



CNYSBA NEWS

Train, Empower, Advocate, and Mobilize for Students

Statewide School Finance Consortium (SSFC) Begin the Year Summary

By Dr. Rick Timbs

2026-27 will be an interesting year for school districts and the Statewide School Finance Consortium. The Foundation Aid formula weighs heavily on our minds. The state is closing in on almost 78% of all school districts as Save-Harmless. I doubt if there could be any easier way to determine that the formula is out of touch with the financial needs of school districts. *Continued on Page 4*



Syracuse.com

Welcome Back to the 2026-27 School Year

By Derrick Dorsey, Executive Director, CNYSBA

Dear Board Members and Superintendents,

Welcome back! On behalf of the Central New York School Boards Association, I hope you and your families had a safe, enjoyable, and restful summer. As we begin the 2026-2027 school year, I want to wish each of you a successful and rewarding year ahead.

Continued on the Next Page

The start of a new school year brings renewed energy, new opportunities, and, of course, new challenges. As Board members and superintendents, you carry an incredible responsibility in providing leadership for your districts and helping create the conditions in which students, staff, and communities can thrive. We appreciate your continued commitment to public education and the countless hours you dedicate to serving your communities.

As you begin this new year, please remember that **CNYSBA is here for you.**

Our Association exists to be a resource, a partner, and a place for connection. Whether your district is looking for Board or leadership training, a customized retreat, a regional roundtable, governance support, advocacy opportunities, or simply an opportunity to connect and learn from colleagues across Central New York, we are here to support you.

We also want to hear from you. If there is a topic your Board would like to explore, a challenge your district is facing, or a conversation you believe we should bring to the larger region, please reach out. Some of the best work we do begins by listening to the needs of our members.

As we move through the 2026–2027 school year together, I hope we continue to strengthen our relationships, share ideas and resources, and support one another in our shared commitment to the students and communities of Central New York.

Thank you for your leadership, your service, and your continued support of CNYSBA. We look forward to working with you throughout the year.

Have a wonderful and successful 2026–2027 school year!

Warm regards,

Derrick Dorsey

Executive Director

Central New York School Boards Association



**Train.
Empower.
Advocate.
& Mobilize for Students**

2026 NEW BOARD MEMBER TRAININGS

LEAD WITH PURPOSE.

SEP
30

CHILD ABUSE TRAINING

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Essential preparation for responsible school leadership.

REGISTRATION

[Click Here](#)

OCT
10

FINANCE TRAINING

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Practical tools for confident fiscal oversight.

REGISTRATION

[Click Here](#)

NOV
TBD

GOVERNANCE TRAINING

9:00AM - 3:00PM

Build a strong foundation for effective board service.

REGISTRATION

[Click Here](#)

NOV
TBD

STUDENT EX OFFICIO TRAINING

5:30PM - 8:30PM

Supporting meaningful student voice at the Board table.

REGISTRATION

[Click Here](#)

READY TO SERVE. READY TO LEAD.

Visit www.cnysba.org | Call 315-463-16904

REGISTER TODAY

Our Challenges:

There is no doubt that expense increases are growing faster than any “ordinary” revenues.

There is still a mistaken belief that the Tax Cap is 2%. We must do a better job with the public and state government about this errant notion.

First, simply looking at the components of the calculation of the Tax Cap easily identifies that the Tax Cap is NOT going to be 2% mathematically. While it is possible to come out that way, it would be extremely rare.

Second, the use of 2% in the Tax Cap formula only refers to the 2% limit on the use of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in the computation. That's it.

Third, there still is a distinctive disadvantage to the use of PILOT Agreement (Payments in Lieu of Taxes) amounts in the Tax Cap calculations. I suggest district band together working with County IDAs to stop PILOT agreements in favor of Community Host agreements (also known as Host Community Agreements) as soon as possible. Should BOCES' or districts need assistance in this effort please contact me.

The Battle to Improve the largely outdated and arbitrary Foundation Aid formula continues.

Below is an excerpt from an email I received from Michael Rebell who continues to ally with us in this fight.

“The oral argument in Maisto v. State of New York will take place before the Appellate Division, 3d Dep't, in Albany on the afternoon of Tuesday, September 15 (exact time to be announced.) The argument will be live-streamed, and a video will also be available in the court's archive. Here is a link to the home page of the court's website: <https://www.nycourts.gov/ad3/>

I will be making a strong argument for the Court to order the state to promptly develop a new foundation aid formula to replace the existing formula that is now 20 years old and is replete with many out- of- date and inequitable provisions. Today's students have a constitutional right to fair funding and adequate resources that meet current needs.

