practices for his/her learning community.

Principal Pipelines Benefit Students, Reduce Principal Turnover

Districts can improve schools – including boosting student achievement in reading and math – by better preparing, selecting, evaluating, and supporting principals, according to a new RAND Corporation report.

The study examined how six large urban school districts implemented a concept called “principal pipelines,” a strategic approach to the hiring, preparation, evaluation, and support of school leaders, and how it improved an array of outcomes. The Wallace Foundation funded the $85 million, six-year initiative.

“Our study provides compelling evidence that when districts set clear leadership expectations and used those standards to hire, develop, and support strong leaders, then principals, schools, and students benefited,” said Susan Gates, lead researcher on the report, “Principal Pipelines: A Feasible, Affordable, and Effective Way to Improve Schools.” The positive effects were remarkably widespread across grade levels and across districts.”

48 Districts Receive Federal Grants to Support Homeless Students

The State Education Department (NYSED) has awarded more than $5 million in grants authorized by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act, a component of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). NYSED awarded grants to 48 districts across the state to promote school success for students in temporary housing with 12 of those districts to also receive an additional grant with an emphasis on trauma sensitivity.

Each winning applica-
Executive Viewpoint
Kevin S. Casey, Executive Director

The Reason for Awards

After a well-deserved spring break, many SAANYS members will participate in both state and regional awards programs that acknowledge professional colleagues who have demonstrated professional excellence. I think it is entirely appropriate that we do this, and I congratulate each and every award winner.

Some people dismiss professional award ceremonies as a self-congratulatory exercise, the real purpose of which is to help promote the relevance of the granting entity more so than the profession at large or the individual award winners.

I know that is a cynical view, but it is one which has been presented to me in the past.

Every year when I attend award ceremonies it becomes easier to reject the notion that award ceremonies are self-serving. To the contrary, they serve the profession by acknowledging people who are selected by their peers as the best among them. It is a statement by those who know best—professional colleagues who do substantially the same work in similar environments. It is a statement of priorities; a statement of best practices; an acknowledgment of what works best unimpeded by either the crises of the moment or the new idea of the moment. Too often educational priorities are driven by pundits and politicians rather than educators, and I imagine the award winners of the former would be those who advanced the favored agenda, regardless of its impact.

Consider how the environment in which educators work has changed just in the recent past. Ten years ago how many knew what vaping was? Or what ACES meant? Who could have predicted the opt-out movement, APPR, ESSA, a Red Flag Bill, or the return of an immunization crisis? It would be easy to go on, but I am sure you get the point. The environment is in a constant state of flux sufficient to overwhelm many.

The SAANYS award winners are typically those who are not overwhelmed. They are frequently focused and consistent, able to tune out the cacophony of one reform after another and concentrate on what will best serve children. They don’t ignore reforms in some act of civil disobedience, but seem able to prioritize and manage them in a way that maximizes the likelihood of success. They also seem to recognize that different people have different needs, different strengths and weaknesses whether they be students or staff. Often they will prioritize climate and culture under the theory that student well-being precedes learning. This was recently pointed out in an article by Mark Cannizzaro, president of the New York City school administrators union, wherein he argues taking the long view in education requires acts of courage. We should never be more interested in keeping our jobs than in doing our jobs. Our award winners are doing their jobs.

My favorite part of awards ceremonies is listening to the speeches of the award winners. Most winners are grateful, humble, and take time to acknowledge others who have helped them. They often talk of their priorities, which are invariably child centered. Listening to them always leaves me optimistic that our best are providing worthy examples for both students and staff alike. They become the bar for others to aspire to. I’m glad we acknowledge them mostly because they deserve it.

