

# FASA Summit - April 27, 2010

**In Attendance:** (see list below)

Attendees to the Summit began arriving at Jefferson Senior High School in Tampa, Florida, as early as 10 AM. Some of the 55 participants had come from as far away as Santa Rosa and Okaloosa Counties located in the Northwest area of Florida's Pan Handle and from Dade County, the southernmost part of the state. From 11:30 to 12:00 Noon attendees were treated to an assortment of platters of fruits, cheeses, and vegetable trays and other refreshments. From 12 to 1:00 PM all in attendance were seated and were served a wonderful lunch prepared by the School's Culinary Arts teacher and his students. The meal included a tossed salad, a surf and turf plate of steak, shrimp, baked potato, and green beans. The meal was topped with a tasty desert of white chocolate mouse with pistachios.

Jim Warford, FASA's Executive director, introduced the following special guests: Dr. Earl Lennard, retired Superintendent of Hillsborough County Schools and now the Supervisor of Elections for Hillsborough; Dr. Jack Lamb, former President of FASA and Executive Director of HASA, now serving on the School Board of Hillsborough County; Tee Solomon, assistant principal at Hillsborough High School and president of HASA; Jean Leone, past president of FASA and now a retired administrator serving on HASA's Representative Board of Directors; Ester Twitchell, president-elect of the Florida Retired Educators Association (FREA), an organization with over 13,000 members, representing Larry Carmichael who could not attend the Summit; Tony Anderson, administrator of the Florida Pan Handle Consortium; Dan Valdez, Deputy Superintendent of the Hillsborough County Schools representing Superintendent MaryEllen Elia who was called to Tallahassee; and Chris Brown and David Allen, VALIC Regional Managers and Business Partner of FASA and HASA, who sponsored the Summit's luncheon. Eddie Ocasio, Regional Account Executive for Bryn-Alan/Lifetouch, a FASA and HASA business partner was also present and took pictures of the event.

John Miliziano, Hillsborough Association of School Administrators (HASA) Executive Director and President of the Tampa Bay Area Coalition (TBAC), distributed a brief survey, given to one person representing each of the 25 districts attending the Summit. A tabulation of the results of the survey revealed that with the help of the district administrators present, FASA could reach \*6,493 administrators throughout the state. With this amount of representation, FASA could accomplish more effective collaboration/communication/networking and exert even greater legislative influence within the state of Florida. The goal of the Summit is to empower Florida administrators' voices through collaboration and unity and to become a significant constituency group that will be respected and listened to by our legislators.

*(\*After the meeting, the above number was corrected to 8,086 administrators. Duval and Hillsborough administrators were not included in the first count.)*

Dr. Miliziano encouraged attendees to take a few minutes to look in the folder given out at the beginning of the Summit. The folder included information provided by the Tampa Bay Area Coalition (TBAC) and the Hillsborough Association of School Administrators (HASA) which may be useful in establishing a coalition (region), to make an existing district association stronger, or help a district establish a local administrators' association. Items included give examples showing how each association can grow. Dr. Miliziano talked about how local associations can

help support FASA in accomplishing its work in Tallahassee. Traditionally most administrators have remained politically un-involved. FASA and local associations must work together more effectively to make sure their voices are heard in Tallahassee, not as a Union, but as strong associations working under the direction and leadership of FASA. Dr. Miliziano encouraged membership in FASA. FASA dues have recently been lowered making membership in FASA more affordable. It is possible to pay FASA membership dues through internal accounts if the district allows this practice. Items included in the folder were:

- Tampa Bay Area Coalition (TBAC) Constitution and By-Laws
- TBAC Minutes of February 3, 2010
- TBAC Treasurer's Report
- FASA's 2010 Legislative Platform
- "It's Smart to belong!" (giving potential members reasons to join)
- "Business Partner Program" flyer
- "HASA Legal Defense Assistance Plan" flyer
- "HASA Membership Doesn't Cost – It Pays!"
- Descriptions of Political Action Committees "PACs and CCEs
- HASA Constitution and Bylaws

Also included in the folder were:

- FASA Summit Contact Sheet
- A map of Florida showing the 4 proposed (Coalition) regions, included names of participants, districts with associations, districts with executive directors, and districts with contact persons only.
- Information regarding HASA's website [www.hasaonline.com](http://www.hasaonline.com))

