



Connecticut Federation of School Administrators

Members of the American Federation of School Administrators AFL-CIO

STATEment!

January 2005

We Work for School Administrators

Volume 8.6

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Message from the President ... Roch J. Girard

Welcome back everyone and Happy New Year from all of us at CFSA. We hope you and your families had an enjoyable and safe holiday season.

Unfortunately we began this year with a horrible human tragedy in S.E. Asia. We at CFSA applaud the great out pouring of support for the victims of this tragedy by our locals, their students, administrators, teachers and parents. What a GREAT country this is!

Legislative Activity:

As we begin a new year, we look forward to a proactive legislative session at the capitol. We will continue to be ever vigilant on issues affecting the membership. We will be keeping a close watch on proposed changes to Binding Arbitration, and support efforts to get a Constitutional Amendment to insure that the state FULLY fund our retirement system. In a recent report to the TRB, it was reported that the funds liability rose from \$ 3.2 BILLION dollars to \$ 5.2 BILLION dollars in two years! Our retirement system MUST be protected and not be seen as a vehicle to balance the budget by "borrowing from it" to pay it back at a later date. We are obligated to put in our share- the state should do the same. This is why CFSA is asking for our own seat on the TRB to insure that our interests are being guarded.

CFSA has attended a number of PAC functions and have met with Speaker Jim Amman, and House Majority Leader Christopher Donovan.

Renovations to our Office:

We begin this New Year with renovations to our office. When we moved to this new facility last June we were aware that the engineering firm that shares the office complex was going to move. A new client has been found which will necessitate the reconfiguration of our office space to accommodate our mutual needs. Hopefully the renovations will go quickly. We have been informed that the renovation may take as long as one month. I will be sending out to Local Presidents a specific plan of operation for the duration of the renovation. CFSA will always be available to the membership and our coalition friends statewide. Just as soon as we get the word that the renovations will begin, I will send out the communications plan to the presidents. Our phone and fax number will always be available.

CFSA Works for You:

CFSA continues to work for the membership. Our negotiators have been doing yeoman work on numerous contracts statewide. A number of locals have gone to mediation and binding arbitration which required additional services from our negotiators.

There are a number of personnel issues which is consuming much of our time. We are dealing with certifications issues, letters of reprimand, and a denial of retirement benefits to a member, and some disciplinary matters. We are particularly pleased with the reinstatement of an administrator who was improperly removed from her position. There are a number of communities that have



Your CFSA officers are: (standing left) Roch J. Girard, President; (seated left) Paul J. Rebot, Vice President; (standing right) Dr. James Thompson, Treasurer; and seated right, Edward J. Roman, Secretary.

a new superintendent. We are dealing with what we consider some pretty outrageous decisions by some of the Superintendents. Often when you have a new superintendent, there are changes within the education community. Some of the changes cause contractual challenges for the local. Budgets continue to be tight, causing boards of education to reconfigure administrative positions, which create additional work, more evaluations, building and curricular changes. The impact of these changes must be negotiated. We are seeing in contract

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VP's Corner ... Paul J. Rebot

The attack on our health benefits and the feeling that politicians have concerning binding arbitration as being unfair to their communities has made this year's negotiations a nightmare for our locals. For the first time in several years CFSA had to deal with arbitration forced upon its' members. In one town the council rejected the settlement negotiated by the board even though they had a representative attend the entire negotiations process. A special thanks to Dr. Wayne Ranhosky CFSA negotiator who saved the local thousands of dollars by preparing the brief for and presenting to the arbitration panel. It's infuriating to spend our hard earned dollars from our treasury on an arbitration rammed down our throats by a gutless council that refuses to accept a fairly negotiated settlement. They fearlessly spend the taxpayers' dollars and then scream about the unfairness of the binding arbitration law. Don't you just love the injustice of it all?

If you have recently gone through negotiations and have your new printed contract we would appreciate a copy for the office files. Either send us a hard copy or better yet send Beth an electronic copy via e-mail to bkonior@ct-fsa.org.

As a general rule we have tried to resolve problems with Superintendents through discussion and our intervention as mediators. However, this past year, the unwillingness of a few Superintendents to act fairly with

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The Connecticut Federation of School Administrators

is the first and only group of professional employees chartered by the AFL-CIO, for the explicit purpose of improving work standards and conditions in Connecticut's public schools.