Assessment for Learning

In my thinking and writing I have spoken about an ELA performance arc that spans grade 3 through grade 11. There is a definite relationship between what happens in a NYS third-grade ELA assessment and an eleventh-grade English Language Arts Regents Exam. In fact, I will go so far as to say that relationship may extend to both the Global History and U.S. History and Government Regents Exams. From grade to grade students are working with documents and responding to claims requiring text-based evidence. It is about time that this examination design is made apparent to administrators and teachers at all levels and the public. The design is wise because it makes sense. These are all reading and writing exams with expectations aimed at deeper reading comprehension. However, while the assessments provide a similarity that needs to be acknowledged, it is equally important to make clear how SEID released items of these assessments may be used to support student reading and writing power. There is a grave problem when annual student assessment results are posted which only meet the assessment of learning criterion. A great- er criterion is meeting when the results are used as the basis for assessment for learning. Teachers in current grades tested and their teachers in subsequent grades may all benefit when released assessment items are used with students for purposes of discussion and understanding.

A best classroom strategy is an engaging assessment. Analysis of annual NYS testing results is beneficial for teachers to home in on test items and learning standards to gauge the status of each student’s performance. In addition, using SEID released test items from the previous school year as a readiness assessment not for grading purposes, rather for in-depth discussions with students and their teachers in subsequent grades may all benefit. When released assessment items are used with students for purposes of discussion and understanding.

The SAANYS award programs provide a community for teachers to learn from one another. Every year when I attend award ceremonies it never ceases to amaze me how much to tell us; and, others to aspire to. I’m glad we acknowledge them mostly because they deserve it.

After years of focusing on creating pathways for deeper learning for all students through a dynamic curriculum replete with strategic performance measures, Dr. Bruce H. Crowder is a senior researcher for Educational Vistas, Inc. His work is primarily focused on creating pathways for deeper learning for all students through a dynamic curriculum replete with strategic performance measures. Dr. Crowder may be reached at bcrowder@edvistas.com.

The statements and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily imply or reflect the opinion or philosophy of SAANYS.
Summary of the April Meeting of the Board of Regents

The agenda for the April meeting of the Board of Regents was filled with items ranging from ESSA implementation to the new Perkins Act. Regardless of the topics discussed, the meeting proceeded under the black cloud of the recent ELA computer-based testing debacle. While the meeting at SED was proceeding, protesters were voicing opposition to the state testing on the steps of the Education Building, legislators were across the street attending to post budget legislation, and no one was discussing APPR. It was just another day in Albany. The following highlights the major items discussed and a brief narrative about the discussions around the table.

Certification Revisions

Certification Areas: Early childhood education; childhood education; middle childhood education; adolescence education; teachers of students with disabilities, who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, blind, visually impaired, or who have speech and language disorders; teachers to speakers of other languages; and library media specialists.

Need/Purpose: The ELL population in New York State has increased by 10.7 percent over the past five years. All teachers are teachers of ELLs and need to develop instruction accordingly to serve them.”

Action: Discussion

Proposed Amendment: The proposed amendment provides that at least three semester hours include language acquisition and literacy development of ELLs and at least three semester hours in language acquisition and literacy development of all students. It revises individual pathway to reflect date changes accordingly.

Effective Date: September 1, 2026. This will allow candidates who apply for individual pathway certification after September 1, 2026.

Certification Areas: Student Teaching Requirements

Need/Purpose: Student teaching requirements vary. Qualification is key for determining whether educators enter and remain in the profession. Student teachers are currently required to do a minimum of two-year placement or a single forty-day placement. The Teach NY Advisory Council and edTPA Task Force met and recommended that more clinical practice is needed.

Action: Increased collaboration between teacher prep programs and school districts through MOU. Student teaching must be at least a full semester, full time, and aligned with daily school schedules and calendars. Candidates must be in full-time status. Certain experienced teachers are exempt from 100 clock hour field experience and full semester student teaching experience (must instead complete at least 50 clock hours of student teaching). Strengthen school-based educators and university-based teacher educators by requiring participation in professional learning on clinical supervision. Align individual evaluation pathways with above requirements.

Proposed Amendment: Adoption

Effective Date: The effective date for students who first enroll in the registered program is fall 2022, for persons applying for an individual evaluation pathway, the effective date is on or after September 1, 2026.

Certification Areas: Extension of the Educational Technology Specialist Content Specialty Test safety net.

