

JOURNAL

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
JUSTAN RICE
100 DAY REPORT**

**DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS
ASBA ON THE ROAD**

**GENERATIVE AI
ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS
AND OPPORTUNITIES**

**ASBA ROLLS OUT
NEW SERVICES IN 2025**

EDUCATE. ADVOCATE. ELEVATE.

ASBA JOURNAL

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Officers

- President** Tadeo De La Hoya, Gadsden USD
President Elect Mitra Khazai, Madison ESD
Treasurer Wendy Effing, Flowing Wells USD
Secretary Armando Montero, Tempe UHSD
Past President Desiree Fowler, Page USD

County Directors & Caucus Leaders

- Apache** Daisy Slim, Sanders USD
Cochise Nelson Daley, St. David USD
Coconino Jimelia Talasyousiea, Grand Canyon USD
Pima John Sparks, Sahuarita USD
Gila Katy Taylor, Payson USD
Graham Kelly Baker, Morenci USD
La Paz Carolyn Freedman, Bicentennial USD
Maricopa Melissa Ewing, Peoria USD
Navajo Jeremy Curtis, N.A.T.I.V.E
Mohave Sarah Hall, Wave JTED
Pima Chris King, Vail USD
Pinal Roger Biede, Florence USD
Santa Cruz Robert Rojas, Nogales USD
Yavapai Andy Fraher, Prescott USD
Yuma Juan Castillo, Somerton USD
Black Alliance President Rachel Barnett, Littleton ESD
Hispanic-Native American Indian Caucus
President Cesar Lopez, Nogales USD
Vice President Marcarlo Roanhorse, Ganado USD
Rural Alliance Chair Monica Timberlake, Quartzsite USD

OUR VISION

The best schools in every Arizona community.

OUR MISSION

We cultivate excellence in locally-governed school districts.

OUR KEY FUNCTIONS

- Provide training and leadership development.
- Respresent and advocate for the diverse needs of our membership.
- Provide products and services that support district success.

OUR CORE BELIEFS

- The basic life needs of children must be met for them to succeed.
- Meeting the unique educational needs of all students must be the foundation of our school systems.
- The governance of publicly – funded schools must lie with locally – elected and publicly accountable governing boards.
- The responsibility of student success is shared by students, parents, governing board, district staff and the community.
- Public education funding must be broad-based, stable and at a level that assures all students are successful.
- Knowledgeable and professionally trained governing board members are fundamental for ensuring student success.
- Closing the opportunity and achievement gap is a moral and economic imperative that must be addressed to ensure all Arizona’s students are successful.
- Systematic inequities must be removed so every student achieves their fullest potential.



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FINDING PURPOSE IN SERVICE

Tadeo De La Hoya



A message from ASBA President Tadeo De La Hoya

Growing up with a Mexican mother, I quickly learned one undeniable truth: they always think they're right. And honestly, they usually are. My mother, who was not only a single mom but also a cancer survivor, would often sit me and my brothers down and say, "Tadeo, I'm going to give you a consejo." Now, consejo means advice in Spanish. But what she really meant when she said, "You can take it or leave it," was *you better take it*.



One of the best *consejos* she gave me—and one I still value and follow to this day—is this: "Whatever you do in life, don't get lost in how much money you make or how much attention you gain. Focus on what gives you purpose. That's the feeling you want to wake up with every single day. That is what success feels like." She shared this wisdom because she saw how many people never find their purpose and spend their entire lives chasing something they can't define.

That *consejo* has guided my life, and it's brought me here, to this moment, serving in a role where **purpose is at the heart of everything we do**. Being a school board member for 16 years has shown me that our work is about so much more than policies and decisions—it's about helping children discover their own sense of purpose, their own potential, and their own path forward.

Becoming president of ASBA is an incredible honor. This organization is more than just an association; **it's a family, familia**. And as I've said before, we are a family of school board leaders, representing every corner of Arizona—from rural communities to urban districts, from small schools to large systems. What unites us is our shared commitment to serving students, supporting schools and shaping brighter futures for every community.

As I take on this role, I carry my mother's consejo with me. This work isn't about titles or recognition; it's about waking up every day with the knowledge that what we do **makes a difference**. Together, we have the power to ensure that every child in Arizona has the opportunity to find their purpose—just as my mother encouraged me to find mine.

To every school board member, I want to say this: **you are not alone in this work**. We are strongest when we come together, learn from one another and lift each other up. My hope is that in the year ahead, we deepen our connections, grow as leaders and continue to inspire purpose in the students we serve.



Thank you for the trust you've placed in me and for your unwavering dedication to the students of Arizona. It's a privilege to lead alongside each of you, and I look forward to all that we will accomplish together as a family of school board leaders.

Tadeo De La Hoya

**President
Arizona School Boards Association**

207
Member Districts
1,100+
Board Members



District Location



7.0%
Urban



15.9%
Suburban



27.4%
Rural



49.7%
Remote

Self-Reported

Membership By District Size

Large

15
Member Districts
7
% of Membership
49
% AZ Students
Represented



Medium

32
Member Districts
15.9
% of Membership
32
% AZ Students
Represented



Small

56
Member Districts
27.4
% of Membership
16
% AZ Students
Represented



Under 1,000

104
Member Districts
49.7
% of Membership
3
% AZ Students
Represented



MEET THE ASBA TEAM

HERE TO GUIDE YOU TO EXCELLENCE

EXECUTIVE



EDUCATE. ADVOCATE. ELEVATE.



Executive Director
jrice@azsba.org



Director of Executive Support and
Liaison to the ASBA BOD
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BUSINESS & CONFERENCE SERVICES



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Conference Services
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Receivable Coordinator
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Policy Technician
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Board Support and Field
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jrice@azsba.org



Governmental
Relations Associate
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Governmental
Relations Coordinator
grazo@azsba.org

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE:

MOVING FORWARD WITH ACCOUNTABILITY, COLLABORATION, AND TRANSPARENCY



EDUCATE. ADVOCATE. ELEVATE.

"Through these discussions, one theme has remained clear: the strength of ASBA lies within its members."

- Justan Rice

Dear ASBA Members,

As I reflect on my time as **executive director of ASBA**, I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to meet with so many of you—**school board members, superintendents and district leaders**—across Arizona. Since stepping into this role, I have made it a priority to visit school districts, attend board meetings and engage in meaningful conversations about the challenges, successes and priorities shaping public education in our state.

Through these discussions, one theme has remained clear: **the strength of ASBA lies in its members**. Whether in rural communities or urban districts, Arizona's school board members are deeply committed to ensuring that all students receive a high-quality education. My goal has been to listen, learn and reaffirm **the value of ASBA membership**—how we advocate, support and provide the necessary resources to strengthen school board governance.

ACT: Accountability, collaboration, and transparency

In my first months as executive director, I introduced "**ACT**"—**Accountability, Collaboration, and Transparency**—as the foundation of my commitment to ASBA members. These principles guide every decision we make, ensuring that ASBA remains a trusted, responsive, and effective partner for school boards across Arizona. **Accountability** means delivering on our promises and measuring our impact. **Collaboration** is built through authentic connection and a commitment to high standards. **Transparency** ensures open communication and engagement with our members. Together, these values strengthen ASBA's ability to serve and support you.



Trust rebuilt, momentum moving forward

One of the most rewarding aspects of these visits has been witnessing the renewed confidence in ASBA’s role as a trusted partner. The 2025 annual ASBA survey saw a record 248 participants, including, for the first time, feedback from community stakeholders.

I’m thrilled to share that ASBA’s overall perception rating increased significantly to 4.1 this year, up from 3.3 in 2024 and 2023. This upward shift highlights the growing trust in ASBA’s role as an essential resource for Arizona’s school board members and districts.

Looking ahead: Strengthening ASBA’s Impact

As we move forward, ASBA is focused on key initiatives to better serve you:

- **Expanding regional trainings** to bring professional development opportunities closer to you, making it easier for board members to participate in meaningful learning experiences.
- **Exploring the role of school boards in emerging trends**, including the impact of artificial intelligence in education, to ensure you are equipped with the knowledge and tools to lead in an ever-evolving landscape.
- **Collaborating with the ASBA board of directors** to develop a new **strategic plan** that will shape ASBA’s direction and ensure we continue to meet the evolving needs of Arizona’s school boards.
- **Strengthening community engagement** to reinforce the connection between school boards and the families, educators, and students they serve.
- **Advocating at the state level for the passage of Prop 123** and continued support for **public education funding**, ensuring that Arizona schools receive the resources they need to thrive.



Let’s Connect: ASBA membership matters

I want every district to feel supported and connected to the resources ASBA offers. If your board would like to schedule a presentation or a meeting to discuss the value of ASBA membership, I’d be happy to speak with you directly. My goal is to ensure that every board understands the full scope of services and advocacy ASBA provides to help districts govern effectively.

Thank you for your continued dedication to Arizona’s students and schools. I look forward to connecting with more of you in the months ahead and working together to elevate public education in our state.

Sincerely,

Justan Rice

Executive Director
Arizona School Boards Association

JUSTAN RICE

100 DAY REPORT



In these 100 days, we’ve achieved some exciting milestones together:

Leadership development, member services and board support provided numerous trainings across the state, focusing on topics like board self-evaluations, board roles and responsibilities, communications protocols and how to run effective meetings.

