

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Pamela Bethel

Annual Meeting – April 5, 2005

Welcome to the 12th Annual Meeting of Eastern Suffolk BOCES. The purpose of this meeting is to share budget information for the upcoming year and review some of the outstanding accomplishments of the current year.

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

This year we have again improved the educational outcomes of BOCES students. The establishment of a comprehensive student services delivery continuum has made it clearer to all of Long Island the many opportunities Eastern Suffolk BOCES makes available to our regions' students.

The completion of Phase 1 of a brand new, computerized student management system will be in effect by the end of this year.

The parameters for the purchase of standardized instructional materials have been developed and aligned with the most current service profiles in order to prepare students for the Regents, RCTs or Alternate Assessment.

The transition plan of the retiring Co-Director of Special Education is in place to ensure a smooth succession of leadership. The structure of the Career, Technical and Adult Education services has been redefined and is being successfully implemented.

There is a clear protocol for staff development initiatives and an integration of increased Accreditation for Growth directed activities.

BOCES has assured equitable facilities for all its students and staff, setting target improvement objectives for all facilities. The agency has reviewed all of its owned facilities and built a comprehensive facility needs/continuous improvement plan, including a Custodial Standards Manual being produced for Building and Grounds staff. The open-house for the new Suffolk Aviation Center was packed this winter with inquiring parents and students. The current students and staff did an excellent job of identifying all the benefits of this state of the art service we provide to our region's students. Several families were eager to contact their districts about signing up. Former students spoke of how the aviation program helped them graduate high school with their career goals figured out and often ahead of their peers who were still struggling to choose a beginning career/higher-education path.

Other services to districts included hundreds of arts-in-education experiences, curriculum development projects, support from the school library system, regional professional development and student assistance services. We also offered expertise in integrating professional development to support inclusive educational programs.

The Department of Human Resources developed initiatives to target recruitment of a culturally diverse workforce and expanded agency-wide professional growth and staff development. More than 300 people attended the 2005 Career Fair sponsored by Eastern Suffolk BOCES. The department has assessed the quality of the agency's employee evaluation process and has begun to develop recommendations for an improved system.

Our small, but wonderful Communications Office, has made great strides in increasing the number of stakeholders that recognize Eastern Suffolk BOCES as a quality regional educational institution. Coordinated public information strategies and communication activities have put us positively in the news, on the WEB, on the radio and television, in the paper and in the hearts and minds of Long Island's community and beyond.

Eastern Suffolk BOCES, as an agency, and all its services that have been accredited by the Middle States Association, continue to evaluate their effectiveness using the AFG protocol. This involves annual reviews of our plans with regional stakeholder input, constant review of our instructional and administrative practices, and tracking our organizational progress.

To facilitate the resources available to our Long Island lifelong learners, over 27 million dollars of grants and specially funded projects are being managed and delivered through Eastern Suffolk BOCES. Some of the over 50 projects include making sure that Suffolk County's homeless students receive the educational services to which they are

entitled, helping struggling districts meet the needs of their students, building greater numbers of excellent, certified, bilingual and English as a second language teachers and other personnel and many other worthwhile endeavors.

We have enhanced our standard operating procedures throughout all of BOCES. In this climate of needed attention to detail and effective, transparent systems, we received a very successful audit review with only a few recommendations of places that needed attention, which were easily and readily improved. As we review and revise all our policies, procedures, regulations and forms, a system is being developed to make this information readily available to all staff within the agency.

The agency's billing business process model is being redesigned and implemented with the expectation of replacing the current system with a system that will provide strategic reporting capabilities for administrators as well as access to contract and billing information for component school districts.

Eastern Suffolk BOCES has been improving its office productivity and organization by increasingly using effective technology tools. A comprehensive plan for administrative technology is being developed with designs for effective implementation of relevant training for its use.

The role of the Regional Information Center (RIC) is being enhanced throughout the area. Our new RIC director is providing leadership and support to improve the efficiency of services that offer significant educational opportunities for the Eastern

Suffolk BOCES community. The RIC has established a plan for developing new and enhanced services, while also increasing the department's internal technical capacity.

This annual meeting is like an Eastern Suffolk BOCES family meeting. We share the good news and the bad news. With all the joys and fantastic work of this year, we have one unfortunate challenge ahead due to the State Cap on BOCES District Superintendents' salaries. Our wonderful District Superintendent, Mr. Gary Bixhorn, will be returning to his deputy superintendent position effective July 1, 2005. Because of the state's inability to remove the salary cap, we will be searching for a new district superintendent. However, Mr. Bixhorn's leadership will continue to help shape the direction that BOCES will travel as he returns to the position of deputy superintendent. We thank him for his vision and for the excellent leadership team that he has organized.

With the groundwork that Mr. Bixhorn has created, the agency is in an excellent position to continue its path toward the ongoing fulfillment of its mission for the Eastern Suffolk BOCES region. The budget we have built for the coming year is based on all of this year's successful work and where we need to go next.

I look forward to our continued work together.

Thank you.

