

March 2009

Collaboratively Speaking

Say the Secret Word!

Growing up, I watched a television program entitled “You Bet Your Life.” The humorous quiz show, hosted by Groucho Marx, required contestants to answer a series of outlandish questions. If the contestants used a secret word as part of their responses they were entitled to bonus money delivered by a toy duck suspended from the ceiling.

If that scenario had been replayed on Wednesday evening this week at the Harvard Roundtable of Superintendents, the ducks and cash would have been flying because the secret word “Collaboratives” was on the lips of all present. Our guest, Commissioner Chester, shared with us his intentions for the about-to-be-released federal stimulus funds. The funds are intended to stabilize district funding and invest in capacity creation among our school districts. During the dialogue following his presentation, I asked the Commissioner if consideration had been given to encourage inter-district collaboration. I reminded him that we stand ready to partner with our member districts as outlined in our white paper. He affirmed that he viewed Collaboratives as part of the solution. Metaphorically speaking, that’s when the ducks would have dropped and the secret word “Collaborative” revealed. The conversation for the next 20-30 minutes enabled superintendents in attendance to extol the value of and contributions from Collaboratives to their districts over the years. In the discussion led by Don Beaudette from Norwell, Joe Casey from Melrose, Jim McCormick from MEC, and Tom Scott from MASS, as well as several others, the Commissioner received a primer with specific examples of the ways in which Collaboratives have and will continue to provide great value and capacity for the Commonwealth’s school districts and students. It was wonderful testimony and affirmation from district-level practitioners of your great work and service every day. You should feel greatly valued and acknowledged by the districts and superintendents across the Commonwealth. I know that I am proud to be associated with you. It is obvious to me that the seeds we have sown are taking root and are nurtured by many of our educational allies across the Commonwealth. Spring really has sprung!!

Coming Attractions

Legal Issues Seminar with Attorney Regina Tate, followed by lunch and a General Membership Meeting

Monday, April 13 at 9:00 a.m. at the South Shore Educational Collaborative

Annual Meeting

Monday, May 18 at 9:00 a.m. at The Education Cooperative