This also included facilitating a **New Board Member Orientation** for newly elected board members both in person and virtually via Zoom.

Policy services accomplished robust work, completing six in-depth policy reviews for districts statewide. The team also launched the new **Policy Listserv**, a dedicated space for Super Users to share insights and questions.

Additionally, Policy Services introduced a customizable, compliance-focused **employee handbook resource** aligned to our model manual and hosted **PolicyBridge Super User Regional Trainings** across Arizona.

ASBA also made reconnecting with past presidents a priority, implementing personalized outreach and recognition that has led to increased event participation and overwhelmingly positive feedback.

We have developed ASBA’s new interactive, accessible website for launch. This website is designed to better serve members by making it easier to find resources, connect with peers and stay informed.

Our team has worked hard to develop new tools for 2025, including Office Hours to get your questions answered in real-time and an upgraded ASBA PolicyBridge platform featuring integration with agenda/meeting software.

MEET ASBA'S 2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DEDICATED TO SERVING YOU WITH VISION AND COMMITMENT



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

ASBA is excited to introduce this year's Board of Directors to members. The board includes the five officers of the Executive Committee, 17 County Directors, including two for Maricopa and Pima counties due to their larger populations and the presidents of the Hispanic/Native American Indian Caucus and Black Alliance.

School board delegates elected the secretary, treasurer and president-elect to the Executive Committee of the ASBA Board of Directors at the ASBA Annual Business Meeting on Thursday, Dec. 19, 2024, during the ASBA-ASA Annual Conference. Each officer serves for a one-year term. All individuals who applied were moved forward by the nominating committee and included in the ASBA Voter Guide. County Directors were elected during county meetings held from September through October of last year.

Meet our County Directors and Alliance/Caucus leaders on the next page!



President
GADSDEN ESD



President-Elect
MADISON ESD



Treasurer
FLOWING WELLS USD



Secretary
TEMPE UHSD



**Immediate
Past-President**
PAGE USD



ASBA 2025 Board of Directors Executive Committee members (from left to right) Immediate Past-President Desiree Fowler, Secretary Armando Montero, President Tadeo De La Hoya, President-Elect Mitra Khazai, Treasurer Wendy Effing

2025 COUNTY DIRECTORS



Daisy Slim

Apache
SANDERS USD



Nelson Daley

Cochise
ST. DAVID



Jimelia Talasyousiea

Coconino
GRAND CANYON USD



Katy Taylor

Gila
PAYSON USD



Mike DeLaO

Graham
SAFFORD USD



Kelly Baker

Greenlee
MORENCI USD



Melissa Ewing

Maricopa
PEORIA USD



To be annouced soon

Maricopa
N/A



Carolyn Freedman

La Paz
BICENTENNIAL UHSD



Sarah Hall

Mohave
WAVE JTED



Jeremy Curtis

Navajo
N.A.T.I.V.E DISTRICT



Chris King

Pima
VAIL USD



John Sparks

Pima
SAHUARITA USD



Roger Biede

Pinal
FLORENCE USD



Robert Rojas

Santa Cruz
NOGALES USD



Andy Fraher

Yavapai
PRESCOTT USD



Juan Castillo

Yuma
SOMERTON ESD

2025 ALLIANCE AND CAUCUS LEADERS



Rachel Barnett

President
Black Alliance
LITTLETON ESD



Cesar Lopez

President
HNAIC
NOGALES USD



Marcarlo Roanhorse

Vice President
HNAIC
GANADO USD



Get Involved to Improve EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUR STUDENTS



Join our ASBA Black Alliance, Rural Alliance and Hispanic-Native American Indian Caucus

Membership
is Free

Take part in state-level dialogue and action improving the academic achievement of the students you serve. Membership in the Alliances and Caucus is open and free-of-charge to all school board members interested in doing more to meet and address the specific educational needs of students of color and students in rural communities.

Black Alliance

The Black Alliance focuses on the school board's role in improving opportunities and outcomes for Black students through activities that:

- Enhance understanding of equity in education.
- Improve service delivery to ASBA members around equity in education.
- Improve recruitment of leaders who reflect the demographics of their communities.
- Increase member access to public education allies for underrepresented students.
- Increase cultural and social competence among public education leaders and partners.

Rural Alliance

The purpose of the Rural Alliance is to strategically enhance the work of ASBA and its member boards in cultivating excellence in locally governed rural and remote school districts, with a focus on:

- Networking opportunities to encourage positive, effective relationships and collaborative efforts among leaders of rural and remote school districts.
- Ensuring representation by rural and remote leaders within the governance of ASBA.
- Collective and strategic advocacy and member education to improve opportunities and outcomes for students in rural Arizona.

Hispanic-Native American Indian Caucus

The purpose of the HNAIC is to promote:

- Quality education for all students, focusing on the needs of Hispanic and Native American students.
- Positive relationships among Hispanic and Native American school boards, members of their communities, political leaders and ASBA.
- Legislation to improve educational opportunities for Hispanic, Native American and other students of color in public schools.
- Positive representation of Hispanic and Native American board members in ASBA.

Membership is free and open to any individual, regardless of their race, ethnicity, culture or origin, with a sincere desire to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for students in Arizona.

Membership is comprised primarily of school board members; however, superintendents, district staff, community and business allies may also join.



Lead with Insight: ASBA'S 2024 SALARY & BENEFIT SURVEY AWAITS



Why Participate?

Join the 2024 ASBA Teacher and Administrator Salary and Benefit Survey and gain access to exclusive data that enhances decision-making for salaries and benefits. Here's why your participation is invaluable:

1 Comprehensive Surveys for Informed Decisions

• Teacher and Administrator Survey:

Includes data on teachers, principals, assistant principals, district-level administrators, and governing board administrative professionals.

• Superintendent Survey: Focuses specifically on superintendent compensation.

2 Key Benefits of Participation

• Comparative Data: Gain insights into peer districts' compensation packages while maintaining confidentiality.

• Enhanced Decision-Making: Use reliable data to formulate equitable and competitive compensation strategies.

• Exclusive Access: Receive a full data set in Excel format if your district completes the teacher-administrator survey.

3 Exclusive Member Advantages

• Summary Results: All ASBA members receive a summary of the survey results.

- **Benchmarking:** Continuously evaluate salary and incentive levels to minimize turnover and boost employee morale.
- **Current Data:** Stay ahead with annually updated information that reflects the latest economic and employment trends.

4 Simplified Participation

This year, we've streamlined the process by removing questions that request basic district data, which we will obtain directly from A.D.E. reports. All data is self-reported by school districts using an online tool provided by ASBA, ensuring ease of use.

A full report will be released every fall, providing comprehensive insights to help you make informed decisions.

5 Invest in Your District's Future

Consistent use of salary surveys helps form a solid foundation for compensation plans that are fair and competitive. Survey data provides a robust basis for discussions with senior management and the board, ensuring defensible and strategic decision-making.

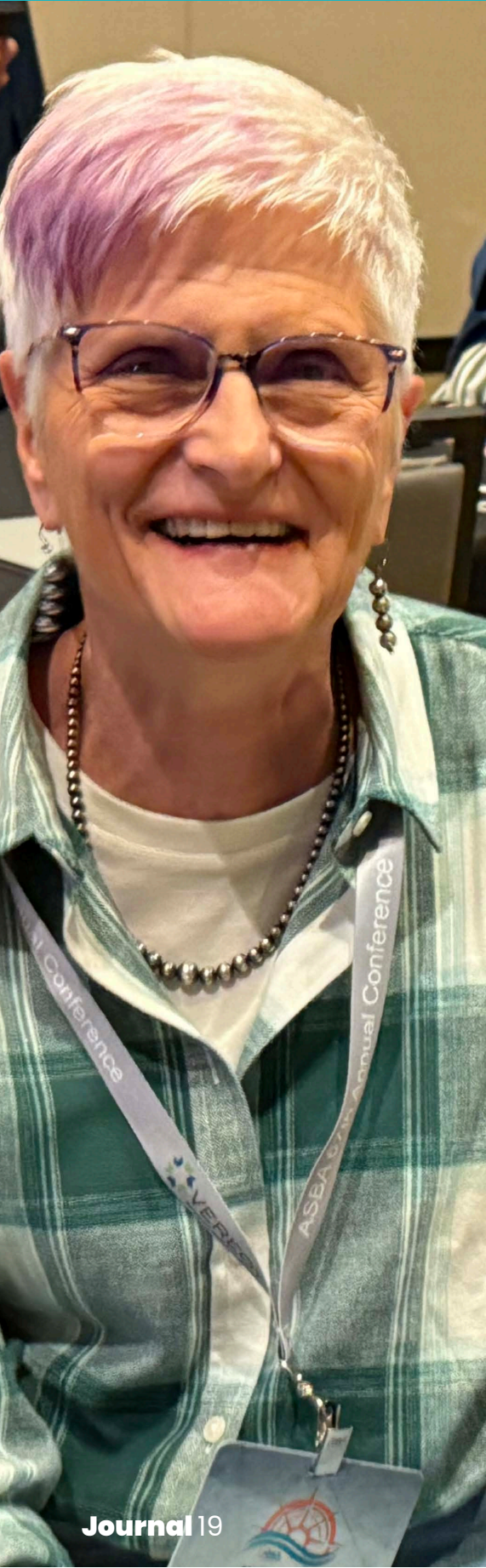
To become a member, go to:

azsba.org/about



For the code to view the 2024 survey, please contact **Ben Adams**, Membership Services Coordinator at badams@azsba.org or **602-254-1100**.