FASA handouts later given out in the meeting were:

- FASA Enrollment Form
- FASA Payroll Deduction Authorization for Administrator Association Dues
- List of Membership Benefits
- FASA Member Counts by District
- FASA 2010 Summer Leadership Conference flyer and registration form
- Dr. Larry Woods handout of legislators voting record for HB 5701 and SB 6

Dr. Miliziano discussed with participants the map showing the proposed 4 regions. He noted that this was to be used as a tool for discussion deciding if the distribution of the districts in the four regions was acceptable. If the grouping was acceptable, we would then have to decide who will take the leadership for each region. This person would be responsible to invite the districts in their region to an organizational meeting (see TBAC Constitution and Bylaws, minutes, treasurer's report). Dr. Miliziano noted that TBAC charges \$1 per association member to cover Coalition administrative costs.

Dr. Jack Lamb, Hillsborough County School Board member, and member of Florida Learning First Alliance, noted that the Alliance's sole platform is to get Legislators to read the Florida Constitution, which states that one of its paramount duties is to FUND public education. He said that collectively, Legislators will listen, and challenged all attendees to come up with an organizational structure to be "reckoned" with.

Dan Valdez, Deputy Superintendent for Hillsborough County schools was introduced. Mr. Valdez has been involved as a liaison in Tallahassee for many years. He stated his concerns with what is going on in Tallahassee. An example he used to describe legislators strategy was that they will first start by telling you that the FRS should be euthanized, and then when they only cut off the legs of FRS everybody will be happy. He fears that the FRS will be changed next year. He is very fearful of what is going to happen in Tallahassee in the next few years.

Dr. Miliziano opened the floor giving TBAC members the opportunity to share unsolicited comments regarding the advantages of establishing 3 additional regions similar to the TBAC. Some comments included:

- Peggy Johns (Pinellas), VP of TBAC, learned from Dr. Miliziano how important it is for an association to have an executive director, to be professionally organized, to build a network, to build a website, and have organized meetings to accomplish goals.
- Neriah Roberts (Polk), TBAC Treasurer, stated that the TBAC started 7 years ago and now includes 14 member associations. TBAC supports membership in FASA. He talked with Senator Les Miller who told him that the problem with public education is that we are fragmented with what we want. It would be better to pull together and accomplish our needs with one voice. By Collaborating within 4 regions, FASA can say that its position comes from 10,000+ administrative leaders. Power is in numbers. Florida could be the only state in the Nation which is organized. For those who do not have a strong local association, you must get organized. In establishing additional regions (Coalitions) we must have persons with commitment, dedication, who are passionate about education. He jokingly said, "this is why we give him (John Miliziano) \$100 per month for leading the TBAC."
- Bob Clark (Orange) gave an example of how FASA helped Orange County principals. Bob learned at one of the TBAC meetings that one percent of FRS administrators employees are eligible to receive a 2% factor for calculating their retirement pay instead of the usual 1.6% that everyone else gets. He noted that the only administrators in his district who were receiving the 2% factor were the superintendents and school board members. With this information in hand, the superintended recommended that all principals be given the 2% multiplier. This meant a \$10K raise in each principal's yearly retirement. We can help each other expand our knowledge and learn from one another.
- David Underhill (Manatee) wanted help with ideas on how to help students and schools. One of the things the TBAC did as a group was to develop a unified Legislative Agenda. All voted for two legislative priorities, class size amendment and high school graduation requirements. Not just retirement, not just administrators' benefits, but what we can do to help students and schools.
- Marjorie Ebersbach (Brevard) stated that TBAC members always get good information from Jim Warford (FASA), Connie Milito (Hillsborough lobbyist), Larry Carmichael

(FREA), and Juhan Mixon. Members receive good dialogue and data that they can use (ex. Salary comparison).

Dr. Miliziano was asked, "Can you talk about the struggles of bringing consensus among the members of the Coalition?" Dr. Miliziano stated that some things we can agree on and some we cannot. He stated that that the group operated with the notion that we would focus on the things that united us and minimize those issues that could divide us.

Dr. Miliziano noted that HASA is paying a consultant to acquire data on administrator salaries. This information will be shared with Coalition members online ([www.hasaonline.com](http://www.hasaonline.com)) when completed. Hillsborough has a \$100 million grant from the Gates Foundation which could help Hillsborough bring salaries in line.