The Court's decision to allow me, as counsel for amici, to participate in the oral argument indicates that they are interested in learning more about our constitutional arguments. I am hopeful for a favorable outcome.

The timing of the argument at the beginning of the new school year provides an ideal opportunity for you to remind your members and your community of the importance of continuing to press the state to develop a new school funding formula that is equitable and adequate. Please share information about the case and its significance with your networks and your media contacts.

Thank you again for supporting the amicus brief and our continuing fight for fair funding.

*Best,
Michael
Michael A. Rebell
Education for Democracy Project
Harvard Law School*

*Professor Emeritus, Teachers College,
Columbia University*

A few critical elements of the Foundation Aid Formula that need attention immediately

Foundation Amount: This is the first number in the formula; \$8,273 per student. This number has not been studied in any way to determine its validity since 2015. Clearly, it does not take only \$8,273 to educate a child in New York State Public Schools in 2026-27. An increase in this value is critical to the removal of a significant number of school districts from Save-Harmless status and result in increased aid to reflect increased costs more realistically.



Expected Local Share: This portion of the Foundation Aid formula is largely based on Actual Value (think Full Value) property values, which throughout New York State tend to often increase over time, and it defines the portion of a child's educational cost that the formula stipulates as the responsibility of the local school district. In the formula this amount is a subtraction to help arrive at the final state obligation for Foundation Aid. Your amount can be found in your State Aid data from the State Education Department available on the NYSED website. Compare it to previous years. If it is going up over time, your district is inheriting greater responsibility for the cost of the education of the children in the district.

Weighting Students With Disabilities: As you are all aware, within the Foundation Aid formula, general education students in the Total Aidable Foundation Pupil Unit (TAFPU) calculation are considered or weighted as 1.0. Students with special needs . considered Students with Disabilities (SWD) in the formula are counted as 1.41 . Thus, the school district TAFPU value will usually be larger than your enrollment value. This, thankfully, recognizes the additional cost to the education of Students with Special Needs. However, this value has not changed historically for a long time and should be updated to reflect modern program offerings for these students to meet their needs, state and federal mandates and the cost associated with such programs.

I remain concerned over the internally and externally perceived financial condition of many school districts across the entire State of New York. See my June Newsletter article for more specifics.

Category 1: School districts concerned for the future

These are school districts that are beginning to realize they are not as financially secure looking into the future as they had hoped they would be. They appear stable for now but are in a quandary about how to approach impending financial decisions that could alter their educational programs, culture and local political standing.

Category 2: School districts that know they are in financial trouble

These school districts have done research, and it clearly indicates that their financial future puts them in jeopardy through a diminishment of educational resources and the inability of their finances to support their mission. Remedies are difficult financially, culturally and politically.

Category 3: School districts that have not figured out how much financial trouble they're in as the future quickly approaches.

These school districts have not had the time, resources or inclination to examine their long-term condition in the light of their mission, community expectations, and their relationship to the financial underpinnings of the district. The fear is that the longer they go without realizing their true condition moving forward, the more difficult it will be to adjust finances, practices and other related elements to school finance. Further, these school districts risk their credibility as School Boards and the Public do not like negative financial surprises.

In Closing, a reminder

Be prepared for another difficult financial year.

Board members please attend regional NYSSBA and regional School Boards Association meetings. Superintendents please be active in NYSCOSS and regionally. And of course, School Business Officials partake in NYASBO and the regional chapter meeting and workshops.

Work regionally and statewide, learn to lobby and of course:

Attend Statewide School Finance Consortium (SSFC) workshops. If you need one for your regional unit, give me a call, I'm ready!

Be well,
Rick

CNYSBA Joins MACNY in Giving Back to Our Community

The Central New York School Boards Association (CNYSBA) was proud to join its affiliate partner, MACNY, The Manufacturers Association of Central New York, in supporting the United Way of CNY 2026 Day of Caring held on August 6th, 2026. The CNY Day of Caring is the region's largest community-wide day of volunteer service. The annual event brings together individuals, families, businesses, and community organizations to complete meaningful projects for local nonprofits. In 2025, more than 1,300 volunteers completed over 100 projects throughout Central New York demonstrating what can be accomplished when neighbors and organizations unite around a shared commitment to service.



Representing CNYSBA, Executive Assistant Ashley Stoltz volunteered alongside members of the MACNY team at Upstate Oasis. Upstate Oasis is part of a national nonprofit educational organization dedicated to enriching the lives of adults age 50 and older. Through educational classes, health and exercise programs, social activities, and volunteer opportunities, Oasis helps older adults continue learning, remain active, form friendships, and stay connected to their communities.

