



# Connecticut Federation of School Administrators

Members of the American Federation of School Administrators AFL-CIO

# STATEment!

July 2005

We Work for School Administrators

Volume 8.7

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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:

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## Message from the President ... Roch J. Girard

During the last year CFSA has been very busy working for you at many levels.

### LEGISLATIVE Update:

Our lobbying efforts at the Capitol were indeed challenging. CFSA presented testimony six times before the Education and Appropriations Committee on proposed bills that affect school administrators and building environment issues. We have supported bills that will establish a constitutional amendment for the FULL funding of our retirement program. The legislature was told that our retirement fund has a deficit of 5.2 BILLION dollars, and that this situation cannot continue. Most administrators do NOT qualify for Social Security, so our pension is extremely important to us. The pension MUST be solvent. The TRB itself submitted legislation asking for full funding for the system! The Governor herself saw the need to address the under-funding of the TRB. She added 100 million dollars from this year's "surplus funds" to the TR Fund. Unfortunately the legislature took 35 Million from that allocation, and added to the education and municipal sector increasing the education allotment for the Governor's 2% allocation, and increased the overall allocation for education expenditures to a 3% level. Though we applaud the added increases to education, it only exacerbated the under funding of the TRF, and did not correct the CAP issue!

We supported many bills at the legislature. We supported bills that dealt with changes in the NCLB Law; helped the Vocational Technical Schools ; Universal Pre-School and Early Childhood Education and All Day K Programs; Evaluation of the BEST Program; After School Programming; Re-employment of Retired Administrators/ Teachers for a full year; Implementation of the Governors' Budget; ECS Issues and Special Education Excess Cost Sharing Grants; Indoor Air Quality; Increased Medical Coverage and Health Insurance Coverage for Retirees; Increased retiree subsidies to LEA's for medical coverage. (The \$ 110.00 current medical contribution from 1989 is now worth \$ 52.00.) We support for a study on Gifted and Talented Programs, and asked for a seat on the TRB. We supported an Early Retirement package which unfortunately fell on deaf ears, and supported a bill for Administrator Protections from False Accusations.

CFSA continued to voice concerns over the privatization of Charter and Magnet Schools, (of which there is a lot of political posturing), and spoke out against the 'Whistleblower Provision' dealing with special education issues.

CFSA continues to be part of the "Union Coalition", which represents 235,000 union members across the state, and is very interested in protecting Binding Arbitration, and getting rid of the power of the "Oversight Board" governing the Waterbury community.

I would like to thank our lobbyist Barry Williams for keeping me up to date on the MANY proposed legislation/bills filed at the Capitol. I would also like to



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.

thank the many local presidents who responded to my emails on what the impact of certain legislation would be on them. We contacted many presidents by phone to get specifics on certain bills, and how each bill would affect administrators at the building/district level. This process worked quite well.

Our Retirement Conference on March 10, 2005 was a great success. We had 76 participants who listened attentively to our presenters. I would like to thank CFSA Secretary, Ed Roman for coordinating the event. Timely seminars and conferences for CFSA members will be

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## VP's Corner ... Paul J. Rebot

Congratulations to our 2005 Administrator of the Year Paula Erickson from East Hartford. Paula a veteran and most deserving recipient has announced her retirement from school administration this year. Her Supt. Dr. Marion Martinez and her local President Richard Quinn spoke eloquently about Paula's dedication to the East Hartford community and her years of service to the administrators' union as an officer and active member of the EHEASU. Several of her fellow administrators were in attendance to acknowledge her award.

On Tuesday June 28, 2005 a workshop will be held at our Cromwell CFSA office for the 15 CFSA locals negotiating this 2005-2006 year. The workshop will be begin at 1 P.M. and end when locals are satisfied with their preliminary work on their contracts with their negotiators. Included with the materials will be new and stronger language for Agency Fee and Just Cause. Locals are asked to pre-register keeping attendees to two members per local.

This summer at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies, at the request of CFSA, our national, AFSA, will be sponsoring a Negotiations Workshop for school administrators. Connecticut will be sending four local members to this workshop. Their locals realize the

*Continued on Page 3 ...*

## President's Message ... continued from Page 1

scheduled in the future. If you have an idea for a conference that will benefit our members, please let us know.

**CFSA continues to deal with many personnel/local issues.** This year hardly a day went by that we didn't hear from local presidents about issues affecting their jobs, working conditions or seeking advice on issues that are impacting their work load. Tight budgets had a major effect on personnel matters in many communities CFSA dealt with certification issues, rifting, given advice on numerous grievance, early retirement and severance issues, and involuntary transfers, etc. As more communities get NEW Superintendents – many from outside the state- member locals soon get into "union issues" affecting the membership. If you have any questions or need guidance on an issue, call us. We are here for YOU. Remember-When in doubt, CALL the office.