Need/Purpose: The extension of a safety net is needed due to the significant decrease in the pass rate. The extension will allow candidates to take either the revised Educational Technology Specialist CST or the Predecessor CST while SED reviews the test to see if adjustments are needed. Extending the safety net enables candidates to be held harmless during the redevelopment of the Educational Technology Specialist CST. It gives candidates who did not pass the revised test the option of taking either test again.

Action: A six month safety net after the revised Educational Technology Specialist CST is redeveloped and operational is proposed.

Proposed Amendment: Emergency Adoption

Effective Date: July 31, 2019, if adopted at the July BOR meeting.

Certification Areas: Extension of Library Specialist edTPA for candidates receiving a failing score.

Need/Purpose: The Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity (SCALE) has not yet released the edTPA handbook to preparation programs. The extension will provide school library programs the ability to review the updated handbook and adjust programs accordingly.

Action: It was proposed to extend the safety net expiration date to December 31, 2021. This will allow candidates to plan for the future saving energy benefits.

Certification Areas: Professional Development Plans for School Districts and BOCES

Need/Purpose: Based on public comments, SED is proposing revisions to the regulations discussed in September.

Action: The wording was revised from professional development to professional learning. This requires a plan to describe how professional learning is consistent with culturally responsive practices to reflect the needs of the community. Clarification is needed regarding SED expectations on use of data in district plans. It will clarify that professional learning plans must include opportunities for teaching assistants and school leaders. CTE programs required for serving as a mentor for a student teacher increased from 15 to 25 hours in each five year registration period. The number of CTELE hours that may be claimed for serving as a mentor for a first year teacher has increased from 25 to 30 hours.

Proposed Amendment: Discussion

Effective Date: Adoption at July 2019 meeting.

Overview of State Aid Increases and Other Funding Allocations

The full report may be found by scanning the QR code.

For more information regarding the SAANYS legislative agenda, the New York State Board of Regents, the Educational Conference Board, or other government relations concerns, contact Cynthia Gallagher, SAANYS director of government relations, c(gallagher@saanys.org.)
SAANYS and NASSP NYS Assistant Principal of the Year

William Bohen
Assistant Principal, Transit Middle School
Williamsville CSD

William Bohen, assistant principal at Transit Middle School in the Williamsville Central School District, has been selected as a 2019 New York State Assistant Principal of the Year. This award is given annually by SAANYS and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) to an assistant principal who has set the pace, character, and quality of education for the students in his or her school. Nominations are administrators who are committed to students, parents, and the community and have shown exceptional contributions to the educational process.

Since joining Transit Middle School in 2011, Bohen has become known as an open and approachable leader who has the best interests of all students at heart. Commented student Patrick Frank, “Dr. Bohen is the kind of vice principal who looks out for all the talents in students, not just the obvious.” He continued, “His openness and casual interactions with students make him easily approachable.” Commented parent Mary Beth Scumaci, “Dr. Bohen is an educator my children speak fondly of at the dinner table. They were always impressed when he was aware of accomplishments; especially when they weren’t aware he was watching. Dr. Bohen is a pillar of the school, devoted to educating children.”

During his time at the school he has also reduced disciplinary referrals by 52 percent by introducing several positive recognition initiatives focusing on rewarding behavior consistent with the school’s mission, “Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Safe.” These initiatives include a quarterly “Pancakes with Principals” breakfast, mentoring programs, a community service day, and monthly “Kudos” awards for students demonstrating these positive behaviors. In conjunction with these fun activities for the students, Bohen has implemented an informal mentoring program, established a service learning initiative for at-risk students, and spearheaded a schoolwide curriculum mapping initiative. Commented Principal Daniel Wahl, “Bill hosts a morning meeting with the building PPS team four days per week to review, discuss, and act proactively on behalf of our students. This information helps to inform large scale decisions around programming, wellness, and capacity building for the staff, and procedures for how students access programs such as advanced classes, intervention services, and student leadership opportunities.”

SAANYS and NASSP NYS Elected Principal of the Year

Doreen McSain
Principal, Glenwood Elementary School
Vestal CSD

Doreen McSain, principal at Glenwood Elementary School in the Vestal Central School District, has been selected as the 2019 New York State Elected Principal of the Year by SAANYS and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). This award is given annually to a member of SAANYS and NAESP who is clearly committed to excellence, has programs designed to meet the academic and social needs of all students, and has firm ties to parents and the community.

