

Leaders

A Newsletter for Florida School Board Members

Sue Hershey new FSBA president

Former teacher and current Martin County School Board member Sue Hershey is the new president of the Florida School Boards Association.

She, and the other new officers, were installed by former FSBA President Tom Greer, Osceola County School Board, during the association's annual Spring Conference in Tampa in mid-June.

The other new officers are: Jeanne Dozier, Lee County School Board, president-elect; Beverly Slough, St. Johns County School Board, vice president; Joy Bowen, Leon County School Board, treasurer; and Jack Lamb, Hillsborough County School Board, immediate past president.

Piggy-backing on Dr. Lamb's quality, equity, and diversity theme, Ms. Hershey told FSBA members that "we should encourage children and parents to share their culture with others. We need to be more sensitive...The future is now for us in this organization," she added.

"Today, not tomorrow, we must make sure every child has the tools he or she needs to succeed. We need to be able to reach that bottom 25%."

With new growth management legislation, school board members are now in control more than ever before. "You have been given the authority to provide for the children of future developments. You need to pay particular attention to your interlocal agreements."

She added: "We can't continue to build schools based on the money you get from the state and your two mill



FSBA's new officers for 2006-07 are, from left: Joy Bowen, Leon County, treasurer; Dr. Jack Lamb, Hillsborough County, immediate past president; Sue Hershey, Martin County, president; Beverly Slough, St. Johns County, vice president; Jeanne Dozier, Lee County, president-elect.

money," which is why it's so important that school boards work closely with cities and counties in the future.

"It really doesn't matter how we used to do it. What matters is how we are going to do it today," she emphasized.

Ms. Hershey has been a Martin County school board member for six years. Previously, she served five years as mayor and city commissioner in Stuart and 25 years as a teacher. She was appointed by Gov. Jeb Bush as the school board representative to serve on the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council. She is married to Stewart, a Martin County judge, and they have three children and four grandchildren.



President's Award

During FSBA's spring conference, former FSBA President Tom Greer, Osceola County, left, was chosen by outgoing President Jack Lamb, Hillsborough County, for the President's Award for Mr. Greer's contributions to FSBA over the past years.

In this edition. . .

- 2 New FADSS CEO named**
- 3 Legislators of the Year**
- 4 Looming insurance crisis**

Leadership Calling

Bill Montford new FADSS CEO

Leon County School Supt. Bill Montford has been named the new CEO for the Florida Association of District School Superintendents. He replaces Dr. David Mosrie, who resigned after seven years to take a position with Banc America Securities.

"Bill knows and understands the issues of big school districts as well as medium and small districts in Florida," said FADSS President Mike Lannon, St. Lucie County superintendent. "He will be able to represent our interests in Tallahassee well and he has the respect and confidence of all superintendents in Florida."

"I enjoy working with every school superintendent in Florida," Mr. Montford said. "FADSS has a strong staff in place to help school districts meet any challenge. I look forward to being in a statewide role in addressing the big issues that face public education over the next few years."

Some of these issues, according to FADSS, include class size funding, teacher performance pay rules and contracts, the Florida school accountability system's alignment with the federal accountability system, teacher recruitment and continued student enrollment growth.

Mr. Montford has served as FADSS President and was named its Superintendent of the Year in 2002. He was first elected Leon superintendent in 1996 and has been re-elected twice since then. Under his leadership, the voters of Leon County approved a sales tax for schools that was used to construct new schools and renovate existing ones. Student achievement levels in Leon are consistently among the highest in the state as measured through the Florida system of school accountability. Under the federal No Child Left Behind Act, Leon was one of just two school districts in Florida to be recognized for making adequate yearly progress (AYP) last year.

Dr. Mosrie joined FADSS in 1999 after a three year stint as DOE's Director of the Division of Public Schools. His new position with Banc of America Securities will be vice president for public finance.



Bill Montford

More legislative honors for Rep. Pickens



Volusia County School Board member Candace Lankford, former vice chair of FSBA's Legislative Committee, presents a legislator of the year award to Rep. Joe Pickens, R-Palatka, on behalf of the Central Florida Public School Boards Coalition. Rep. Pickens chaired the House Education Appropriations Committee this year. K-12 schools got one of their most generous funding increases in years following the 2006 legislative session. The award was presented during FSBA's Spring Conference in Tampa June 14-16.

