



Executive Viewpoint

Kevin S. Casey, Executive Director

Several Important Issues; One Critical One

In the last edition of *News & Notes*, I wrote an article explaining the rationale of the SAANYS Board of Directors in declaring its opposition to a constitutional convention. I don't need to repeat those reasons here, but if you are interested, that article is accessible (along with other material relevant to the constitutional convention) by clicking on the constitutional convention banner that is scrolling on the home page of saanys.org. Among the various important things going on, the November 7 ballot question on the constitutional convention is on top of the list because it could fundamentally alter your rights in an adverse manner. We urge you, your family, friends, and neighbors to vote "NO" to this ballot question which will be on the back side of the ballot.

Please do not defer to others to determine the outcome of this question. We all have an equal voice, but only if we show up to be heard.

There continues to be a variety of regulatory issues bubbling, and which should be watched. Next Generation Learning Standards for ELA and math have been adopted, but it won't be until the spring of 2021 that the assessments will be aligned with the new standards. In the meantime, in each of 17-18, 18-19, and 19-20, there is expected to be professional development on the new standards. SED intends to help create a common foundation for Next Generation professional development to help achieve consistency in training that is likely to be offered by a variety of providers.

SED will soon be conducting forums around the state (some of which may

have occurred by the time you read this) on the 180 day school calendar and the adoption of Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL). SED is also organizing advisory groups on data privacy and student teaching requirements, and we will continue to report on all of the above.

In the category of most interesting current events are the proposed SUNY charter school teacher certification regulations and, again (like a bad penny) APPR. I'll take each in turn.

The charter school sub-committee of the SUNY Board of Trustees proposed that the charter schools for which SUNY granted charters be able to create their own, more easily attained, teacher certification requirements that would certify one to teach only in the SUNY granted charter schools. The applicable charter

schools complain that they have difficulty in recruiting and retaining teaching staff. It was quickly pointed out that fair compensation and working conditions could remedy that situation without compromising the quality of the teaching staff. The pushback against watered-down certification requirements has been substantial. SAANYS, in conjunction with our colleagues in New York City, Yonkers, and Buffalo, submitted a letter in opposition. Most members of the Educational Conference Board (ECB; including SAANYS) did likewise. Most interestingly, Board of Regents Chancellor Betty Rosa and SED Commissioner Elia issued a strong public statement in opposition of the proposed SUNY action, and the deans of several SUNY schools of education likewise publically opposed what the SUNY Charter Schools subcommittee has proposed. Other than the SUNY charter schools themselves, there appears to be no one else publically advocating for this, but who knows what private conversations are occurring. I suspect SUNY will do an about face or litigation will result. Stay tuned.

With respect to APPR, NYSUT recently announced that this coming legislative session (2018) it was going to seek to essentially have the evaluation statute withdrawn and have evaluations conducted only in accordance with what is locally negotiated. It is probably not a coincidence that this effort is being undertaken in an election year. Shortly after that announcement, Regents Chancellor Betty Rosa said that the Regents may extend the current teacher (and principal) evaluation moratorium because the existing expiration date of the moratorium (through the 19-20 school year) would create a "tight timeline" for new evaluation legislation, which would need to be done in advance of the moratorium expiration. There was no stated link whatsoever to NYSUT's announcement, but several commentators observed that a moratorium extension would make the evaluations less of a 2018 election issue, thus reducing the leverage of those seeking changes to it. Very interesting. APPR is the gift that just keeps giving. ■

Time to Adopt an Integrated VADIR/DASA/Discipline Management System!

Sponsor Opinion Piece by Scott B. Crowder, CEO, Educational Vistas, Inc.

In this ever-changing world of VADIR and DASA incident reporting, you must consider improving the methods and systems that your school(s) uses to remain compliant, while managing discipline and protecting students.

SED changes that went into effect on July 1 and the rebranding of VADIR/DASA to School Safety and the Educational Climate (SSEC), are just the first steps in the metamorphosis from the measurement of school violence to pro-

moting improved school climate while providing the social-emotional skills that affect every area of students' lives! That point is articulated on slide 5/62 on the SED "roll-out" PowerPoint from August at http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/10c789_d61dd8ccfdee492b9bdc606fa92e5049.pdf.

The piloting of the US DOE school climate surveys (valid and reliable) for students, instructional & non instructional staff, and parents by a small number of initial schools

provided SED with some base-line data and information. That pilot has now been expanded and will eventually lead to a School Climate Index (SCI) for all schools in the state. Add to this the recommendation that ALL schools create/provide for the anonymous reporting of safety/harassment/discrimination/bullying/risky behavior/other... issues for investigation and a need for a single management system has never been greater!

From the beginning of VADIR reporting in 2003-2004, our VADIRS™ now titled SafeSchoolsNY™ product has been the leading integrated software system for all aspects of required incident reporting, data collection, parental notification, data retention, and the in-process access to information required for you all to manage all discipline incidents within your schools. All Student Management Systems (SMS) by their very nature are student-based whereas SED reporting has always been incident-based. Therefore, the potential for the accidental over-reporting of incidents that involve multiple students is but one reason to adopt a dedicated program to efficiently

manage the process. Add to this the following major considerations:

1. Link to any SMS.
2. A customizable discipline module.
3. Single button SED report production.
4. Errorless IIR creation.
5. Unlimited correspondence letters with mail merge.
6. Anonymous threat reporting iWitnessNY™ included.
7. US DOE/NYSED school climate surveys included.
8. School safety surveys included.
9. Powerful reports and charts.
10. Email notifications to stakeholders.
11. SVI calculations.
12. Civil Rights report.
13. Enhanced BEDS reporting data.
14. Students with disabilities ISS/OSS tracking.
15. DASA incident investigation forms.

This system has been developed to provide you and your staff with the most powerful tool to efficiently manage all areas of discipline, school safety, and the improvement of school climate. Now more than ever, you should take a look at SafeSchoolsNY. ■

The statements and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily imply or reflect the opinion or philosophy of the School Administrators Association of New York State.

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Phone: 518-782-0600
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