Since joining the leadership at Glenwood Elementary School almost ten years ago, McSain’s priority has been to create a school environment where she would want her own children to attend, “a place where the adults and students value each other and where acts of kindness and consideration run rampant.” To that end, her nomination by a large team of faculty, staff, parents, and students embodies her mission as an exceptional and compassionate leader. Noted fourth grade teacher Jessica Mirtallo, “Doreen makes parental and community involvement in the school a focus at Glenwood.” Noted parent Sanjiv Patel, “Principal McSain has truly been an inspiration to the teachers and parents.” One of the students described her this way: “You might think that Mrs. McSain is a special person, that is true. Believe me, she is.”

McSain considers herself the school’s lead learner and is also known as a mentor who cultivates leadership in others. She and her teaching team have implemented several innovative programs such as a “Learning Through Play” program where students use an imaginative play space in order to practice social skills in a supersized version of a “One Book, One School” initiative where the entire school reads the same book at the same time as a way to spark a school-wide and dedicated “Maker Space” where all the children have the opportunity to engage in hands on STEAM time.

Commented Assistant Superintendent for Instruction Laura Lamash, “I have often said that I cannot imagine working without Doreen McSain in her home you find an educator who has committed her life to enriching the lives of students and teachers through creating a school where learning is joyful and friendships abound.”

Outstanding Educator Award

Teresa Calabrese-Gray
Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and 21st Century Learning
Champlain Valley Educational Services BOCES

Teresa Calabrese-Gray, assistant superintendent for instruction and 21st Century Learning at Champlain Valley Educational Services (CVES) BOCES, has been selected for the SAANYS 2019 Outstanding Educator Award. This award is given annually to a SAANYS member who has made outstanding contributions in New York State schools through public education, professional organizations, or research and/or writing in the field of education.

Known as a collaborative leader, Calabrese-Gray has instituted a model for shared leadership and district-wide decision-making teams to guide the work across the 17 districts under CVES/BOCES. As a way to encourage a chain reaction of positive change, Calabrese-Gray encourages administrators to “find their sparkplugs,” empowering others to provide all stakeholders with the appropriate tools to implement desired change. She notes that “Everyone needs a sparkplug” to make the change possible. Calabrese-Gray is often seen at conferences and professional development opportunities at all levels.” Commented Peru Central School Board of Education President Bonnie L. Berry, “Teri is an articulate leader and able to communicate her ideas to others, energizing her audience – be it students, teachers, or colleagues – with her positivity and enthusiasm.”

In 2018, Calabrese-Gray spearheaded an initiative partnering BOCES SCDN with SED to develop, and deliver statewide training on the Next Generation Math Learning Standards to more than 2,000 educators. And she is currently collaborating with leaders within the Teacher Education Program at SUNY Plattsburgh to develop a pipeline for future teachers within local education agencies. Commented District Superintendent Mark Davy, “She is an invaluable member of the district superintendent’s cabinet, which is crucial in helping us to advise me on all recommendations to the BOCES Board, and she is essential in helping to make the daily operational and strategic leadership decisions for our BOCES. She has also been a visionary leader in her support and implementation of CVE’s strategic plan, now in our fifth year.” Calabrese-Gray is an outstanding educator who demonstrates collaborative and synergy-promoting leadership abilities in all her undertakings.”

Leadership and Support Award

Mark Bordeau
Senior Food Service Director
Broome-Tioga BOCES

Mark Bordeau, senior food service director at Broome-Tioga BOCES, has been selected as the 2019 recipient of the SAANYS Leadership and Support Award. This award was established by the SAANYS Board of Directors to recognize the outstanding leadership efforts of those who have responsibilities that require leadership through support services to educators and students across and between buildings and districts.