Leaders • Page 2 • June-July 2006



OFFICERS

Sue Hershey, Stuart
President

Jeanne Dozier, Fort Myers
President-Elect

Beverly Slough, Switzerland
Vice President

Joy Bowen, Tallahassee
Treasurer

Dr. Jack Lamb, Tampa
Immediate Past President

STAFF

Dr. Wayne Blanton
Executive Director

Karen Denson
Director of Board Development

Dr. Max L Schmidt
FSLRS Executive Director

Mark McKinney
Director of Risk Management, FSBIT

Ruth Melton
Director of Legislative Relations

Jim Barnidge
Loss Prevention Coordinator

Linda Quick
Comptroller

Jan Norris
Executive Administrative Assistant

Patricia Peterson
Administrative Assistant for Board Development

Mary Jane Angelotti
Office Administrator, FSBIT

Florida School Boards Association
203 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32301
(850) 414-2578 or Suncom 994-2578
Fax (850) 414-2585 or Suncom 994-2585
E-mail: fsba@fsba.org

Editor
Andy Williams
Communications & Consulting
Tallahassee, Florida
(850) 894-2226
andyw313@earthlink.net

FSBA's 2006 Legislators of the Year announced

Coming on the heels of one of the best legislative years yet, FSBA has announced the recipients of its 2006 Legislator of the Year honors. The awards will be presented during the association's fall conference Nov. 28-Dec. 1 in Tampa, at an upcoming school board meeting in the recipient's district, or at another event of the recipient's choice.

This year's legislators of the year are: Sen. JD Alexander, R-Lake Wales, Education Appropriations chair; Sen. Jim King, R-Jacksonville, Education Appropriations vice chair; Sen. Evelyn Lynn, R-Ormond Beach, Education Committee chair; Rep. Mike Davis, R-Naples, Growth Management vice chair; Rep. Joe Negron, R-Stuart, Fiscal Committee chair; and Rep. Joe Pickens, R-Palatka, Education Appropriations chair.

The awards are presented to legislators "who have demonstrated outstanding commitment and service to public education during the past legislative session," said new FSBA President Sue Hershey, Martin County School Board.

"These legislators demonstrated superb leadership and integrity during the 2006 legislative session," added Wayne Blanton, FSBA executive director. "FSBA is proud to recognize their commitment and their advocacy for Florida's students and our public school system."

Sen. Alexander and Rep. Pickens oversaw the education budget that was one of the best ever for public schools. In addition, Rep. Negron, as chair of the House's Fiscal Council also helped insure generous K-12 funding.

Rep. Davis fought to secure avenues for school districts to provide housing for educational personnel. His HB 1363 was adopted by the Legislature and signed by Gov. Jeb Bush and allows school boards to identify surplus land that can be made available for construction of affordable housing.

Sen. King worked to secure voucher accountability legislation and restoration of co-teaching as a class size compliance tool. Co-teaching was included in the A++ bill that has been signed by Gov. Bush.



JD Alexander



Jim King



Evelyn Lynn



Mike Davis



Joe Negron



Joe Pickens

Sen. Lynn, as chair of the Senate Education Committee helped defeat the 65% solution which would have required school boards to allocate 65% of their operating funds to the

classroom. She also opposed a proposed constitutional amendment that would have placed vouchers in the constitution.

Committee chairs chosen

As one of her first actions, new FSBA President Sue Hershey, Martin County School Board, named her committee chairs and vice chairs for 2006-2007.

Advocacy: Judge Helms Jr., Gadsden County, chair; Kathryn Hensley, St. Lucie County, vice chair.

Board Development: Lorie Shekailo, Martin County, chair; Bobby Carter, Bradford County, vice chair.

Bylaws: Beverly Slough, St. Johns County, chair; Betty Burney, Duval County, vice chair.

Federal Relations Network Subcommittee: Andrea Messina, Charlotte County, chair; Patty Hightower, Escambia County, vice chair.

Finance: Joy Bowen, Leon County, chair; Isaac Simmons, Gadsden County, vice chair.

Legislative: Lee Swift, Charlotte County, chair; Beverly Gallagher, Broward County, vice chair.