*Participate Today
and Drive Your
District Forward!*



ASBA's annual survey reflects record growth and member confidence

At ASBA, we are committed to listening, learning and evolving to better serve our members and the communities they represent. This year's 2025 annual ASBA survey set a new record with **248 participants**, including—for the first time—input from community stakeholders. Your voices matter, and these results demonstrate the growing trust and engagement among Arizona's school board leaders.

We are thrilled to share that ASBA's overall perception rating increased significantly to 4.1 from 3.3, reflecting heightened confidence in the association's impact and effectiveness. This upward trend highlights the collective progress we are making together.

Key takeaways: A positive shift in member perception

- Stronger confidence in ASBA's role
ASBA's overall perception rating jumped from 3.3 in both 2023 and 2024 to 4.1 in 2025, underscoring increased trust in the association's leadership and advocacy.
- Growing satisfaction with membership benefits
The "strongly agree" category rose by 12.29% from 2024 to 2025, while neutral and negative responses dropped, showing stronger appreciation for ASBA's services and support.
- Improved trust in ASBA's ability to address challenges
Confidence in ASBA's ability to support school boards jumped by 18.54% in the "strongly agree" category, with a notable decline in neutral and negative responses.
- Engagement and connection on the rise

The engagement satisfaction rating climbed to 4.0 in 2025, up from 3.4 in both 2024 and 2023, demonstrating an increased sense of connection between ASBA and its members.

- Stronger brand alignment

Members' perception of ASBA's brand identity significantly improved, with the "extremely clearly" category rising by 16.72%. Negative responses dropped from 25.56% in 2023 to just 5.65% in 2025, marking a major shift in how members view ASBA's mission and values.

- Core values stronger than ever

Alignment with ASBA's core values saw a 15.98% rise in the "strongly agree" category, reflecting greater unity between ASBA's mission and member expectations.

- Diverse representation in feedback

The survey captured insights from a broad range of stakeholders, with 61.29% of respondents being board members and 19.35% being superintendents, ensuring a wide-ranging perspective on ASBA's impact.

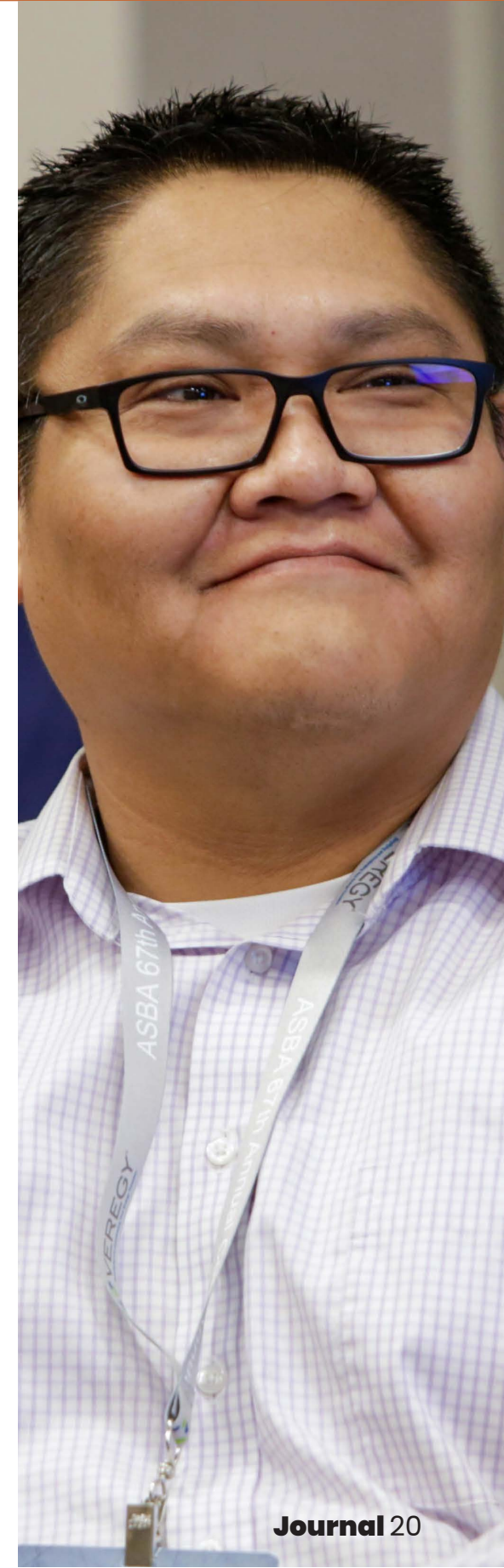
Thank you for your input – we are listening.

This drastic improvement across all categories is not just a reflection of ASBA's growth but also of the trust, engagement and commitment of our members. Your feedback helps shape the direction of ASBA, ensuring that we remain aligned with your needs and continue to evolve in ways that strengthen our support for Arizona's school boards.

We truly value the time and thought that each participant put into this survey. Your voices guide us, and together, we are building a stronger, more unified ASBA.

Thank you for your trust, participation and unwavering dedication to Arizona's students and schools. Here's to continuing our work—stronger together.

See a breakdown of the results on the following pages.





At the Arizona School Boards Association, **your voice helps us better serve you.** Your feedback guides the actions that strengthen our ability to support and empower school board members across Arizona.

Here's what members had to say about ASBA's impact:

Q1: How would you rate your overall perception of ASBA (out of 5)?

2025	2024	2023
4.1	3.3	3.320

Q2: My school board's membership with ASBA brings specific benefits to our school board and the education system in Arizona.

2025	2024	2023
Not applicable 1.54%	Not applicable 0%	Not applicable 0%
Strongly agree 36.15%	Strongly agree 23.86%	Strongly agree 28.23%
Agree 43.85%	Agree 47.73%	Agree 48.39%
Neither agree nor disagree 13.08%	Neither agree nor disagree 14.77%	Neither agree nor disagree 16.13%
Disagree 4.62%	Disagree 9.09%	Disagree 5.65%
Strongly disagree 0.77%	Strongly disagree 4.55%	Strongly disagree 1.61%

Overall Improvement

- The strongly agree category saw a substantial rise in 2025, reflecting increased confidence and satisfaction with ASBA membership benefits.
- Neutral and negative responses (disagree/strongly disagree) decreased notably in 2025, signifying a positive shift in member perceptions.
- The decline in the agree category suggests that members are moving to stronger positive responses, showcasing growing enthusiasm and satisfaction.

Q3: ASBA addresses the current challenges and issues faced by school boards in Arizona.

2025	2024	2023
Strongly agree 36.72%	Strongly agree 18.18%	Strongly agree 17.21%
Agree 39.06%	Agree 45.45%	Agree 50.0%
Neither agree nor disagree 16.41%	Neither agree nor disagree 20.45%	Neither agree nor disagree 19.67%
Disagree 6.25%	Disagree 9.09%	Disagree 11.48%
Strongly disagree 1.56%	Strongly disagree 6.82%	Strongly disagree 1.64%

Overall Improvement

- The strongly agree category saw an impressive increase of 18.54% from 2024 to 2025, indicating growing confidence in ASBA's ability to address school board challenges.
- Neutral and negative responses (neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree) steadily declined, showing improved alignment with member expectations.
- The decline in the agree category suggests a positive shift toward stronger agreement, as more members moved into the "strongly agree" category.

Q4: How would you rate your overall perception of ASBA (out of 5)?

2025	2024	2023
4.0	3.4	3.4

Q5: What, if anything, would make you more likely to engage with ASBA's offerings?

See full comments

The trends indicate a strong desire for accessible training, regional engagement, values alignment, and strengthened relationships with communities and peers. These recurring themes provide clear directions for ASBA to further align its services with member expectations.



At the Arizona School Boards Association, **your voice helps us better serve you.** Your feedback guides the actions that strengthen our ability to support and empower school board members across Arizona.

Here's what members had to say about ASBA's impact:

Q6: Are there any areas where you believe ASBA could enhance its support for school boards in Arizona?

See full comments

The top trends demonstrate a strong need for tailored training, improved local engagement, and enhanced advocacy efforts. Addressing these recurring themes will help ASBA better align its services with member expectations while continuing to foster collaboration and inclusivity.

Q7: Does ASBA's brand identity clearly represent the organization's role in supporting school boards and education in Arizona?