Jim Warford (FASA) encouraged strong local associations and hoped that all would consider organizing regionally. The challenges are sometimes different in counties (size, urban/rural, etc.) He stressed the importance of organizing politically. He would like dialogue on structuring 4 regions. Consensus could be developed. The goal is for educators not to speak on every local and state issue.

Del Diaz (Miami-Dade) said that because of the attacks on public education, he feels that creating the regional idea is a great one. Senator Brady (Naples) said that there is no doubt that the FRS bills will be back next year. There is power in numbers ("proverbial squeaky wheel").

Diana Taub (Miami-Dade) supports the idea of getting back on board with FASA and establishing 4 regions.

Dr. Miliziano – As we build associations, it is important to have political action committees, PACs. There is a great advantage for associations who want to establish a PAC to be affiliated with the FASA-PAC because FASA does all the work of filing reports, etc., for a nominal fee. If local associations could have at least 20 or 30 Political Action Committees, much could be accomplished politically.

Larry Woods – This year FASA took the approach with legislators in the House and Senate that it was wrong for them to take away benefits from educators that were earned in past years. Jim and Juhan Mixon are convinced that next year they will have to use a different strategy which argues that educators deserve to be respected and have the necessary tools to educate our children.

Marjorie Ebersbach (Brevard) motioned that we should start with 4 regions. Terry Aunchman (Pasco) met with next year's Speaker of the House who agrees this concept would be influential and that the time to do this is now. Jim Warford had similar meetings with the next speaker, Weatherford (coordinated by Dell and Miliziano), who also reiterated that the time to launch this organizational initiative is now.

There was a consensus that 4 regions be organized and 4 persons were needed who would take charge of organizing the 4 regions. The following persons agreed to lead the 4 regions:

- Central Region - John Miliziano (Hillsborough)
- South Region – Del Diaz (Miami-Dade)
- Northeast Region – Alan Due (Duval)
- Panhandle Region – Tony Anderson (Consortium), David Sigurnjak (Santa Rosa), John Spolski (Okaloosa), and Philip Pinello (Hamilton). All four men agreed to work together. They will get together and decide on how to divide the responsibility for leading the region.

Jim Warford suggested that each region should have representation on FASA's Board. Jim said that this was a historic meeting. The conversation for this initiative has been going on for 4 years. Marie Wright, FASA President, is also very supportive of this initiative. An important thing FASA can do now is to make changes in the Constitution and help the 4 regions be recognized. This discussion will be continued at the FASA Summer Conference in July. Jim also suggested that at the Summer Conference we should organize for the Class Size Amendment political campaign. Jim is confident that FASA will follow Dr. Wright's and Jayne Ellspermann's (Marion) FASA President-elect lead.

Chris Brown, VALIC (sponsor) stated that he got chills watching what was happening, and he envisions great things being accomplished in the future. Chris also stated that VALIC will be willing to sponsor 4 key people who may need financial assistance to attend the FASA Summer Conference.

Dan Bonilla, Principal of Jefferson HS, was introduced and thanked for hosting the Summit at his school. Dan Bonilla noted that he reads FASA's newsletter religiously. He stressed that those present cannot stop what you are doing. He represents the silent majority, while FASA is the vocal majority. He thanked all for what each organization is doing.

**Dr. Miliziano summarized the decisions and commitments reached at the Summit:**

- The state will be divided into four regions
- Hardee and Desoto counties will be re-assigned to the South Florida (Miami/Dade) Region
- Marion county will be re-assigned to the Central Florida (TBAC) Region
- The four regions will be lead by:
  - Central Region - John Miliziano (Hillsborough)
  - South Region – Del Diaz (Miami-Dade)
  - Northeast East – Alan Due (Duval)
  - Panhandle – Tony Anderson (Consortium), David Sigurnjak (Santa Rosa), John Spolski (Okaloosa), and Philip Pinello (Hamilton).
- It will be recommended at the FASA Summer Conference that the proposal to give each region representation on FASA’s Board of directors be approved
- That as many local administrators should try to attend the FASA summer Conference.
- That at the Summer conference we should gear up for the campaign to pass the Class-size Amendment “Right Sizing the Class Size Amendment”
- Cathy Davis, HASA’s Web Master and secretary for the Summit will transcribe and publish the Summit’s minutes on HASA website. There will be a special page related to all information and forms related to the Summit. [www.hasaonline.com/hotmal.htm](http://www.hasaonline.com/hotmal.htm) Click on “HOT MAIL”

**ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION** (The following are general comments during the roundtable discussion)

- Loves the concept of strength in numbers.
- Great opportunity!
- Prepare notes and communicate getting back information and seeing other opinions. Lock arms on issues.
- Great to see FASA headed in a new direction with new power.
- Best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago, next best time is TODAY. TODAY is going to transform education in the State of Florida.
- Tree is already coming out of the ground through John Miliziano and Walter Pierce (also instrumental). Definitely see growth.

