

## **REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

**Pamela Bethel**

**Annual Meeting – April 5, 2006**

On behalf of the entire Board, welcome to the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Eastern Suffolk BOCES. Every year, we take this opportunity to share the accomplishments and ongoing efforts of our Agency.

As President of the Board, I am very pleased at the many ways we continue to serve Long Island's lifelong learners. Eastern Suffolk BOCES continues to fulfill its vision every year by providing educational services that transform lives.

Educational Services continues to develop programs and acquire resources to improve the educational outcomes of the student population of Eastern Suffolk County. Over 50% of BOCES Special Education students are integrated with their typically developing peers, both in BOCES facilities and in "included classes," located within eleven of our fifty-one component districts.

The Special Education department recently received a \$320,000 Contract Award from the New York State Education Department to fund support to districts opening new programs for children with autism spectrum disorders. This funding will also allow our Agency to provide training in Crisis Prevention Intervention to our fifty-one component school districts. Additionally, a \$12,000 legislative grant has funded the construction of a new athletic field at the Centereach Academic Center.

This year, Eastern Suffolk BOCES continued to expand our services to more students. Since the realignment of the department, enrollment in Career and Technical Education courses has been steadily increasing at about 10 to 15% over the past two years.

In accordance with the restructuring process, six Career and Technical Education programs are proposed for relocation by September 2006. By centralizing the location of single offering programs, we will provide greater access to East End districts.

The 2005-06 service-year introduced on-line registration for Adult Education courses. In the fall of 2005, approximately 20% of the registrations were conducted on-line. That percentage continues to increase as we process our spring registration.

The Department of Administrative Services has continued to assure equitable facilities for all BOCES students and staff.

The Operations & Maintenance administrative staff has worked closely with the building administrators to implement the recommendations made in the Comprehensive Facilities Needs and Improvement Plan that was completed last year.

Administrative Services is in the process of implementing an energy performance contract, which will bring about \$2,500,000 worth of needed repairs and renovations to our facilities without the outlay of any cash from the Agency. They are also looking at different proposals to make the career and technical schools more energy efficient and aesthetically pleasing.

The Energy Management Program continues to be very successful, with estimated savings of approximately \$625,000 this past year.

Educational Support Services serves our component districts by offering informative workshops about new programs and requirements. Printed materials created by Education Support Services are being reviewed by the New York State Education Department as a possible resource for future training. This is further evidence that our Agency is a model for others.

Education Support Services developed & implemented new policies and procedures to improve regional and cluster scoring. With a focus on test intake procedures, quality control guidelines, scoring leader feedback and systemizing data, these new procedures successfully scored over 35,000 Social Studies and ELA exams.

The Coaching Network has been successfully promoted within our component school districts. A new network listserv is in development to better share information among the Agency, our districts and our coaches.

As outlined in the Second Phase of Evaluation Assurance, the Department of Human Resources has effectively created and revised many documents and practices to increase Agency performance. Newly created forms have been placed in the Human Resources public folder for easy access by program staff.

Additionally, Human Resources successfully coordinated numerous opportunities for staff development and programs to recruit a more diverse workforce. Such programs include the Diversity Job Fair, new Administrative and Student Teacher Internship Programs, Quarterly New Employee Orientation Sessions and the Eastern Suffolk BOCES Conference Day.

The Agency is very proud that our Regional Certification Office has been recognized by the State Education Department as the most efficient in the State with an evaluation correctness rate of 98%.

The Office of Communications has increased Agency placement and recognition through more than 80 featured articles and news segments in local media, as well as a 50% increase in the number of visitors to the Eastern Suffolk BOCES website.

Internally, over 80 major service projects were produced for the Agency's diverse programs and sites. An electronic system for tracking and monitoring requests for

Graphics services became fully functional during the 2005-06 service-year to ensure on-time performance and quality output.

In February, the Office of Communications successfully trained individuals throughout the Agency as “Web Contacts,” who will provide the office with newsworthy information from their respective departments and facilities. These individuals also have access to update the Eastern Suffolk BOCES website, ensuring that more up-to-date information is available to all our stakeholders.

The Office of Research and Planning is busy providing data and informational resources to the Agency and its districts. They have worked with several departments this year to help them evaluate their services and have published various reports that have been posted on the Agency website and Intranet.

In a time when Long Island’s schools are anticipating decreases in federal funding, the Office of Research and Planning manages over 25 million dollars of grants and specially funded projects throughout the region. Several of our districts are working with Eastern Suffolk BOCES to find resources to support teaching and learning in their districts.

After a very successful Agency Mid-Point Review by the Middle States Association, the Office of Research and Planning is preparing for additional upcoming Mid-Point reviews of our educational services program sites, which will be evaluated through the fall of 2006.

The Division of Management Services continues to enhance the standard operating procedures throughout the Agency. Numerous additions and revisions have been made to governing documents, which have also been placed on the Agency network for easy access by staff.

The increased use of the Intranet, supported by employee training, has improved our ability to share documents and work collaboratively throughout the Agency.

In alignment with the mission of the Management Services Division, Eastern Suffolk BOCES provides leadership and support in the areas of school business management and school finance. In addition to our regular interaction with component districts, our administrators are working to educate state and county legislators and the public at large about the need for increased funding for Long Island's schools.

The Regional Information Center continually offers new technologies that improve the quality of educational programs within our component districts, including the establishment of SharePoint services and the expansion of eSchool data services.

Increased participation in statewide forums and projects has established the Eastern Suffolk BOCES Regional Information Center as a leader in educational technologies.

All of these accomplishments are just a few examples of the great success our Agency has experienced over the past year. While we continue to make strides in improving educational services, we find ourselves facing constraints that challenge the educational community.

One such hurdle is the unfair and inadequate equation that the state uses to distribute educational funding to our districts. The Board, administrators and staff of Eastern Suffolk BOCES have voiced our concerns to politicians on both the local and state level. We are working together with our elected officials to make sure Long Island receives the funding that we deserve to support our educational programs and services. While this has been a long battle, we will not waiver from our dedication to defending the best interests of Long Island's lifelong learners.

Keeping in mind the fiscal needs of our component districts and our region, this Agency has completed a budget that we believe will continue to offer the same, quality cost-effective services that our stakeholders have come to expect from Eastern Suffolk

BOCES. I am confident that this budget will allow us to build upon all of the success we have established within our Agency.