

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Pamela Bethel

Annual Meeting – April 11, 2007

On behalf of the entire Board, welcome to the 14th 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 brings hope, opportunity, innovation, accountability, and renewal to the region. We strive to fulfill our vision each year by providing ***educational services that transform lives.***

In the **Educational Services Division** we continue to work on improving student outcomes through data-driven decision making, high-quality staff development, and implementation of the Best Practices in the field. Eastern Suffolk BOCES has taken a leadership role in supporting educators and students by providing a variety of opportunities to participate in programs and activities that promote intercultural understanding among the diverse populations of Suffolk County.

This year, through Educational Support Services, more than 25 programs in diversity and anti-bias education have been presented to BOCES students at our high school programs, as well as additional offerings for our agency staff and component school districts. The department has also reached out to individuals and institutions to recruit a diverse group of professionals to serve as coaches and mentors in our leadership programs and district-based initiatives.

The **Special Education Department** developed an Annual Student Profile (A.S.P.) Goal Development process, in response to a need to align Eastern Suffolk BOCES goals and objectives with new IDEA and New York State regulations. The revised goals incorporated terminology that supports observable, measurable instruction and assessment. The deployment was an unqualified success, maintaining speed, accuracy and handling, at its peak, over 245 users at one time.

It has also been a busy year for the **Career, Technical, and Adult Education Department**. In an effort to continue to improve employability, we are raising the standards in *Special Career Education*, evaluating the academic components that are embedded in the various curriculums and making modifications to increase rigor. It is our goal to then be able to recommend academic credit for material covered by these classes. These enhancements will provide special education students an opportunity to attain graduation requirements while attending our programs.

We are continuously working on recertification of CTE Curriculums. In 2006, with the assistance of business leaders and academic teachers from our component districts, teachers reassessed and updated curricula for SED recertification. By the summer of 2007 it is expected that seven additional courses will be approved for academic credit by the State Educational Department.

In 2006, we started the first BOCES Barbering class in New York State. There will also be five new course offerings for the 2007-08 school year. They are: Fire Science/Emergency Medical Technician, Home Theatre, Security and Installation, Paralegal Studies, and Pre Engineering. Additionally, we began a Bilingual Intensive Support Services program for Limited English Proficient High School students.

Based on district requests we now have similar programs on opposite ends of our catchment area and more single offering courses are now centrally located.

As we continue to work with Institutions of Higher Learning to obtain Articulation Agreements, we are happy to say that we have increased the number of Articulation Agreements from 92 to 100+.

One reflection of program success is the performance of our students at different levels of Skills USA competitions. We were honored to have a Skills USA First Place National Winner in the Clinical Medical Assistant course.

Management Services continues to provide staff with opportunities for professional development, both within the division, and for various divisions/departments within the agency. The division reviews internal controls, systems, and processes to update in accordance with New York State laws and the Comptrollers' recommendations. This year, Management Services is assisting districts in developing functional consolidations in transportation, purchasing, and other financial areas, and is completing a two-year process to update all Board policies and administrative regulations as well.

The **Regional Information Center**, also know as "the RIC," has begun to offer web hosting and design services to several districts, as well as prototyping SharePoint sites for districts. Other network services have begun to be expanded to districts throughout the region. Internet 2, a private dedicated educational network that spans the globe and provides schools with access to resources that they cannot connect with over the commercial internet, will be installed at the RIC this June. School districts and BOCES instructional programs may begin subscribing to these services as early as July 1, 2007, once their network connections have been upgraded, to allow them access.

Off-site data retention and storage capabilities are being installed in the Regional Information Center to allow districts to store critical data off-site for contingency and disaster situations as early as July 1, 2007.

Safari Montage, an on-demand video delivery system that is fully aligned with NYS standards and performance indicators, and supports the creation of local content that can be delivered to subscribing school districts, has been installed in the RIC. It is being positioned to begin supporting school district needs, in conjunction with Professional Development training from Model Schools.

The RIC plays an increasingly vital role in the region as state reporting requirements and district demand for technical service continue to grow.

The Department of Administrative Services has collected and posted key information on the Intranet that will aid in planning activities and provide staff with general information about BOCES owned and leased facilities, floor plans, emergency management, electronic copies of facility leases, and lease financial terms.

A constituent Facilities Standards Committee evaluated BOCES facilities' standards to ensure that, as an agency, we continue to meet all regulatory requirements while assuring the health, safety and reasonable comfort of all occupants.