2025	2024	2023
Extremely clearly 25.81%	Extremely clearly 9.09%	Extremely clearly 10.0%
Very clearly 42.47%	Very clearly 43.18%	Very clearly 28.89%
Somewhat clearly 25.81%	Somewhat clearly 26.14%	Somewhat clearly 35.56%
Not so clearly 4.44%	Not so clearly 15.91%	Not so clearly 16.67%
Not at all clearly 1.21%	Not at all clearly 5.68%	Not at all clearly 8.89%

Overall Improvement

- The "extremely clearly" category saw a 16.72% increase from 2024 to 2025, indicating strong progress in aligning ASBA's brand identity with its mission.
- Negative responses (not so clearly and not at all clearly) dropped significantly, with the combined percentage falling from 25.56% in 2023 to just 5.65% in 2025, showing a major positive shift in perceptions.
- The decline in the somewhat clearly category suggests more members are transitioning from moderate agreement to stronger agreement.

Q8: ASBA's core values align with the values and expectations of school boards in Arizona.

2025	2024	2023
Strongly agree 31.89%	Strongly agree 15.91%	Strongly agree 10.87%
Agree 46.06%	Agree 34.09%	Agree 38.04%
Neither agree nor disagree 13.78%	Neither agree nor disagree 25.0%	Neither agree nor disagree 36.96%
Disagree 7.87%	Disagree 15.91%	Disagree 6.52%
Strongly disagree 0.39%	Strongly disagree 9.09%	Strongly disagree 7.61%

Overall Improvement

- The "strongly agree" category saw a remarkable rise of 15.98% from 2024 to 2025, indicating members increasingly see ASBA's values as aligned with their expectations.
- Neutral responses (neither agree nor disagree) declined substantially, dropping from 36.96% in 2023 to just 13.78% in 2025, reflecting stronger opinions overall.
- Negative responses (disagree and strongly disagree) fell significantly in 2025, with strongly disagree nearly eliminated, dropping to just 0.39%.

Q9: Please indicate your role in your district:

2025	2024	2023
Superintendents 19.35%	87 respondents	118 respondents
Board Member 61.29%		
Board/Supt. Asstistant 9.68%		
Other 9.68%		

We appreciate all of you for your input—your feedback helps us **grow and strengthen** our community together. **Your voice drives our mission, and we're excited to turn your feedback into action.**



ASBA Handbooks For Sale



Calendar of Events

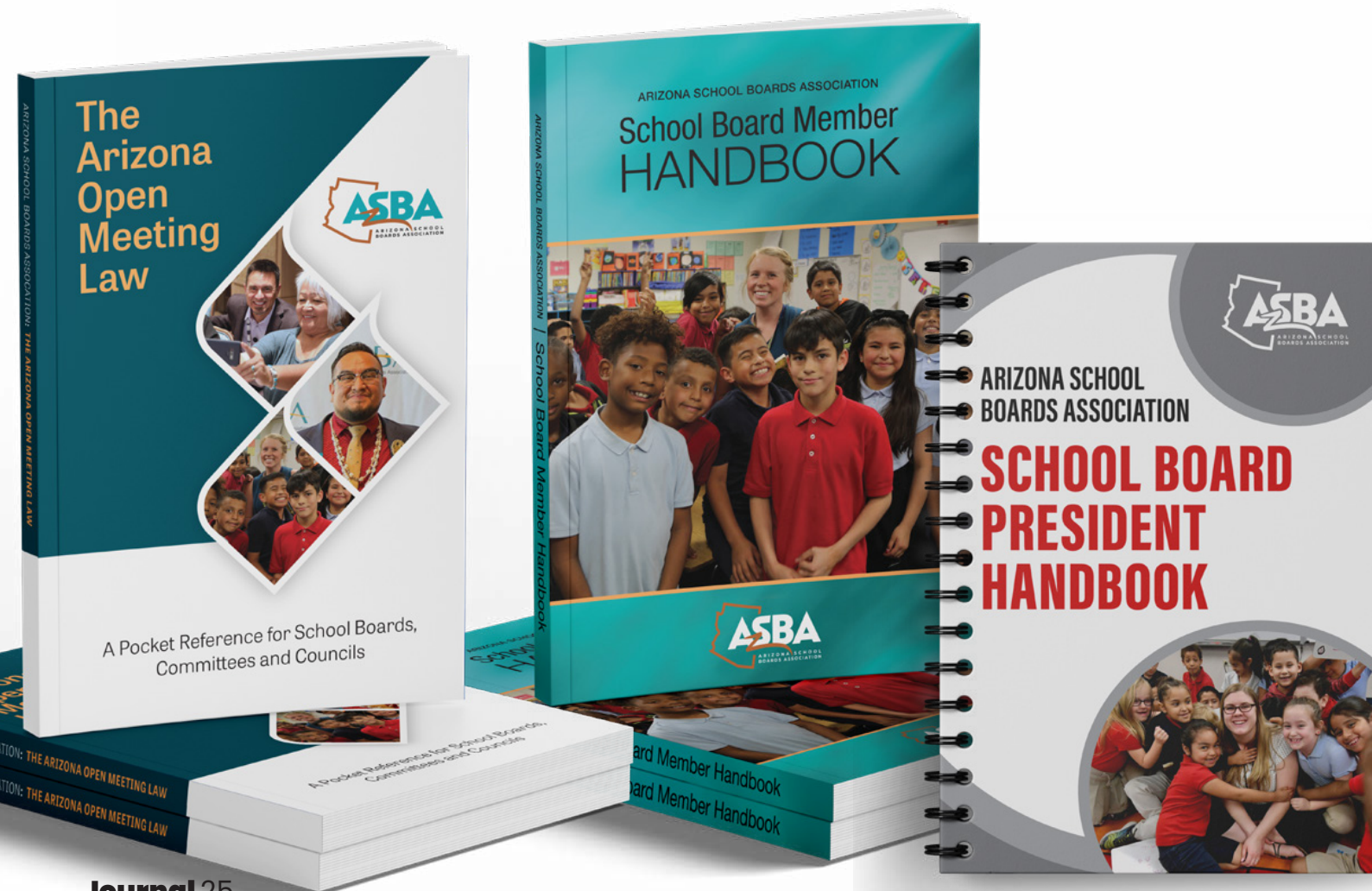
Provide your school governing board members – new and experienced – with resources to help them excel in their work.

azsba.org/bookstore



You can order each board member their own copy of *The Arizona Open Meeting Law* and the *School Board Member Handbook*, as well as get a *School Board President Handbook* from ASBA's Bookstore at azsba.org/bookstore or call 602-254-1100. The price of each book is \$25.

These handbooks are effective tools to enhance your board members' skills. Research shows that board members who develop their knowledge of leadership, governance, issues and topics that impact student success are more effective in achieving positive outcomes for their students and communities.



March

TUE
11

**The Board-Superintendent Team:
Using Board Retreats to Build Team
Culture and Collaborative
Relationships Webinar**

April

TUE
8

**How Does Your Board
Operate? ASBA's Board
Operations Manual Webinar**

May

TUE
13

**From Idea to District Policy:
The Long and Winding
Road Webinar**
5:00 pm – 6:00 pm



June

THU
5

**New Board Member
Orientation, Part 2 In-
Person, SLI Pre-Conference**
8:30 am – 4:00 pm

FRI-SAT
6-7

**Summer Leadership
Institute with ASAP Track**
Registration opens Apr. 15

July

THU
17

**ASBA Policy Super User
Webinar: Elevate Your
Expertise for Free!**
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

September

WED-FRI
3-5

Annual Law Conference
JW Marriott Scottsdale
Camelback Inn Resort & Spa

December

WED-FRI
17-19

Annual Conference
JW Marriott Desert Ridge
Resort & Spa



EDUCATE. ADVOCATE. ELEVATE.

**EDUCATE.
ADVOCATE.
ELEVATE.**

The heart of ASBA

We asked members to select one word from "Educate, Advocate or Elevate" that they best connect with and share why.



The heart of ASBA: EDUCATE. ADVOCATE. ELEVATE.

What word do you connect with?

ASBA is thrilled to announce the launch of a new member campaign that deepens the connection between our members and the ASBA logo, as well as the three defining words that serve as the foundation of our mission: **Educate. Advocate. Elevate.**

This campaign is designed to bring the values of ASBA to life by exploring how these powerful words resonate with the experiences, challenges and aspirations of our diverse membership. The purpose is not only to highlight our shared commitment to

education, advocacy and community growth, but to also empower our members to reflect on how these principles shape their individual and collective work.



Advocate means to me to be a voice and it may not always be that voice of support but to be that voice in education that helps cultivate our students, so they can be the next generation to advocate in a meaningful and productive way."

-Katy Taylor, Payson USD

"The word I connect with most is **"Educate"** because empowering members with knowledge lays the groundwork for growth, informed decision-making, and positive change. This aligns with ASBA's mission to equip members with the tools they need to lead effectively and thrive. As school board members, we must set an example by providing excellent governance and thriving in our roles."

-Juan Castillo, Somerton ESD



"As a school board member and a member of the Arizona School Board Association, the word **"advocate"** deeply resonates with me because it reflects our unwavering commitment to championing the needs of our students and ensuring they have access to a quality education. Advocacy drives our efforts to address challenges, support teachers, support staff and administrators, and create opportunities for every student to succeed and thrive in an ever-changing world."

- Mitra Khazai, Madison ESD

"The reason I chose **elevate** is that it can apply to students, staffs and boards. We should always look to the possibilities of elevating to the next big/best thing for everyone."