Recognized as a visionary promoting nutrition and healthy meals, Bordeau has been the food service director at BT BOCES for 20 years. Under his leadership, BT BOCES expanded from serving two districts to now operating in 15 districts. One of his team’s greatest accomplishments has been the creation of the nationally recognized marketing brand “Rock on Café,” the purpose of which is to promote school meals serving more fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as whole grains and low-fat/fat-free milk. His innovative approach has been featured in the Journal of Health Promotion Practice.

Bordeau believes in the power of student input and recognizes the value of students’ perspective on nutrition and wellness. He has implemented several innovative programs such as a “Learning Through Play” program where students use an imaginative play space in order to practice social skills in a supersized version of a “One Book, One School” initiative where the entire school reads the same book at the same time as a way to spark a school-wide and dedicated “Maker Space” where all the children have the opportunity to engage in hands on STEAM time.

Commented Assistant Superintendent for Instruction Laura Lamash, “I have often said that I cannot imagine working without Doreen McSain in her home you find an educator who has committed her life to enriching the lives of students and teachers through creating a school where learning is joyful and friendships abound.”

Congratulations 2019 SAANYS Award Winners
Congratulations 2019 SAANYS School Principal.


deep commitment can be seen in the loyalty returning students have to their home school. Known also as a leader who consistently goes above and beyond, Dunn can be symbolic of Principal Dunn’s leadership and commitment to his students, staff, and community on a trajectory of reflection and continuous improvement. It is also ultimately benefit from the School to Watch process; it positions the school for future growth and development.

Commented Superintendent of Schools Brett Provenzano, “Our students and parents at Martha Brown Middle School have been working with a leadership team that resulted in the school being named a New York State School to Watch in 2018. This is a role he relishes, noting that all of his interactions with the school community have given him a "unique perspective of the strengths and areas of growth for the school." One of his most rewarding accomplishments has been working with a leadership team that resulted in Martha Brown Middle School being named a New York State School to Watch over the course of several years, receiving the designation in 2012, 2015, and 2018. Commented Superintendent of Schools Brett Provenzano, “Our students ultimately benefit from the School to Watch process; it positions the school community on a trajectory of reflection and continuous improvement. It is also symbolic of Principal Dunn's leadership and commitment to his students, staff, parents, and our community.”

Known also as a leader who consistently goes above and beyond, Dunn can be found early in the morning greeting students as they enter the building. This is a role he relishes, noting that all of his interactions with the school community have given him a "unique perspective of the strengths and areas of growth for the school." One of his most rewarding accomplishments has been working with a leadership team that resulted in Martha Brown Middle School being named a New York State School to Watch over the course of several years, receiving the designation in 2012, 2015, and 2018.

This award is given annually to a retired SAANYS member who, in retirement a golden opportunity to embrace his passion for volunteering. As he notes, “Volunteering has been tremendously rewarding, not only because of the satisfaction of giving back and making a difference, but also because of the numerous friends I’ve been fortunate to make.” In addition to serving on many educational organizations, Priore is proud to be among the group of volunteers who worked tirelessly to bring about the transition from an elementary to a K-12 building. He serves on many committees, including the Parent Teacher’s Desk, an organization that distributes $1,000 of new school supplies to every third-grader in the district. His boundless energy, humility, kindness, and compassion when working with students, faculty, and families makes him a remarkable person with a lot to offer.

Commented Principal Kate Pulimuro, “Every day Samantha brings fresh ideas, boundless energy, humility, kindness, and compassion when working with students, faculty, and families. She takes the time to establish a personal connection and forge a relationship in order to maintain a lasting positive rapport.”

The award winners were honored for their contributions at an awards ceremony on May 3.
Retiree Health Insurance and Medicare Part B

In these trying economic times where school districts and BOCES find themselves looking for ways to trim their budgets, retiree health insurance has become a popular avenue to attack. Understanding Medicare and how it can and will affect you in the future is as important as understanding any other retirement benefit or pension plan.