For their Day of Caring project, Ashley and the MACNY volunteers created handmade cards for older adults/seniors residing at Nottingham rehabilitation and nursing care. Using colorful paper, decorative materials, and handwritten messages, the volunteers designed each card to be personal and up-lifting.

The cards included messages reminding recipients that they are loved, valued, remembered, and important. Although creating a card may seem like a small gesture, a thoughtful message can provide encouragement, brighten someone's day, and help strengthen a sense of connection—particularly for individuals experiencing illness, rehabilitation, or isolation.

For Ashley, the project was an opportunity to step away from her usual responsibilities and devote time and creativity to others. She thoughtfully selected encouraging words and decorations for each card, knowing that every message would reach an individual member of the community.

“Creating these cards reminded me that giving back does not always require a grand gesture,” Ashley shared. “Sometimes, taking the time to tell another person that they matter can make a meaningful difference. I was grateful to represent CNYSBA, work alongside the MACNY team, and contribute to a project centered on kindness and human connection.”

The experience also reflected the value of community partnerships. By working together, CNYSBA, MACNY, United Way of Central New York, Upstate Oasis, and volunteers from across the region helped extend the reach of organizations serving residents. These collective efforts demonstrate that strong communities are built not only through institutions and programs, but also through individuals who are willing to share their time and talents.

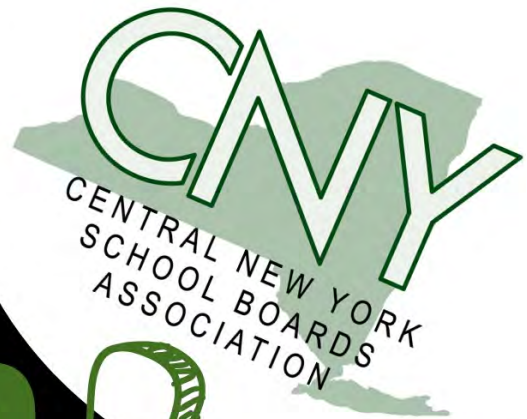
CNYSBA is proud of Ashley for representing the Association with compassion and community spirit. Her participation reflected CNYSBA's broader commitment to the people and communities of Central New York, reminding us that service, collaboration, and kindness can create an impact well beyond a single day.

To learn more about Upstate Oasis or explore its volunteer opportunities, visit upstate.oasisnet.org.

CENTRAL NEW YORK SCHOOL
BOARDS ASSOCIATION

JOIN OUR
BOARD

OF DIRECTORS FOR CNYSBA



FILL OUR **VACANCIES**

ARE YOU....?



Involved with a current
CNYSBA Member School
District?



Currently a sitting Board of
Education Member for a District
or BOCES?



Passionate about supporting
public education across the CNY
region?



Able to attend VIRTUAL Board
Meetings via Zoom?

VACANCIES:

CAYUGA-ONONDAGA BOCES

*** 2 OPEN SEATS ***

CORTLAND-MADISON BOCES

*** 2 OPEN SEATS ***

INTERESTED? , QUESTIONS?, WANT TO LEARN MORE?

EMAIL THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - DERRICK DORSEY TO DISCUSS THIS
OPPORTUNITY FURTHER!!!



DERRICK@CNYSBA.ORG

VOICES FROM OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

The Moments That Matter

"What made you smile—or reminded you why you work in education?"

REFLECTIONS SHARED AT OUR ANNUAL DINNER

- Watching our special needs students board buses for the Oswego County Olympiad.
- Our students.
- Students' participation in unified sporting events.
- I lead with my heart and have created a supportive culture at work.
- **"Hey Guuurl... You are the reason our school is great <3"**
- Watching the volleyball club/league, which supports all our student athletes to develop individually and collectively—continuing to build our district.
- A group of 8th graders who cared about the next class coming behind them more than themselves.
- A student group that collaborated to discuss how to make things better for the incoming class.
- A staff member praised my attention to detail, ability to see both sides of the financial impact to employers and taxpayers, and being fair and open-minded.
- That a student is going to college for pre-law who didn't think she would go at all.
- **Students said, "Thank you for caring."**
- A student told me that my guidance helped them make a life decision they love.
- A student sent me a thank-you note for calling a snow day.
- A senior in the school play thanked me for a new auditorium.
- Graduation antics.
- A kindergarten student asked me if I was on TikTok.
- Seeing pictures I took at events being shared on students' social media feeds.
- The students and their needs.
- **"Knowledge is power, but access is powerful."**
- I like being involved in fixing problems people have.
- Nothing like a follow-up email to let me know that my work is appreciated.

Every act of care creates a ripple.

THANK YOU FOR SHOWING UP FOR STUDENTS—AND FOR ONE ANOTHER.