We represent over 1200 school administrators and supervisors in Connecticut.

Our members are all dedicated, professional, and experienced school administrators.

We provide many free and reduced-cost services.

Our AFL-CIO support group consists of over 13 million members.

Please send ideas, requests, information, and letters you would like published to the editor:

Ed Roman

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deliberations, the cost of medical insurance/health plans/co-pays are increasing while salary increases are barely meeting the cost of inflation, yet alone the increased cost in medical coverage!

Organizing:

We are also looking to grow the organization. We have met with two new potential locals. We hope to bring the locals on board early this spring. If you know an administrator in a non-CFSA local, please let us know. We will contact the person and arrange a meeting with their leadership/members. CFSA has a lot to offer. EVERY administrator in Ct. should be a member of our state/national organization.

Retirement Workshop Planned:

We will also be holding a 'Retirement Workshop' on March 10, 2005. Our guest will be most knowledgeable in retirement issues. Local Presidents will be forwarding information on the workshop soon. The workshop will be FREE for CFSA members and a \$ 25.00 charge for non-members. The workshop will be held at the Courtyard by Marriott in Cromwell.

Meeting with Commissioner Sternberg:

The Connecticut Coalition for Public Education met with Commissioner Betty Sternberg last month. The Commissioner laid out her education agenda for the next two years. The Commissioner discussed the "New Program Initiatives for F.Y. 05-06 and 06-07".

1. Discussed the "W" questions: Who are we teaching; what and how are we teaching; who is teaching; and how well are we teaching?
2. SDE is looking at a 5 year plan- goals/objectives with financial support- with ranking order by SDE Board Members.
3. EARLY CHILDHOOD ISSUES:
 - Need to serve more preschool children in Erg Group 1.
 - Provide more facilities so that more preschool children can be served.
 - Provide high -quality programs by increasing the skills of pre-service and in-service preschool teachers.
 - Provide high -quality services, instruction, assessment and evaluation to preschools.
 - Stimulate the provisions of full-day K. programs.
 - Provide help for the families in ERG Group 1 communities with necessary services to support the success of their preschool-age children.
 - She praised the work of Dr. Janice Gruendell. (Whom we will try to get for our next meeting).
4. TECHNOLOGY/CURRICULUM ISSUES:
 - Integrate the use of laptop computers in instruction in all Ct. High Schools.
 - Provide increased and more rigorous choices for Ct H.S. students.
 - Improve curriculum in Priority School Districts.
 - Share BEST Practices in instruction.
 - Better assess the achievement of special populations.
 - More Charter Schools with proper funding.
5. TEACHERS:
 - Exchange of ideas and techniques among teachers in urban, suburban and rural districts.
 - Retain outstanding teachers in Priority School Districts who teach in designated shortage areas.
 - Attract and retain outstanding teachers in P.S.D.
 - Provide support to new teachers in ERG Group 1 urban areas.
 - Reward teachers for serving as mentors/cooperating teachers.
 - Attract teachers to serve as principals in P.S.D.
 - Make recommendations about how to attract and retain high-quality educators to the teaching profession.

The Commissioner indicated that in reviewing communities who are in need of improvement, many factors appear to be at work not benefiting students, such as: teacher illness rate, absenteeism, quality of instruction, non-parental involvement, teacher turn-over, lack of social services, class size, student-teacher ratio, priority school grants money not being properly used, etc.

Looking at the data, the state must recognize these major issues, and must address them. It will be a COSTLY endeavor over and beyond the

unfunded mandate of NCLB.

The state must look at the input and output factors. There is a direct correlation between children underachieving and the lack of resources. As we test more students' grades 3-8, the needs will be even greater. We are addressing the needs of 8 schools now... what will be the need if 32 more schools get identified?

The question is: are we creating an "underclass society"?

Legislators need to look realistically at the ECS Grants and insure that there is proper funding to address all the needs of schools/communities. There should be more categorical grants areas beyond ECS money.

There remains a clear need for more Family Resource Centers statewide. They are providing great service to their communities.