-Marcarlo Roanhorse, Ganado USD



"Since being elected to the school board and the board of directors I have sought to **elevate** myself and those around me by modeling the lifelong learner philosophy by returning to school seeking a Masters degree in Educational Administration and Supervision that I will complete in May 2025. As I elevate myself in knowledge and board experience, I can pass along the information and experiences to community members, staff, students, current, and prospective board members. We can truly be made stronger by elevating ourselves and pulling those we serve along."

- Chris King, Vail USD

By amplifying the messages behind Educate, Advocate and Elevate, we aim to inspire a deeper understanding of our collective mission while strengthening the bond that unites us all. This initiative will provide an ongoing celebration of the work we do together, supporting one another and the larger education community.

Through this campaign, we hope to reinforce the shared values that make ASBA a vibrant and impactful organization. One that will continue to empower all of us to move forward in our shared commitment to shaping the future of education.

January 2025



ASBA CELEBRATES SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH

January is School Board Recognition Month, a time to honor the dedicated leaders whose vision and commitment shape the future of our schools and communities.

Let's see what districts around the state have been doing to celebrate their boards!

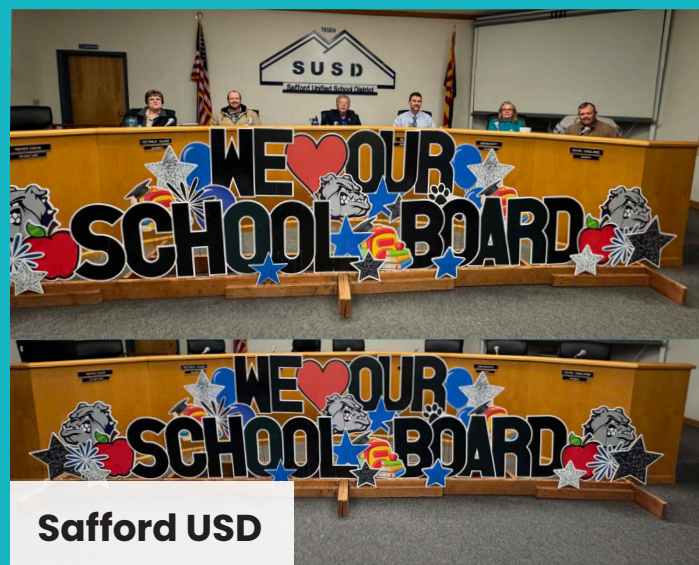


Gadsden ESD

Gadsden USD honored their Governing Board throughout January as part of School Board Recognition Month. During their Governing Board Meeting on January 14, 2025, the board was presented with Appreciation Certificates in recognition of their dedication and contributions to the GESD community (pictured).

The district also celebrated their board on social media, sharing a thoughtful caption that read: *"January is School Board Recognition Month! Join us in celebrating and thanking our incredible school board members for their dedication and hard work in supporting our students, educators, and community!"*

These individuals volunteer their time and efforts to ensure that our schools provide the best possible education for all. Their leadership helps guide our district toward success, and we are so grateful for their commitment to shaping a bright future for our students. Please join us in giving a heartfelt THANK YOU to our amazing school board members, Luis Marquez, Tadeo A. De La Hoya, Rosa Varela, Liliana Arroyo, and Maria Luz "Lucky" Hoyos!"

**Safford USD**

Safford Unified School District dedicated the month of January to celebrating their school board on social media. During the first board meeting of the month, district staff surprised the board with a heartfelt sign expressing the district's appreciation and support for their leadership.

Thank you to the Safford USD Governing Board for your unwavering commitment to student success and excellence!



Florence USD

In honor of School Board Recognition Month, Florence USD invited Florence's new mayor, Mr. Keith Eaton, and Town Council member Nicole Buccellato to present a proclamation recognizing the governing board for their exceptional dedication and contributions to the students of Florence USD.

Thank you to the Florence USD Governing Board
for your steadfast dedication to student success and
your commitment to excellence in education!

January 2025 GOVERNING BOARD APPRECIATION MONTH



2025 Governing Board President
Andres Barraza



2025 Governing Board Vice President
Amanda Steele



Tempe UHSD

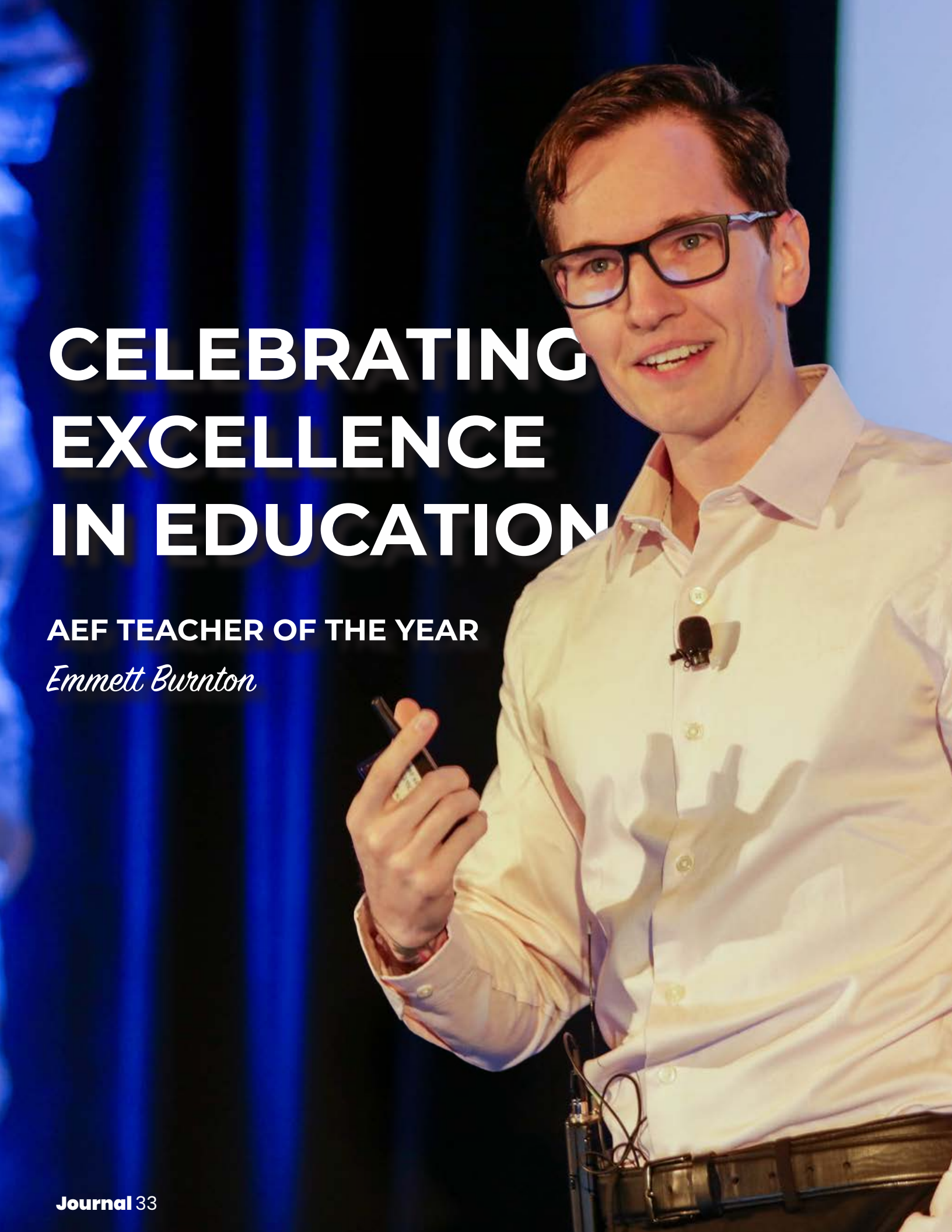
D Governing Board Member
Nicola Costigan-Miller

Governing Board Member
Armando Montoya

Tempe UHSD celebrated their Governing Board by showcasing their contributions across social media platforms. They shared a message of gratitude, saying, "This January, we want to take a moment to thank our Governing Board for their dedication and service to our students and community!"

A heartfelt thank you to the Tempe UHSD board for your steadfast support and commitment to fostering student success!

*We want to express
our deepest gratitude
to all Arizona school
board members for your
unwavering dedication to
public education and your
commitment to fostering
student success.*



CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

AEF TEACHER OF THE YEAR
Emmett Burnton

Celebrating excellence in education: Emmett Burnton, 2025 Arizona Teacher of the Year

The Arizona School Boards Association is proud to recognize **Emmett Burnton, an AP World History and U.S. History teacher at Boulder Creek High School in Deer Valley Unified School District**, as the **2025 Arizona Educational Foundation Teacher of the Year**. This prestigious honor highlights Burnton’s dedication to fostering critical thinking, historical inquiry and civic engagement in his students.

With a passion for making history relevant and engaging, Burnton’s teaching philosophy goes beyond memorization of dates and events—he encourages students to connect historical themes to modern challenges, preparing them to be informed, thoughtful citizens. His innovative approach, commitment to student success and ability to inspire learning make him a standout educator in Arizona.

