

Legislative Committee Members

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Role of Legislative Committee

- Review and analyze federal and state laws and legislation that impact the educational program and operations of the district
- Work with other associations and school boards to remain current on legislative issues that impact education, schools and district management
- If appropriate, lobby legislators and form strategic alliances to pursue our legislative goals
- Keep the community informed and engaged in advocating for the needs of the district

Purpose of Presentation

- What legislative issues affect our school district, including operations, finances, facilities and the way we deliver curriculum and instruction?
- What issues are currently being considered by legislators that may affect us now and in the future?
- How we can advocate for our district's needs?

Unfunded Mandates

- Something the school district is required to provide by law or regulation, has a cost attached, but there is no funding!
- Intention may be good, but added requirements are burdensome, often have nothing to do with educating kids, and have the potential to make our work inefficient in terms of time and cost.

Examples of Mandates

- Reporting: extensive, cumbersome, costly, inefficient reporting requirements; over 200 reports filed annually (*and does anyone really look!?*)
- Special Education: mandates that don't put kids first and don't consider educational goals; frequent contradictory mandates
- State Comptroller's Office Requirements: auditors
- Blood donations and cancer screening
- Wicks Law
- AEDs: maintenance, installation and training
- BMI: tracking for all students

Our Advocacy Work

- Urge legislators to consult with educators **BEFORE** making decisions that impact schools: evaluate costs, burden
- Advocate for changes that will cost the State nothing, save taxpayer dollars
- Streamline reporting requirements
- State Comptroller's Office
- Repeal the Wicks Law
- **NO NEW MANDATES WITHOUT REQUISITE FUNDING!**

District Cost Saving Practices

- District recognized for outstanding financial management and long-term planning
- Space created for in-house special education programs
- Fuel purchasing
- Energy consumption
- Bulk purchasing
- Aggressive bidding
- In-house facilities work
- Participation in healthcare provider consortium
- Participation in Sound Shore School Districts consortium
- Our district is doing its part to contain costs. Where is the State?

Cost to the District

- Mandates account for a large portion of our budget
- Costs beyond district control vs. costs within our control

Property Tax Reform

- Everyone wants property tax relief
- Any relief must take into account the impact on schools.
- Suozzi Commission on Property Tax Relief: Final report recommends capping the growth of property taxes; includes reform of state laws and mandates.
- Tax cap: limit the amount a school may increase its budget to 4% or 120% of CPI (cap is on the tax levy, not the tax rate)

Federal Funding

- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Promised funding?
- Often contrary to the best educational interests of kids

Board Advocacy

- Educate the community
- Collaborate with other School Boards
- Westchester Putnam School Boards Association
- NYSSBA
- Sound Shore Consortium
- Meet with Legislators
 - Senator Suzi Oppenheimer
 - Assemblyman Adam Bradley
 - Congresswoman Nita Lowey