The membership thanked Commissioner Sternberg for her presentation and voice support for her agenda. The Coalition will assist / support the Commissioner with her agenda, as the legislature takes up the challenges set forth in her proposals.

Update on the Hartford Initiative:

CFSA continues to be an active participant in the Hartford Initiative. If you recall Mayor Perez created a Commission, (A Commission on the Status and Future of Hartford's Children and Youth). It is comprised of many key figures from Hartford, which work with the children in the city. Our Treasurer, Dr. James Thompson was asked to Chair the Education Initiative, which was one of the seven working groups on the commission. Dr. Thompson asked if I, as state president, would serve on the education commission. Together we have met in the committee on many occasions. A final report was given to the Mayor late in October. The policies and strategies that were developed will serve as guidelines in the areas of education, family, juvenile justice, community services, health, workforce and early childhood. The Mayor recognized that the "condition and plight of Hartford's children and youth require a complex and multi-systems approach".

The next step is to host a citywide "Call to Action" conference where policy makers, funders, community residents, key stakeholders and service providers come together to set direction, priorities, and an "action plan" that emotionally and socially connect and engages the children of Hartford and youth to families and communities, education and employment. The goal of the conference will be to "articulate comprehensive coordinated, research based and developmentally appropriate best practices that set a clear direction for Hartford's public and private sector leadership as they influence decisions that impact Hartford's youth". We will keep you abreast of this important initiative, which in the long run could serve as a model for every urban area in the country.

Indoor Air Quality:

CFSA continues to be a member of the Ct. Indoor Environmental Resource Team. I have sent to local presidents a number of communications on the work of this important committee. I have recently sent out documentation on implementation guidelines to set up a school Indoor Air Quality Team using the "Tools for Schools" program which addresses indoor air quality issues in schools using collaborative efforts involving staff and parents. If you or your school system needs more information on IAQ please contact Kenny Foscue. At the Ct. Department of Health. His email address is: Kenny.foscue@po.state.ct.us

CFSA is a Board Member of the Ct. Coalition for Justice in Education Funding. (CCJEF) The Coalition held a news conference at the Capitol on Tuesday November 30, 2004. The Coalition is comprised of municipal officials, non-profit organizations including CFSA, AFT-CT, CABA, CEA, and other child advocacy groups. The President of the Coalition is Hamden's Mayor Carl J. Amento. The coalition was formed to address the growing inadequacies of the current funding for public education using the ECS formula. It is the Coalitions view that the ESC Grant shortchanges school districts by millions of dollars. Consequently local communities have to increase local property taxes to cover revenue short failings and cut critical services for their communities.

The Coalition has hired a national school financing firm to gauge the cost of providing adequate education in Ct. the Coalition is extremely pleased to have the services of the Yale Law School, which is offering its service on a pro-bono basis. Once the study is completed- scheduled for

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early spring- attempts will be made to address the funding needs of education through the legislature. The Coalition has suggested that if the funding needs are not adequately met, the group could eventually take the funding issue to court. This may sound somewhat familiar. In 1977 there was a major court case – Horton vs. Meskill in which the Supreme Court ordered the state to close the large funding gap between wealthy and poor communities. With the negative and punitive impact of the NCLB Act upon us, it is imperative that education be funded in a manner that properly meets the needs of students in the 21st century! This is a very important Coalition and one in which I will report on frequently. Serving as a Board member on this Coalition serves as another reminder on how CFSA best represents you as school administrators.

Election Results:

We would like to congratulate all the elected and re-elected state and national candidates who won in the November elections. Though we were not successful at electing Senator Kerry as President, Connecticut did its part in voting for Senator Kerry. We would like to thank AFSA-PAC for their contributions to our Congressional Candidates Jim Sullivan, and Diane Farrell. They both ran a great campaign and clearly made a mark in the election process. We would like to thank Mrs. Colleen Sullivan and Mrs. Nancy Dinardo for coming to our President Dinner Meeting last October to receive the AFSA-PAC donations for the congressional campaigns. In the elections, all but four of our endorsed candidates were elected.