- Appreciate opportunity to be involved. GREAT DAY!
- Knowing all different districts can be heard is EMPOWERING. Looking forward to collaboration.
- Let's "KICK BUTTS" in Tallahassee.
- Thank you for handouts regarding voting issues. FASA will help get PAC set up. Little money from many pots will make a difference (CLOUT).
- When a coalition is just beginning, don't inflate your expectations, but keep at it and eventually it will come to this.
- When making this 450 mile drive, I thought "this better be good". "IT IS GOOD".
- Administrators will start to take control of our fate.
- Lots of enthusiasm...Let's keep it going.
- Indian River and neighboring counties will support Miami-Dade.
- A lot of Florida issues are also Federal issues. This initiative will put Florida ahead of other states.
- WONDERFUL, great to see FASA grow. Strong voice in Tallahassee...Grass Roots.
- As Larry the Cable guy would say "JUST GETER DONE".
- Happy that there will be 4 armies to fight.
- The distance from Key West to Pensacola is the same as the distance across 1/3 of the USA. This is an opportunity to pull the State together.

Dr. Miliziano thanked Juhan Mixon and Larry Carmichael for remaining in Tallahassee to work for us and look after our best interest. We all truly believe that educators with the right resources can solve Florida's education problems. People in this room are empowered to make a difference. Dr. Miliziano wanted to reiterate a special thanks to Jim Warford and his staff for all the support that they provided in planning the Summit. A special thanks also to the Summit co-sponsors Chris Brown of VALIC and the Tampa Bay Area Coalition for contributing \$1,000 each to cover the cost of Lunch and secretarial work and supplies. Also thanks to all of you who made the trip to Tampa and the commitment you have made to this initiative.

Meeting adjourned at 3:10 pm.

## In Attendance

<b>District</b>	<b>Attendee</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Attendee</b>
Brevard	Marjorie Ebersbach	Miami-Dade	Del Diaz
Brevard	Kenneth Winn	Miami-Dade	Diana Taub
Broward	Patrick Sauer	Okaloosa	Bob Jones
Broward	Stephen Frazier	Okaloosa	John Spolski
Broward	Marie Wright	Orange	Michael Armbruster
Broward	Maria Tracy	Orange	Robert Clark
Broward	Dale Spear	Palm Beach	Ben Martin
Citrus	Bill Nelson	Palm Beach	Mario Crocetti
Clay	Sandra Mead	Pasco	Terry Aunchman
Duval	Alan Due	Pinellas	Dennis Griffin
Glades	Beth Barfield	Pinellas	Peggy Johns
Hamilton	Philip Pinello	Polk	Neriah Roberts
Hernando	Bryan Blavatt	Santa Rosa	David Sigurnjak
Hernando	Barbara Kidder	Sarasota	Pat Black
Highlands	Laura Waldon	Sarasota	Leona Collesano
Hillsborough	Tempress Solomon	Seminole	Richard Wells
Hillsborough	John Miliziano	Washington	James Lee
Hillsborough	Ken Allen	Panhandle Consortium	Tony Anderson
Hillsborough	Dan Valdez	Leon - FASA	Jim Warford
Indian River	Eric Seymour	Leon - FASA	Cindy Casavant
Lake	David Cunningham	Leon – FASA	Tricia Buchanan
Lee	Ed Stickles	FREA	Esther Twitchell
Manatee	Randy Petrilla	Broward	David Allen
Manatee	David Underhill	Hillsborough	Chris Brown
Marion	Jayne Ellspermann	Hillsborough	Cathy Davis
Martin	Tracey Miller	Hillsborough	Earl Lennard
Martin	Lawrence Green	Hillsborough	Jack Lamb
		Hillsborough	Eddie Ocasio