On March 10, 2005, we held the **Annual Joint Meeting of the Administrator and Teacher Professional Standards Board.** We met at CREC in Hartford. Each group shared their Annual Reports, which are sent to the Governor, SBE Members, and the Commissioner of Education and Legislative Co-Chairs of the Education Committee. Both groups discussed the "Highly Qualified Teacher" requirements of the NCLB Law. The joint commissions reviewed the requirements, and a joint statement will be released on the matter. The HQT issues effects issues such as: certification (K-8: Middle and High School certification), school building scheduling, compliance, licensure, professional development, special education teaching status.

**NOTE: The old five year "Hartley Commission" recommendations** which lead to a Legislative Commission are being REVISITED. The shortage of school administrators is an ongoing/ serious concern for many communities. (The same problem exist in the Superintendent ranks.) We will be seeking ways to address administrative shortages. CFSA will be seeking your input on what things YOU think the state can do to encourage and enhance administrative recruitment.

**Indoor Air Quality Issues** continue to be of concern in many communities. CFSA sits on a Committee (The Connecticut School Indoor Environment Resource Team) that deals with air quality issues. We strongly support the "Tools for Schools Program", sponsored by the Ct. Department of Health and the EPA. We meet monthly and discuss school environmental issues. If your school district does not use the "Tools for Schools Program", you really should encourage your Superintendent to look into the program. If you and your district are interested in looking into the program, please call me at the office for details. An environmentally safe school should be priority one!

CFSA is also a **Board Member of the Ct. Coalition for Justice in Education Funding.**

The study on "**Education Adequacy and Equity in Connecticut**" was released June 1, 2005. It was a BOMB SHELL! A town by town projected cost analysis was posted in the report. Each Local President was emailed a copy of the report. The cost study report demonstrated that Ct. needs to spend almost 2 BILLION dollars more annually to meet the needs of students in Ct. The CCJEF committee hosted a Legislative Conference at the LOB (Legislative Office Building) in Hartford on April 11, 2005, which gave the criteria which was used to do the cost study. The target audiences for the day long event were city/town leaders, local boards of education, educators and advocacy communities. The report was presented to the Governor, Education Committee Chairs, and Committee members, SDE members, and Appropriations Chairpersons. CFSA is proud to be board members of this Coalition and in the forefront of this important initiative. The CCJEF will meet throughout the summer to determine the next course of action to insure greater funding for education in Ct.

**CFSA is involved with the Ct. Coalition for Public Education (of which I chair), and with CAPE- Citizen Alliance For Public Education. Both coalition meet nine times this year.**

**We also co-sponsored a pledge in support for Ct. Television Network-(Ct-N).**

## Constitutional Amendments:

In January 2005, the officers recommended 5 constitutional changes to the GEB. In March the GEB approved the recommended changes. At our State Convention held on May 19, 2005 one provision was passed and the other 4 ( 2-language -2 technical language changes) were put on hold until the October Presidents Meeting, when we will vote on the remaining amendments - once specific language considerations are worked out. The constitutional changes all deal with membership issues, and technical changes.

We would like to congratulate Mrs. Paula Erickson, Principal of the O'Connell Elementary School in East Hartford for being **CFSA's 2005 Administrator of the Year Award recipient.**

In early May, CABA and the Superintendents group (CAPSS) honored **Judge Simon Bernstein** who, 40 years ago, was responsible for Article 8, Section 1 of the Connecticut State Constitution, which provided for free public education for children in Ct. Judge Bernstein who is now 92 years old, was honored at the LOB in Hartford. Many legislators, friends and family members praised Judge Bernstein for his boldness and perseverance at incorporating the constitutional language. Without his work, Horton – V- Meskill, and Sheff –V- O'Neil would have had no legal standing in the courts!

As you can see this was a very productive and busy year for CFSA. As always we would like to thank you for your continued support.

## UPDATE from AFSA:

**The AFSA Leadership Conference in Boston was a tremendous success.**

1. The conference highlighted the BEST PRACTICES of eight administrators from all over the country. We were PROUD to see that our own Dr. James Thompson was a presenter, and receive an AFSA Award.

2. There was a PAC Luncheon and raffle which was well received. Our guest speaker was Ct. State Senator Gary LeBeau- D-3rd District. Senator LeBeau gave a practical –hands on look at PAC's and why they are important in the election process. He did a great job at the luncheon, and praised the work of CFSA in Ct.