As school board members, you play a crucial role in shaping policies that impact the classroom experience. To provide insight into the perspectives of an award-winning educator, we asked Burnton to share his thoughts on education, student engagement and the role of school boards in supporting teachers.

Q&A with Emmett Burnton

Q: What do you believe is the most important role of a school-board in supporting teachers and student success?

A: The most important role of a school board is strengthening community engagement and serving as the intermediary between the schools and community. School boards serve as an open forum and representative body of teachers, staff, parents and students. When a school board is deeply linked to all community members, they are able to create a stronger community.

Q: How do you engage students in history and make it relevant to their daily lives?

A: Mark Twain wrote, “History never repeats itself, but the Kaleidoscopic combinations of the pictured present often seem to be constructed out of the broken fragments of antique legends.” When we acknowledge the difficulties our students face: alienation, isolation, societal pressures, we can connect these issues with the past and equip students with the tools used previously to navigate the present.



Q: What are the biggest challenges teachers face today, and how can school boards help address them?

A: One of the largest challenges facing teachers today is the compartmentalization of the classroom and the community. Every teacher, principal, board member, and parent wants what is best for our students. When divided, our fears and miscommunication conflate reality, and we find ourselves as adversaries rather than allies. When school board members celebrate the realities of the classroom, support our staff and parents, we create an environment that grows beyond partisan politics and creates a stronger community.

Q: What advice would you give to school board members about fostering a strong partnership between educators and district leadership?

A: If you want to formulate a strong partnership between educators and district leaders, you have to make it personal. It didn't take honors, awards or titles to become familiar with members of the board. My board members had already appeared in my classroom, on campus, online and in each of these places they openly supported teachers. When you engage in your job, you become more than a yes/no vote, you become an active participant in each of the lives you represent.

Q: As Arizona's Teacher of the Year, what is one message you want to share with education leaders across the state?

A: My message to educational leaders would be to be unapologetically "you". By being your authentic self, you can be genuine, honest and vulnerable, which allows others to do the same. By embracing the person rather than the profession, it encourages us to build bridges, not walls, when it comes to fostering a community that we all represent.

Burnton's recognition as Arizona Teacher of the Year is a testament to the incredible work happening in classrooms across the state. His dedication serves as a reminder of the profound impact that passionate educators have on students' futures. ASBA congratulates Burton on this well-deserved honor and looks forward to sharing his insights with school leaders committed to supporting teachers and student success.



Empowering Futures:

ASBA STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Black Alliance Georgie and Calvin Goode Scholarship

This scholarship is awarded to seniors of Black or African descent who demonstrate an exceptional record of academic growth and commitment of service to others who plan to further their education at an accredited postsecondary institution.

Jack Peterson Scholarship

This scholarship is awarded annually to exceptional high school seniors who plan to pursue college degrees in teaching. Recipients shall have maintained a high school record that reflects high academic achievement and regular attendance, respectable leadership and citizenship among peers and sustained participation in school and community activities. The award amounts vary from year to year and are based on annual scholarship endowment earnings.

Panfilio H. Contreras Honorary Scholarship

This scholarship was awarded for the first time in 2013 by ASBA's Hispanic-Native American Indian Caucus. Hispanic and Native American Indian students who are seniors in high school are eligible to apply for this scholarship to support their attendance at an accredited post-secondary institution.

Application Dates and Criteria

Applications are now open, and close March 31, 2025. To qualify for a scholarship, students must be from a member district and enrolled in an accredited Arizona college or university.

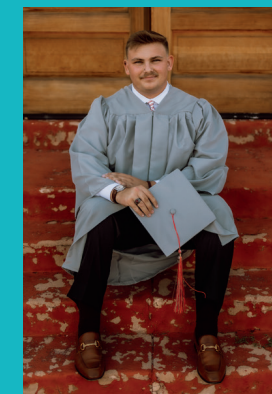
Additional information can be found on the ASBA website:

azsba.org/awards



Applications for all student scholarships are now open and close March 31, 2025.

High school seniors in ASBA member districts may apply for the three scholarships that are offered each year.



Arizona school funding uncertain as Prop 123 nears expiration



With Proposition 123 set to expire in June, Arizona lawmakers and education leaders are racing against the clock to determine the future of school funding. Passed in 2016 as a temporary fix, the measure directed \$3.5 billion to K-12 schools by increasing distributions from the state land trust.

Now, with no automatic renewal in place and no official replacement plan on the ballot, school districts face a potential financial gap of \$300 million per year.

A temporary fix now expiring

Prop 123 was passed to settle a lawsuit over K-12 funding and provided a decade of additional resources for Arizona schools. By increasing the land trust distribution rate from 2.5% to 6%, the measure helped fund teacher salaries, classroom resources and student programs.

While it offered relief, it was never intended as a permanent solution. As its expiration date approaches, education officials warn that without legislative action, districts could face serious budget challenges.

No clear path forward

Despite ongoing discussions, state lawmakers have yet to finalize a plan to replace Prop 123. The Arizona Legislature and Gov. Katie Hobbs' office will play a critical role in determining how K-12 education is funded moving forward.

Senate Minority Leader Priya Sundareshan said lawmakers are prioritizing a long-term solution rather than rushing a replacement to meet a May special election deadline. If the Legislature does not act before June 30, the state's general fund will be required to cover the \$300 million that would have come from the land trust, but that backfill is not guaranteed beyond 2025.

Debate over state land trust continues

One of the key policy discussions centers on whether to extend or adjust the land trust distribution rate. Some lawmakers have suggested increasing the percentage again to provide immediate relief, while others have raised concerns

about depleting the fund too quickly.

ASBA advocates for long-term solution

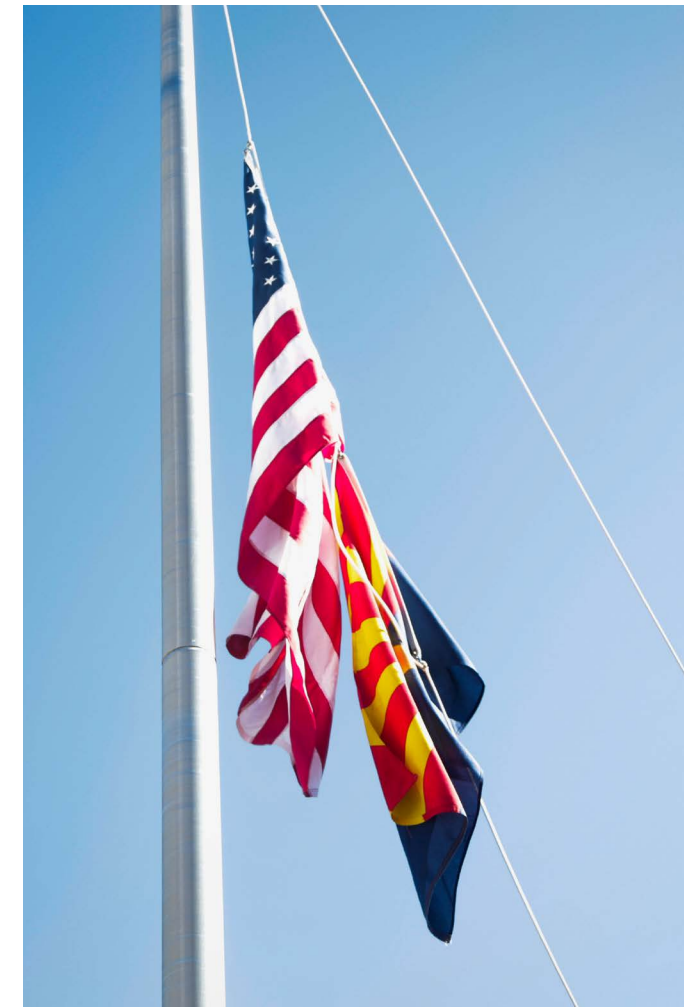
ASBA is actively engaged in discussions with lawmakers, education coalitions and district leaders to push for a stable and equitable funding model.

We are calling for a plan that provides financial stability for school districts, ensures resources are distributed fairly and includes transparency in how funding is allocated.

What's next for school board members

With education funding still uncertain, ASBA is urging school board members to stay engaged. Board members are encouraged to track legislative updates, advocate for their districts and communicate with their communities about potential funding impacts.

The 2025 legislative session will be pivotal in determining how Arizona supports its public schools in the years ahead. ASBA remains committed to ensuring local voices are heard and that public education remains a top priority for lawmakers.



ASBA POLICY SERVICES

Supporting districts with key updates

ASBA's policy services team is committed to guiding and supporting policy subscriber member districts through key updates in 2025. This year brings exciting enhancements to both the model policy manual and the PolicyBridge software, ensuring school boards and administrators have the most up-to-date tools and resources to navigate policy changes with confidence.

Keeping policies aligned with the latest statutory and regulatory impacts

The model manual update is well underway:

- Section A was released following the latest Title IX updates.
- Section B is in final editing and will soon be available for outside review by district leaders and educational partners.
- Section C will follow closely behind.

Enhancing efficiency in policy management

In addition, the PolicyBridge software upgrade remains on track for its spring launch, providing an improved user experience and enhanced policy management tools. To help districts seamlessly transition, ASBA will offer comprehensive training for superusers, ensuring they have the knowledge and support needed for success.