Responses lightly edited for clarity and length.

2026 - 2027 CNYSBA

Board of Directors

Revised 07/2026

BOARD LEADERSHIP

PRESIDENT – JOAN REEVES

VICE PRESIDENT – RUSS RIDDELL

CNYSBA STAFF

DERRICK DORSEY – Executive Director

Derrick@cnysba.org

ASHLEY STOLTZ – Executive Assistant

Ashley@cnysba.org

CAYUGA-ONONDAGA SBA

RUSS RIDDELL (CAYUGA-ONONDAGA BOCES)

** Vacant Seat **

** Vacant Seat **

CORTLAND-MADISON SBA

PEG PERI (Cincinnatus & OCM BOCES)

** Vacant Seat **

** Vacant Seat **

ONONDAGA-MADISON SBA

JOAN REEVES (OCM BOCES)

ALISON BRAINARD (Fabius Pompey)

ROBERT CRABTREE (NSCSD & OCM BOCES)

SYRACUSE CITY SCHOOLS

GWENDOLYN RAEFORD (Syracuse City)

TOMPKINS-SENECA-TIOGA SBA

MISSY RYNONE (Newfield & TST BOCES)

SUSAN TABRIZI (Lansing & TST BOCES)

DAVID PECK (Dryden & TST BOCES)

OSWEGO SBA

NICOLE NADEAU (APW)

CONNIE DOUGLAS (Mexico)

TOM CIAPPA (Oswego City)





FERRARA FIORENZA PC

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW

SCHOOL LAW M A T T E R S

Supreme Court Finds that State Laws Limiting Participation in Girls' and Women's Sports Do Not Violate Title IX or the U.S. Constitution's Equal Protection Clause

A West Virginia law passed in 2021 imposed a categorical ban on biological males participating in female sports. B.P.J., biological male who identifies as female, challenged the law in court claiming it violated Title IX and the Equal Protection clause of the U.S. Constitution. Idaho passed a similar law in 2020, which was also challenged by a biological male who identifies as female. The challenges to both state laws were the subject of a decision in the case of *West Virginia v. B.P.J.*.

Twenty-seven states, and athletic organizations including the National Collegiate Athletic Association, the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee, and the International Olympic Committee have also adopted policies limiting female sports to biological female.

Laws that provide for sex-based classifications are examined under a legal standard that is referred to as “intermediate scrutiny.” To pass constitutional muster, a sex-based legal classification must be “substantially related” to achieving an “important government objective.” The Court noted that biological sex differences in sports are enduring, affecting height, weight, strength, speed, and endurance. The Court noted the ongoing scientific debate about the effects of puberty blockers and hormones, and how they may impact sex-based differences that impact athletic abilities, weighed in favor of the Court deferring to state legislative judgments about whether it may be appropriate to bar biological males from participating in female athletics.

The 14th Amendment's Equal Protection Clause provides that no state shall “deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws”. Title IX prohibits sex-based discrimination in school sports.

In B.P.J., the Court noted that Title IX allows schools to provide separate women’s and men’s sports teams defined by biological sex. The Court also concluded that under the Equal Protection Clause, schools may determine eligibility for women’s and girls’ sports based on biological sex given the States’ interests in ensuring safety and competitive fairness.

The Court explicitly noted that it was not considering the question of whether permitting biological males to participate in girls’ and women’s sports would violate Title IX or the Equal Protection Clause.

While significant, the B.P.J. decision is not likely to have any immediate practical consequences for school districts in New York. This is because New York State law requires that students be allowed to participate in athletics based on their gender identity, without regard to a student’s biological sex.

We'd Love to Hear What You Think

Annual Dinner Feedback Survey –

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WPLZ6BV>

or the QR Code



Roundtable Event Topic Suggestions Survey - [https://
www.surveymonkey.com/r/9JXC5C7](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9JXC5C7)

or the QR CODE





STEAM Camp Inspires Oswego Students Through Hands-On Learning

Students from the Oswego City School District recently participated in a hands-on STEAM Camp hosted at Minetto Elementary School, exploring science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics through interactive activities and demonstrations.

Students conducted experiments, explored geology and learned about chemical reactions, including a volcanic reaction demonstration led by professors from SUNY Oswego.

Additionally, the camp featured drones, a lesson on dental hygiene from the Oswego Health Department, laser printing, visits from the Paws of CNY, and the Bookmobile. The camp encouraged students to ask questions, collaborate, experiment and think critically while discovering how STEAM concepts connect to the world around them.

The district is grateful to the community partners, educators and organizations who helped make these opportunities possible. Their support and expertise provide students with meaningful experiences that encourage curiosity, creativity and a love of learning.