So what is Medicare? In general, Medicare is health insurance that is available to individuals who are 65 years old or older. If an individual chooses to enroll, the program will provide 80 percent health insurance coverage for hospitalization (Part A) and physicians (Part B). Because Medicare only provides 80 percent coverage, an individual will typically obtain secondary coverage to cover the remaining 20 percent. Secondary coverage is typically purchased on the open market (this is commonly referred to as Medicare Supplemental Insurance), covered by a former employer, or is offered by an organization that provides health insurance to retirees (Medicare Part C). Medicare Part B was never a mandatory program, but in the 1990s, health insurance companies began encouraging the school districts and BOCES they were insureing to instruct their eligible employees and retirees to enroll in Medicare. Some insurance policies require enrollment in Medicare Part B prior to paying any claims once you turn 65. It is important to read the fine print of your current insurance policy to determine this.

In order to encourage enrollment, many school districts and BOCES provide the Medicare Reimbursement Expense Benefit (MREB), which is much less expensive than paying the full cost of health insurance for retirees for the rest of their lives. All Medicare recipients pay a standard premium amount which varies over the years. The current standard premium is $134 dollars per month and is deducted from the retirees social security check monthly. In 2007, as part of the Affordable Care Act, Congress enacted the Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount (IRMAA), which imposes an additional Medicare Part B premium on Medicare enrolled retirees whose income exceeds $80,000 annually. This was passed with the goal of having high-income retirees pay more into the Medicare system.

What does all of this mean for SAANYS members? Once a member turns 65, their district will ask that they switch from using the district insurance as their primary insurance, to Medicare as their primary insurance and using the district insurance as their secondary insurance.

Understanding Medicare insurance has become a goal for ways to trim their health insurance costs. All Medicare enrollees have to be assessed on a yearly basis and can be moved into a new IRMAA category. If a retiree obtains a job for supplemental income or the household has a second pension, the IRMAA could be a significant added monthly increase.

Members should be aware that districts may attempt to negotiate the removal of the Medicare Reimbursement Expense Benefit (MREB). If the district is successful in removal or reduction of MREB, that would put the burden of payment for Medicare Part B on the member. As an aside, the district is strictly forbidden by the Retiree Health Insurance Insurance Moratorium Law from reducing retiree benefits without effecting a corresponding reduction in benefits for active employees. Be careful during negotiations that you do not fall into this trap as it could impact every retiree member of your association and ultimately it will affect you in retirement. This is why the SAANYS Legal Department has continuously issued reminder over the years concerning the importance of language unconditionally protecting retiree benefits as of the date of retirement “for life.”

If members have any questions about switching to Medicare or if you have questions about Medicare Reimbursement expenses, please contact the SAANYS Legal Department for advice on the matter. Additionally, if you are a member who is already on Medicare and getting reimbursement from the district, if they try to diminish that reimbursement in any way, call SAANYS immediately so that we may take the necessary steps to prevent it. Lastly, if you believe you may fall within the IRMAA category, be sure to check your state law to be sure that you are being properly reimbursed. If you think there is an issue, call the attorneys at SAANYS and there may be something you can do. That being said, much of that will depend on the collective bargaining agreement, and thus will have to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES Educator Honored for Leader in Digital Education

Recognized as a statewide leader with excellent collaborative skills, Brown has worked tirelessly to bring blended and digital learning through the Online Courses for the 21st Century (OC21) consortium and the Integrated Social Studies/ELA Curriculum to schools across the state. Through his efforts and collaborative skills, he has formed partnerships with 13 other regional BOCES and more than 230 school districts. Colleague Diane Cunningham noted, “Not only does he coordinate a blended high school with teachers and students from multiple districts, his leadership focuses on best practices for learning, including project-based learning opportunities, authentic field experiences, feedback for learning, student-centered instruction, and standards based grading.”

Commented Ardsley UFSD Assistant Superintendent Layne Hughes, “Dr. Brown’s capacity to innovate is demonstrated in a variety of ways. The reach of OC21 ensures a diversity of learners that is not always present in small districts like ours. One of our teachers remarked that the real of lived experiences that his students brought to her ‘classroom’ created a vibrancy that she had not experienced before.” PWN BOCES colleague Rebecca Johnson noted, “Beyond Dr. Brown’s outstanding achievements in digital practices, I would describe him as a bright, thoughtful, knowledgeable, and compassionate school leader who continues to garner the admiration of those who are most fortunate to work with him.”

