

General Membership Meeting
Minutes
Meeting October 14, 2004

The meeting was started at 1:05 PM by John Hilliard. John welcomed everyone to the “first unified meeting” of CIE, CBE, and Marketing Coordinators. John introduced Carol of Cittone Institute who welcomed the group and discussed scholarships offered by The Institute. Cindy Herbert of Cittone then spoke about the new “hands-on” classrooms at the institute and invited all to tour the new rooms.

John then presented his report. He discussed the new objective of having career counselors in school districts. The state of New Jersey is working with vocational and comprehensive high schools toward this objective and will be surveying school principals and guidance departments. Next John spoke about the National Association being in trouble, having to make cuts and possibly closing their building. Finally, the membership was requested to complete and return a survey containing questions concerning the need for a handbook of administrative guidelines for secondary cooperative education coordinators in New Jersey.

Lou Romanet spoke next and stated that the heads of the different organizations are coming together to run a new unified organization. He said that the constitution was passed at “Generation Next” in August and distributed copies of the constitution to all members present. Lou continued by saying that our organization is a paid-up, chartered organization. He stated that membership applications are due and the benefits that organization membership provides. Membership benefits include; a membership booklet, plaque, and the scholarship program. \$40,000 in scholarships were awarded last year according to Lou. He expressed the need for members to get involved, especially on the scholarship committee. Information about the association logo contest was distributed. The members present were informed that anyone interest in becoming a member and not present today can contact Lou via e-mail.

John spoke again about the need for people to go to the state meetings in Trenton. A question was raised regarding the placement of students in automotive related jobs. It was stated that students must be 18 years of age and only high schools with certified programs can place students in these positions. John said that State Representative Steven Sweeney filed a bill in the state senate that proposes the consolidation vocational and special services schools in Gloucester, Cumberland, and Salem Counties. He also suggested that if the automotive aspect is a problem, it can be brought up to the NJEA as a possible lobby issue.

John introduced Congressman Rob Andrews. Congressman Andrews began by saying that the world of Ozzie and Harriet is over. Students don’t go to high school for four years, graduate, then go on to four year colleges paid for by mom and dad. The typical post-secondary student is often a parent themselves. The median age of a post-secondary student today is 28.

Today's worker needs to be educated and re-educated to keep up with changing technology. They need to keep learning skills not needed years ago. The best way to learn, according to congressman Andrews is while you are working. He then made some suggestions as to what the government can do for us as educators. First, he said the government can get out of the way. Second, he said the government needs to adjust the financial aid system to real world needs assessment and redefine the definition of an independent student. He stated that debt based financial aid is no good. There is a need to make Pell Grants worth more and to make the financial aid system available for our age students. Congressman Andrews further stated that the government needs to change national priorities. He said that economic priorities are backwards. For every \$100 spent, \$30 of it is borrowed. That's 30% debt.

He posed the question; what can we do to promote vocational education? He suggested getting businesses involved with school boards, state representatives, freeholders, and federal legislators and promoting programs in the school district.

Congressman Andrews wants to see more funding for drivers education as well as a coupling of and increase in the minimum wage with a tax credit for businesses who hire co-op students.

Regarding the No Child Left Behind Law, he wants to redefine the term "highly qualified teacher" so that classroom experience counts as much as a degree, redefine the evaluation/assessment criteria for schools, and redefine funding.

He offered some suggestions on how to bring manufacturing back to the state. Prime contractors buy from U.S. manufacturers. Change the tax code so that it doesn't benefit companies that manufacture overseas. And offer a tax incentive for manufacturers who make their products in the U.S. make them exempt from corporate tax if they reinvest in the United States. Target efforts towards industries we can bring back to the U.S. Some industries, like the garment industry, can't be brought back.

Congressman Andrews said we should change the way we pay for public education in New Jersey by taking the reliance off property tax and put it on income tax.

He thanked the group for the opportunity to speak. The meeting was adjourned by John at 2:50PM