3. AFSA also presented the "Distinguish Service/ Longevity Awards" for members who have served 15 and 20 or more years in their locals. All CFSA officers were honored for their years of service to the union.

4. As President of CFSA, I was extremely honored to have received AFSA's "Dr. Joe Greene National Organizing Award" for our organizing efforts in Ct.

It was an important professional conference and it was a great way to network with colleagues from all over the country. I strongly encourage local to attend these worthwhile conferences.

5. IMPORTANT: In July 2006 AFSA will hold its 11th Triennial Convention in Las Vegas. Each local should plan on attending this Convention next year. As information becomes available I will forward the information to you.

6. AFSA has moved to its new office. The new address is: AFSA, 1101 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. All telephone and fax numbers remain the same.

I wish all of you a healthy and safe summer. For administrators who are retiring this year- CONGRATULATIONS to you. For all other administrators rest up for the New Year. Before you know it ... the next school year will be here!

## VP's Corner ... continued from Page 1

importance of having their members trained in the art of negotiations. From **HPSA:** President Gerald Martin, Freeman Burr, and Jane Pertillar; **HESP:** Vice President Shelley Johnson; and members from **HSSSA.** The training is always intense but we expect that our members are up to the challenge and will distinguish themselves as negotiators to be reckoned with in the future.

It has been one busy but rewarding year at our State CFSA office. Meeting the needs of our local members has been a challenge at times but, the kind comments voiced by several members at the May Constitutional Convention makes our efforts worthwhile.

Have a good closing and a safe and rejuvenating summer.

# Blumenthal Stands Firm: State Will Challenge NCLB Mandates

State Attorney General Richard Blumenthal stands firm in his decision to challenge the Federal "No Child Left Behind Act". In an open discussion at the University of Connecticut's Law School campus in West Hartford, Blumenthal clearly stated his opposition to the rigidity, inflexibility, and unlawful monetary demands set forth in this act. A one size fits all attitude is simply not acceptable according to the Attorney General. "The law clearly demands that each State starts to spend monies on testing that is required by the law. These mandates are UNFUNDED and are a direct contradiction to the language of the law."

President Roch Girard met with Blumenthal and pledged CFSA's support in this battle. CFSA has provided data and information which clearly demonstrates the where the law falls short. Connecticut's school Administrators don't object to the principles or ideals of the law. We all strive to reach standards which propose to benefit our students. However, we do object to the prejudice masked in demands that hold districts accountable to reach standards that are unattainable. Simply, a child with limited cognitive ability cannot be held accountable to demonstrate academic growth that he or she may be unable to achieve. How can this be a factor in identifying a school as failing to meet adequate yearly progress? For the sake of all students ... Level the playing field!

The battle won't be easy. The Bush administration is already playing hardball by threatening to withhold federal monies earmarked for this State. Is it coincidental that a Sub Base may be closed or simply political tactics for not going along with the President's agenda? CFSA represents over 1200 school administrators in Connecticut. As an organization we are willing and able stand firm and assist the Attorney General in this fight to the very end. We will not let the Bush administration succeed in its attempt to punish and dismantle public education. Poverty in Urban America is also a real factor and school's cannot be held accountable for that!



*President Roch Girard meets with Attorney General Blumenthal supporting his suit against the Federal Government on the No Child Left Behind Act.*

## President's Dinner Meeting



*President of East Hartford, Richard Quinn with CFSA's Administrator of the Year Paula Erickson, CFSA Vice President Rebot, and CFSA President, Roch J. Girard.*

## AFSA Boston Conference



*AFSA President Baxter Atkinson and VP Dominic Sachetti of Boston congratulate AFSA Secretary Roch Girard on his receiving the Dr. Joe L. Greene AFSA Organizing Award.*

*AFSA President Baxter Atkinson and AFSA Secretary Roch Girard welcome State Senator Gary LeBeau, Democrat 3rd District as the "PAC Luncheon Speaker" at the AFSA Leadership Conference in Boston.*



*Dan Brouder of East Hartford and Canterbury President Cathy Ferguson discuss issues at the convention.*



*Howard Sheldon and Paul Johnson, President of Thomaston.*

## Honoring Simon Bernstein

*Judge Simon Bernstein, who was responsible for the constitutional language granting children in Connecticut free public education thanks the invited guests who attended a function in his honor at the LOB in Hartford.*



*President Girard, Vice President Rebot, Treasurer Dr. James Thompson, and Secretary Roman congratulate Paula Erickson on her award.*





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