Multicultural and Diversity: Mary Brown, Pinellas County, chair; Ana Rivas Logan, Miami-Dade County, vice chair.

Technology: Sheila Costigan, Leon County, chair; Dr. Debra Walker, Monroe County, vice chair.

Ad Hoc Committee, Growth Management: Tom Greer, Osceola County, chair; Bill Graham, Palm Beach County, vice chair.

From the Executive Director

By WAYNE BLANTON

The looming 'insurance crisis' for school districts

With eight storms in two years, it's no wonder school districts are facing an insurance crisis unlike any they've seen before.

School districts are paying more—in many cases a lot more—for less coverage. This is a major crisis that is affecting all school districts, not just those hurricane alley coastal counties. For example, Seminole County reports that it can only get \$25 million coverage at nearly twice the premium it paid a year ago. That would replace just one school.

In an informal meeting between school board members and superintendents during our spring conference in June in Tampa, we along with the Florida Association of District School Superintendents decided we should work on a solution to this problem.

Some of the issues facing districts include lack of coverage and a substantial reduction in windstorm limits coupled with equally substantial premium increases. And this doesn't include the increase in the surcharge for Citizens Property Insurance, the state-funded insurance company of last resort. This latest, possibly unbudgeted expense, simply adds to a school district's insurance woes. Let me also mention that this insurance crisis isn't affecting just school districts. Counties and cities are also feeling the heat.

This crisis makes the chief financial officer race more important than ever. It's the CFO that helps regulate insurance companies. There are currently three people in this race. The Democratic candidate is Tampa banker Alex Sink, wife of Bill McBride, who unsuccessfully tried to unseat Gov. Jeb Bush four years ago.

The Republican candidates are Rep. Randy Johnson, R-Celebration, and Senate President Tom Lee, R-Brandon, now

in his last year as senator. Both Sen. Lee and Ms. Sink spoke at our Spring conference.

Guess what their most-asked question was.

Ms. Sink told our members that the state requires

"a more focused voice to address insurance issues facing our state." Her financial background in banking, she added, is just the ticket the state needs. As the president of Bank of America for Florida, Ms. Sink said she managed more than \$40 billion in assets and supervised 9,000 employees.

In a speech to the Tiger Bay Club in Daytona Beach earlier this year, she said Florida should look for alternative solutions to its insurance problems rather than continuing to fund the Citizens Property Insurance, because it is rapidly becoming the largest insurer in Florida.

"We can do without the burgeoning bureaucracy of Citizens (Property Insurance)," Ms. Sink said. As one possible solution, she said Florida could set up a special wind fund to help private insurers pay for future disasters.

Sen. Lee said Florida needs to attract more investors to the state and warned against what he called "socializing insurance. That would bankrupt this state."

He added: "We need to create a regulatory structure and go out and attract private money to take this off the back of government. There are a lot of solutions that are politically expedient. I encourage you to listen carefully to these 'pay me later' schemes. That's the greatest threat to economic development in this state. We need to encourage private investment in insurance. I've talked to the lieutenant governor (Toni Jennings) about engaging a commission to talk about this problem."

He said if Florida can't attract those private investors to solve this problem "we're going to socialize this and if we do, you're going to see a Legislature with empty pockets."

I like the "pool" concept. It's my opinion that if we're paying all these premiums for less coverage, we'd be just as well off to put all this premium money into a common pool and, frankly, "go bare." This pool would be the first layer of coverage for our school districts. The catastrophic fund (Citizens) would follow with the second layer with FEMA picking up what's left.

I have no idea whether such a pool concept is feasible. But we can't sit by and do nothing. FSBA intends to meet with the current CFO, Tom Gallagher, this summer to see what immediate solutions are available. We're also looking at setting up a special crisis task force on insurance.

We have got to do something about this crisis. . .not tomorrow, not next year, but today.



WAYNE BLANTON

Upcoming Events

July 23-26

NSBA Southern Region
(Hosted by Alabama), Sandestin, FL

Sept. 7-9

FSBA Board of Directors Retreat
West Palm Beach

Nov. 28 - Dec. 1

FSBA Joint Fall Conference
Grand Hyatt Tampa Bay, Tampa



Dr. Blanton is executive director of the Florida School Boards Association.