ASBA is always here to support and empower our member districts with expert guidance, timely updates, and reliable policy solutions. Stay tuned for more details as we continue working to make policy management easier and more effective for Arizona schools.

For questions or more information, please contact **Dr. Charlotte Patterson, Policy Analyst, at cpatterson@azsba.org**, or **Lynne Bondi, Policy Analyst, at lbondi@azsba.org** or call ASBA at 602-254-1100.

School board members have a critical role in selecting employee health insurance



As a school board member, each of your decisions significantly impacts the well-being and satisfaction of your district's employees. One of the most important choices you can make is selecting the right health insurance. This decision could affect staff health, as well as district finances and retention rates.

Why your role matters

Health insurance is a crucial part of employee compensation. Your selection must provide comprehensive coverage, be financially sustainable and meet diverse employee needs.

Consider ASBAIT for your district's health insurance needs

The Arizona School Boards Association Insurance Trust (ASBAIT) is a premier health plan option for many Arizona schools and community colleges. Established in 1981, ASBAIT offers:

- **The largest group health care pool in Arizona.** Serving only public schools and community colleges.
- **41 years of innovation.** Efficient and effective health care solutions.
- **A full suite of benefits.** Nine medical plans to meet every school budget. Plus, additional offerings including dental, vision, life, health savings accounts and more.
- **A tremendous focus on member health.** High-quality care and comprehensive service. Including, but not limited to, programs that improve member access to care, such as Hinge Health, SkinIO, Virta Health, EAP and Teladoc Health. As well as, Thrive3SixtyFive, our comprehensive Wellness Program.
- **Sustainability.** Financial stability and low administrative costs.
- **Extensive networks.** In addition to the Aetna National Network, ASBAIT plans have exclusive access to the Banner|Aetna three-tier network and an option to include a Mexico Network.

Real-life impact: How ASBAIT benefits our employees

Imagine the diverse workforce in your district, from teachers to custodians to cafeteria staff. One employee may need regular specialist visits and medications for a chronic condition. Another might rely on preventive care services to stay healthy and avoid serious issues. A third supports a family and needs comprehensive coverage that includes dental and vision care for their children.

With ASBAIT, every employee benefits from comprehensive health coverage that meets their varied needs. They have access to an extensive provider network, affordable prescriptions, regular checkups and family health benefits. This support helps them stay healthy, reduces absenteeism and provides peace of mind knowing their health care needs are covered.

Your next steps

Engage with your fellow board members, district administrators and employees to gather input and ensure a transparent decision-making process. By thoroughly evaluating key points and asking the right questions, you can select a health insurance plan that best serves your district's needs and ensures a healthy and thriving school community.

Remember, your decision impacts not just the health of your employees, but the overall success and stability of your district. Make a decision that benefits your employees and strengthens your district.

Need more information?



Contact:
Chuck Nelson

ASBAIT Sales Executive
Meritain Health®

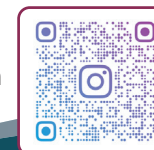
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ASBA Policy Services

Compliance-Based, Comprehensive and Cost-Effective

District policies that are consistent with state and federal laws and regulations are the foundation of governing board and district operations. They are the bedrock upon which excellence in locally governed school districts is built. Reviewing and adopting policy is one of the chief responsibilities of the governing board. That's why the Arizona School Boards Association – the professional association for Arizona's school district governing boards– has been the provider of policy services to Arizona's school districts for more than 40 years.

ASBA Policy Services is operated by a staff of trusted and experienced policy experts and available to ASBA members on a subscription basis. A Policy Services subscription provides ASBA member districts with a comprehensive, cost-efficient way to ensure your District Policy Manual is in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. We do this through a license to the ASBA Model Policy Manual® and timely Policy Advisories that are issued throughout the year, plus a range of supports designed to make policy adoption, implementation and review effective, efficient and in-tune with your local needs.

In addition to policy content, ASBA Policy Services subscribers gain access, at no additional cost, to on-call consultation with our team of policy and governance experts; policy amendment assistance; and online publishing and hosting of the District Policy Manual through our PolicyBridge® platform. Comprehensive reviews of the District Policy Manual are recommended every four years and available for a nominal additional fee.

Our equitable pricing structure makes ASBA Policy Services affordable for every ASBA member district – from the largest school district in Arizona to the smallest, and the more than 220 in between – with the same top-notch service and support given to each.

As a Policy Services subscriber, ASBA member districts receive access to:

The ASBA Model Policy Manual®

All ASBA original policy content, including Policy Advisories as they are issued, are compiled into the ASBA Model Policy Manual©. Its purpose is to ensure member districts are in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. Districts that subscribe to ASBA Policy Services are licensed to use the ASBA Model Policy Manual® as the basis for their own District Policy Manual.

Policy Advisories

All Policy Services subscribers are also licensed to utilize the ASBA Policy Advisories they receive throughout the year. Policy Advisories contain model policies, regulations and exhibits developed by ASBA in response to changes to or new interpretations of state and federal laws and regulations. These are issued by ASBA to subscribing districts in a timely fashion to ensure that governing boards can adopt them into the District Policy Manual and rely on policy that is up to date.



Your success is our focus, with trusted service and support for your board and district.



On-Call Experts

We recognize that understanding and implementing policy can be complex and, sometimes, confusing. That's why we make our policy and governance experts available for on-call information when you need it as part of the Policy Services subscription at no additional cost. The superintendent, members of the governing board and the administrative professional supporting them may contact ASBA Policy Services at any time for information or assistance concerning specific policy matters.*

Online Hosting of the District Policy Manual

The most current version of the District Policy Manual for public access is hosted by ASBA through the PolicyBridge® platform at no additional cost. This element of ASBA Policy Services removes the burden from district staff for keeping a paper, pdf or online manual updated and also provides 24/7 public access. Posted in an electronic, web-based format, the manual is easily navigable, and available on both the district and ASBA website.

Our PolicyBridge® platform also includes timesaving editing and search functions. The editing function enables customization and electronic submission of documents to ASBA Policy Services for timely online publishing to the District Policy Manual. The search function allows subscribing districts to compare their policies to those of other districts.

Policy Manual Reviews

ASBA advises that all districts that subscribe to Policy Services undertake a policy manual review every four years to ensure that no lapses in compliance exist. ASBA's policy services team does a comprehensive comparison of the District Policy Manual to the ASBA Model Policy Manual© to see where gaps may exist. The review also provides an opportunity for the district to consider and discuss with ASBA policy experts any changes or customizations it may want to make to the District Policy Manual to reflect local needs, priorities and practices.

Policy Amendment Assistance

Policy amendment assistance is available at no additional cost to assist Member Districts that are considering revision of their policies, whether in response to a Policy Advisory or at the initiative of the district to make a change that reflects local needs, priorities and practices.*

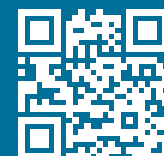
Note: We believe in local control. Policy Services subscribers may add policies to their District Policy Manuals that have not been developed by ASBA or may edit or customize ASBA developed policies in ways that significantly differ from the copyrighted policy developed and provided to subscribers by ASBA. Such policies are considered the district's own; ASBA copyright does not pertain to those policies, as the District Policy Manual will reflect.

Participation in ASBA Policy Services is subscription-based and available only to ASBA member districts. The subscription is for 48-months and licenses the district to utilize copyrighted material developed by ASBA solely during that period. Subscription fees are determined on a sliding scale based on district enrollment. Membership in ASBA is required throughout the period of the agreement.

ASBA Policy Services for charter school is also available; an associate membership in ASBA is required. Contact ASBA for details at 602-254-1100.

***Provision of such service will not constitute legal advice.**

For more information, visit the ASBA website:
azsba.org/policy or call **602.254.1100**



EDUCATE. ADVOCATE. ELEVATE.



Frequently Asked Questions about ASBA Policy Services

Q Why does ASBA offer Policy Services?

A Adopting policy necessary to govern and run a school district effectively and in compliance with the law is one of the most fundamental responsibilities of a school district governing board. Regardless of its risk management role, policy does not belong to lawyers or liability insurers. It belongs to school boards, making ASBA the natural provider. As the professional association dedicated to governing boards, ASBA is dedicated to supporting school boards in this role. ASBA began offering policy services to its member districts approximately 40 years ago to save them money and provide policies and exceptional service at minimal cost. We continue to make good on that promise.

In addition, we believe there is value in school districts statewide utilizing common policies, albeit with customization based on local needs. This enables board members and superintendents to “speak the same language” from district to district and to be stronger together when advocating for or against changes to the law – and thus policy – that would negatively impact board or district operations.

Q Who may consult with the ASBA Policy Services team?

A Unrestricted “on-call” consultation is a benefit that sets ASBA Policy Services apart. At ASBA, we believe governing board members, superintendents and administrative professionals are partners in policy, hence our commitment to assisting and meeting the needs of those in all three roles. Governing board members who consider and adopt policy, administrative professionals who manage it and superintendents all have equal access to our Policy Services team, **provided they are current Policy Member subscribers**.

Q What is included in ASBA’s Policy Services subscription?