NYC Local 1 Conference:

Last December 4, 2004, I had the honor of attending NYC Local 1, and their Annual Leadership Conference. The theme for the 40th Conference was "Leadership Revisited". It was a tremendous success and was as always, a class act! The keynote speaker dealt with the "Reflections on the Cultural Revolution in Our City's Schools." Dr. Diane Ravitch, Researcher, Professor of education at New York University, and is a national authority on education, was a tremendous hit. She did a magnificent job at laying out the history of the NYC school system, and highlighting misconceptions about what education can and cannot do.

We look forward to a productive and beneficial year for the membership. Once again, Happy New Year Everyone!

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our members has resulted in the filing of several grievances. Just because they think they can do whatever they want is not a license to stomp all over our rights and working conditions. As a member of a bargaining unit you have to know that the Superintendent has no right to negotiate or dictate to you additional duties or modifications to negotiated contractual issues. You have a duly elected President and that is the person who speaks for you and your union.

On a brighter note now is the time to think about nominations for the CFSA Administrator of the Year. You can get a copy of the nominating form from your local President or contact Beth at our office and have one e-mailed to your directly. Any member of CFSA in good standing may nominate any other member of our Union for this prestigious position. On the cover sheet sent to your President was the timetable for nomination, application, and selection which will be announced and awarded at our May 19, 2005 Convention. Please plan to have your local send representation. There is not limit to the number of members that a local may send. However voting rights are limited to the delegates specifically designated by the local.

For those locals negotiating their contracts commencing July, August, or later in 2005 there will be a workshop held at the CFSA office for all negotiations chairs and Presidents. Bring your contracts! We will be presenting a general overview of the process and expectations.

Our negotiators will be in attendance and will provide some individual hands on reviews to help you get started on your prep for the next contract. The specific date of the workshop will be announced at the May convention.

CFSA has been proactive in requesting that AFSA initiate a summer workshop at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies located in Silver Springs Maryland. The specific details relative to costs, dates and registration should be available shortly after this statement goes to press. From discussion at the Presidents dinner meeting there are two locals already interested in sending members to take part in the training. If you enjoy the experience of negotiating this 5 day workshop will give you an understanding of the preparation and subtleties required to truly be a union negotiator. If you or any member of your local is interested in attending please contact our office (860-635-3660).



L-R: Mr. Mark Norton, IAG Rep, with last year's CFSA Administrator of the Year, Mr. Harry Dumeer, who celebrated the Boston Red Sox victory this year.



L-R: Nancy Dinardo representing Congressional Candidate Dianne Farrell, with Mrs. Colleen Sullivan, wife of Congressional Candidate Jim Sullivan accepting AFSA's PAC check at our President's Dinner meeting last October.



Vice President Rebot celebrating his beloved Red Sox in their National Baseball pennant victory.



President Girard meets with the new Speaker of the House Jim Amann at a New Democrats function in early January.



House Majority Leader Christopher Donovan meets with President Girard



President Girard speaks with East Hartford's State Representative Michael Christ.

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**Scott R. Vertucci
President**

**CFSA in a joint effort with
Teacher Retirement
Planning Services, LLC**
presents a Leadership Workshop on:
**Understanding the Connecticut
State Teacher Retirement System**

SAVE THE DATE:
Thursday, March 10, 2005
4:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Courtyard by Marriott
(the old Holiday Inn)
4 Sebeth Drive
Cromwell, Connecticut

Presenters will include:
Mr. David LeVine, Mr. Josh Gottfried, and
Mr. Matt Somberg of the Teacher's Retirement
Planning Service. Joining them will
be Mr. William Sudol, former Director of
the CT State Teacher's Retirement Board,
and Mr. Mark Norton of AIG.

**Is your retirement just
over the horizon?**

If you are within 10 years of retirement, you need to plan how to best control your retirement needs. Most people spend more time planning their vacations than their retirement. Mark A. Norton is a former Connecticut educator and 22 year financial professional with AIG American General specializing in pension options. Mark has presented to CFSA locals, been an industry speaker and radio guest on the topic of pension maximization. Providing free *educator group seminars and individual meetings by appointment*, Mark explains how your teacher retirement works, the planning needed prior to retirement and the financial as well as personal impact of your pension option decisions.

Call direct to schedule a meeting or contact the CFSA executive office for further information at 860-635-3660

**Mark A. Norton
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