Yorktown CSD Superintendent of Schools Ronald Hattar commented, “From my perspective, I never had any questions as to whether the SS/ELA initiative would be successful. For me, the deciding factor in adopting the OC21 and SS/ELA programs was about Dr. Brown overseeing the programs.”

April BOR Meeting Summary

The increased state aid is approximately the same percentage increase as was obtained in last year’s budget. In addition to these amounts, funding to school districts is as follows:

• $1 million for translations of the 3-8 ELA, math, and Regents state assessments.
• $15 million for Expanded P-42 and for 3 and 4 years olds.
• $1.5 million for student mental health needs grants through SED (mental health centers, training, anti-bullying programs, school climate surveys, school/ family engagement resources).
• $4 million for students in poverty to access AP and International Baccalaureate exams.
• $47 million expands after school programs.
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ESSA Implementation

The full report (found by scanning the QR code) focused on support for student social, emotional, and development; mental health; a well-rounded education; excellent educators; students placed at-risk; English language/ multilingual learners; differently abled students; data access; identified schools and districts; and all students.

Discussion Around the Table

The discussion by the members of the Board of Regents focused less on the update, but rather on how the plan would/could be revised as implementation is rolled out. Regent Johnson inquired as to how districts would/could be revised as implementation is rolled out. She focused less on the update, but rather on how the plan would/could be revised as implementation is rolled out. Regent Johnson inquired as to how districts would/could be revised as implementation is rolled out.

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April BOR Meeting Summary

continued from page 3

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April BOR Meeting Summary

of the spectrum. He also indicated a need for data on the various graduation pathways to ensure that district capacity expands and does not inadvertently contribute to gaps between high schools that can offer a wide variety of pathways versus those that cannot.

Many members asked questions regarding support for building level leaders. Information was provided on P-20 Pilot Projects and funded collaborations with universities and districts in order to advance turnaround skill sets. Many board members felt that the skills needed for a turnaround leader were very specific set of skills and they were unsure if universities were up for this type of initiative. Some members expressed surprise about this funding, questioned its potential for different leadership models and requested additional information on this project.

Computer-Based Testing

The last meeting of the day focused on the recent computer-based testing problems. A small part of the conversation provided an overall summary of what happened and the number of students impacted. It was clear that SED and the Board of Regents were very concerned with the vendor, as well as that for a second year in a row the conversation centered on major failings with the computer-based testing initiative.

Discussion Around the Table

The conversation among board members in attendance questioned the capacity of SED and the state as a whole to undertake such a large initiative. This line of questioning was in part a reaction from the commissioner’s discussion on the limited field of potential alternate vendors for CBT examinations. Due to the number of students in the state, a high need for tests in languages other than English, and lack of resources coming into SED for testing, members expressed concern that this was not just a vendor problem. The meeting ended with an acknowledged need for further discussions on computer-based testing.

Dr. Sharroky Hollie

Dr. Sharroky Hollie is a national educator who provides professional development to thousands of educators in the area of cultural responsiveness. Going back 25 years, he has been a classroom teacher at the middle and high school levels, a central office professional development coordinator in Los Angeles Unified School District, a school founder and administrator, and university professor in teacher education at the Cal State University. Sharroky has also been a visiting professor for Webster University in St. Louis and a guest lecturer at Stanford and UC Berkeley.

In addition to his experience in education, he has authored several texts and journal articles. Most recently, he wrote Strategies for Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning (2015) and contributed a chapter in the Oxford Handbook of African American Language (2015). Dr. Hollie’s first book, Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning: Classroom Practices for Student Success was published in 2011, followed soon thereafter by The Skill to Lead, The Will to Teach, written with Dr. Anthony Muhammad.

MaryEllen Elia is the New York State Commissioner of Education and president of the University of the State of New York. Commissioner Elia will once again join members at the Annual Conference. She will provide a quick update on current and future initiatives at the State Education Department and then open the floor to address questions, concerns, and comments from attendees.

Q&A with Commissioner MaryEllen Elia

MaryEllen Elia

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