The Department of Human Resources continues to implement positive change within our organization and with our component school districts. As reflected in our Strategic Plan, a major focus this year is on the recruitment and retention for a culturally and ethnically diverse workforce. In this regard, Cultural Competence/Diversity workshops were offered to all agency employees during the November 2006 Superintendent's Conference Day. This is also incorporated in our New Employee Orientation program. This year, the Career Fair for Culturally and Ethnically Diverse Educators was the most successful yet. Over 575 candidates participated in a well-organized event. The Department of Human Resources will be chairing the Council on Prejudice Reduction Conference in the fall of 2007.

The agency is very proud that our Regional Certification Office continues to be 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 recognition through more than 180 featured articles and news segments in local media. This represents an approximate 50% increase in articles and news segments placed in external media compared to last year. Additionally, the agency website averages about 3,000 visits per day. Total website visits for the 2006-07 service year have increased by 42% compared to counts in 2005-06.

The office continues to establish an agency-wide image reflective of the mission, the talent, dedication, and diversity of the staff and students, and the range of programs available to youth and adult learners. This year, the office has produced more than 190 print media items, including brochures, posters, and course catalogs, communicating these objectives and goals.

Research continues to be a priority throughout the agency to ensure that programs and services meet the needs of students and staff. **The Research Office** has worked with agency departments to evaluate services and assess staff and student needs. The office also carries out a program of regional education and school district finance research for the agency, component school districts, and other Long Island and statewide stakeholders. Serving as a regional resource, the office helps stakeholders achieve their goals through sound programmatic recommendations, thorough analysis, and effective communication of findings.

The Office of Planning and Program Improvement has facilitated the Accreditation for Growth process for continued Middle States Association accreditation for the remaining seven educational services (instructional) sites. Their mid-point visit this past December went very well and we are awaiting the official Middle States report. We are also beginning to plan for the agency's next accreditation period for 2009-2016.

In a time of many state and federal unfunded educational mandates, Eastern Suffolk BOCES continues to manage almost 27 million dollars of grants and specially-funded projects throughout the region. With the support of the Office of Planning and Program Improvement, the Department of Business Services and all the special program leaders and administrators, we deliver over 57 specially-funded projects across the region and beyond.

More and more of our districts are seeing the importance of seeking special funds to support teaching and learning for their students and a network of regional and district grant administrators is being developed.

Eastern Suffolk BOCES is pleased to continue our practice of hosting several **State Education Department specially- funded programs**. We believe this benefits the agency as well as the region. These offerings include, the **Bilingual/ ESL Technical Assistance Center (BETAC)** which has coordinated a number of staff development and other events in support of the improvement and enhancement of educational services to, and instruction of, Limited English Proficient students / English Language Learners (LEP/ELLs).

A second funded program, the **Family Education Outreach Program**, has successfully met the challenge of integrating seven programs which provide supplemental educational services to families in Nassau and Suffolk Counties. These programs include Brentwood Even Start, Esperanza Migrant Homeless, Migrant Education, Mobile Outreach Parent Child-Home, Parent Child-Home, Promesa Migrant Homeless and the Summer Food Service.

The Special Education Training & Resource Center (SETRC) has provided leadership for the collaborative development of the VESID Regional Work Plan for 2006-07; coordinated the VESID-funded partners in a joint presentation to district special education directors and assistant superintendents on the State Performance Plan; created a Task Force to develop an appropriate assessment

protocol for ELL/LEP students; and created a learning community to discuss the implementation of a response-to-intervention model in elementary schools.

SETRC also partnered with Eastern Suffolk BOCES Educational Support Services Department as well as the Regional Information Center (RIC) to ensure that districts supported by SETRC services are able to participate in all appropriate professional development opportunities at no cost to the districts.

The Long Island Transition Coordination Site provided a variety of transition services to assist students with disabilities as they transition to adulthood.

The Long Island Regional School Support Center (LIRSSC) staff continues to assist districts with the development and implementation of the plans required by NCLB, IDEA and the New York State Education Department.

Professional development and technical assistance have been provided to schools selected by the New York State Education department to receive Reading First grants. Our staff has provided technical assistance on the new requirements from the VESID Office related to the implementation of the State Performance Plan, VESID identified districts and the transition from CSPD planning to the development of Quality Improvement Plans in a handful of key districts.

All of these accomplishments are just a few examples of the great successes our agency has experienced over the past year in partnership with our districts and numerous regional stakeholders. 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.

Thank you.