A ASBA provides a comprehensive, robust, responsive service. Compliance-driven model policies through the ASBA Model Policy Manual© are at the heart of the service, but ASBA also provides Policy Services subscribers with the other critical supports necessary for successful policy adoption and implementation.

These include:

- Exhibits and regulations that help districts operationalize and bring policies to life.
- Updates to model policy throughout the year, as necessary.
- Access to on-call staff experts, who are as available to consult with governing board members as they are to superintendents who manage the district.
- Online hosting to provide 24/7 public access along with timesaving editing functions and easily navigable search and comparison functions for exploring your own manual and comparing your policies to those of other districts.
- Policy manual reviews to ensure your policies are up to date with laws, regulations and court decisions.
- Policy amendment and customization assistance.

Subscribers also can access ASBA’s complimentary Employee Handbook Service, which connects district policies to rules, conditions and clear expectations for employment and supports growth and development of employees for member school districts – all in a concise, customizable format.

(Learn more about each of the components of ASBA Policy Services at azsba.org/policy/policy-services-overview).

Q What is included in the ASBA model policy manual – and why?

A We believe in local control and the responsibility of governing boards to determine district policy, including how much or how little is included. Rather than take an approach that decides for school boards that “bare bones” is best, we offer a comprehensive manual that puts governing boards in the driver’s seat.

Compliance-driven model policies based on state and federal laws and regulations and pertinent court rulings make up the bulk of the ASBA Model Policy Manual®. These policies are critically important. However, ASBA also offers model policies beyond the “bare minimum” that the vast majority of districts in Arizona choose to have in place and that are not required by law. For example, governing boards may choose to adopt and customize model policies from the ASBA Model Policy Manual® that are designed to support the governance function more generally and provide for efficient and effective meetings. As with all model policies, it is at the governing board’s discretion to determine which policies from the ASBA Model Policy Manual® to adopt. This comprehensive approach saves boards and districts the time and legal fees that would be needed to engage a lawyer to create policies that rise above the minimum standard.

The manual is arranged in 12 sections, all of which are easily accessible, navigable and searchable through the online ASBA PolicyBridge platform.

Q What separates ASBA from other policy services providers?

A ASBA is the only provider of comprehensive model policy and full policy support in the state. As a statewide school boards association with a mission of cultivating excellence in locally governed school districts, our commitment when it comes to policy is to effective school district governance and operations, not solely risk management. ASBA’s model policies reflect that. Of course, compliance-based model policies are at the heart of ASBA Policy Services, but our wholistic approach acknowledges that more than “bare bones” policies will likely be needed for boards and districts to be successful. In addition, ASBA Policy Services subscribers have access to a multi-faceted team of legal, policy, operational and governance professionals with the knowledge and experience to consult on compliance, while also understanding and supporting the real-world, practical needs of Arizona’s school boards and school districts.

Q How can I learn more about district policy?

A Policy-related learning opportunities are available throughout the year at ASBA workshops and conferences, as well as through no-cost webinars that we offer. Just as importantly, members of our Policy Services team are available to answer questions or provide clarification to board members, superintendents and the administrative professionals who support them. We’re just a phone call or email away.

For more information, visit the ASBA website:
azsba.org/policy or call **602.254.1100**



EDUCATE. ADVOCATE. ELEVATE.

Generative AI: Essential questions and opportunities for school board members

Learn how generative AI helps school board members streamline tasks, foster collaboration and make impactful decisions for their communities.

Generative AI: Essential questions and opportunities for school board members

Generative artificial intelligence is making waves in industries across the globe, and its potential impact on public education is undeniable. A study by Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Sloan School of Management revealed that AI tools boosted productivity by 14 percent, with the most significant gains among less-experienced workers. For school districts, this means generative AI could help close achievement gaps, providing tailored support to struggling students and enhancing learning outcomes.

School board members play a crucial role in determining how AI is adopted and implemented. Asking the right questions about its use can help ensure that this technology supports equitable, effective education across their districts.

How AI can support students

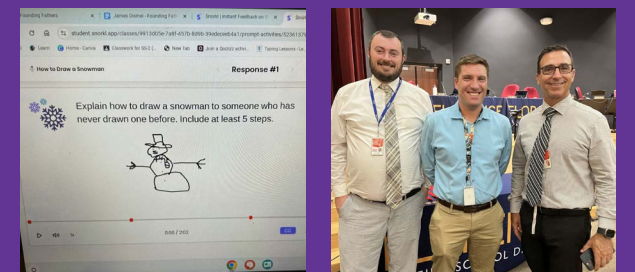
Generative AI has the potential to address key challenges in education, particularly for students who are behind their peers academically. The study found that workers using AI completed complex tasks more efficiently and with higher-quality results, even in areas outside their expertise. In schools, similar benefits could be realized:

- **Personalized Tutoring:** AI-driven platforms can analyze student performance and provide customized lessons to target specific gaps in understanding.
- **Real-time feedback:** Tools powered by AI can offer immediate, adaptive feedback allowing students to build confidence and progress at their own pace
- **Expanding resources:** AI can bring high-quality educational tools to underserved schools ensuring all students have access to the support they need.

Florence Unified leads the way in AI-powered learning

As artificial intelligence transforms industries, one Arizona school district is taking bold steps to ensure students and staff are ready for the future. Florence Unified School District (FUSD) isn't just experimenting with AI, it's embracing it, building a culture of innovation and responsible use across its campuses.

Under the leadership of Technology Director Nicholas Trakas, FUSD has implemented an "Open AI" policy, encouraging educators to explore AI tools that enhance learning. But the district isn't leaving anyone to figure it out alone. The education technology and training team has designed hands-on courses and one-on-one coaching to help staff understand how to integrate AI effectively.



"We're not just preparing students for today. We're preparing them for jobs and industries that don't even exist yet," Trakas said. "That means we have to be proactive in giving teachers the tools and confidence to use AI the right way."

Training sessions focus on more than just using AI, they emphasize ethical responsibility. Staff members learn how to spot AI bias, identify misinformation and safeguard student data. The goal is to ensure AI supports, rather than replaces, critical thinking in the classroom.

Cont. on next page...

Generative AI Cont...

Questions every school board member can ask

To ensure AI is used effectively and ethically, school board members can start by asking:

- 1. What challenges in our district could AI help solve?
- 2. How can AI tools provide equitable access to resources for all students, especially those in underserved areas?
- 3. How do we educate students, staff and parents about the limitations of AI and how to address those in academics?
- 4. What privacy protections are in place to safeguard student and teacher data?
- 5. What training will teachers and staff need to implement AI effectively?
- 6. How will we measure the success of AI initiatives in improving student outcomes?
- 7. How can we engage educators, parents and students in discussions about AI adoption?
- 8. Are there partnerships with experts or organizations to help us navigate AI implementation?

These questions can guide discussions, helping board members make informed decisions that prioritize student success while addressing potential risks.

Content from Florence USD was contributed by Alec McDaniel.

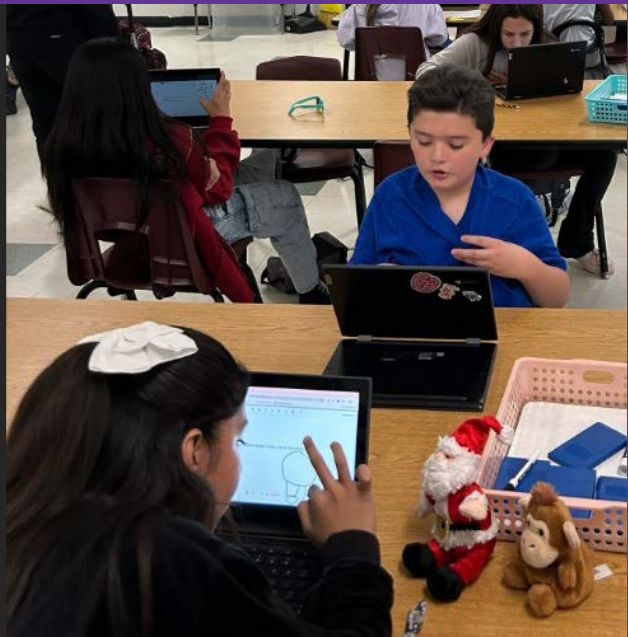
Florence Unifed leads the way in AI-powered learning cont...

FUSD has also opened AI access to students through district-approved platforms like Canva, Adobe Express, Curipod and Khan Academy. Within curriculum programs such as Study-Sync and Imagine Learning, AI helps personalize instruction, giving students tailored feedback in real time.

The district is committed to balancing innovation with accountability. As an ASBA policy subscriber, FUSD follows policies such as the Acceptable Use Policy and Board Policy IJNDB to ensure AI tools are used ethically and effectively. Leaders have also put safeguards in place to prevent misuse, reinforcing that AI is a learning tool, not a shortcut.

Beyond policies and training, FUSD has created a thriving AI learning community. Weekly initiatives like “Tech Tip Tuesdays” and “Student Tech This Out” keep staff and students engaged, while ongoing professional development ensures educators stay ahead of emerging trends.

Cont. on next page...



The board’s role in implementation

As stewards of district policy, school board members have the authority to shape how AI is integrated into classrooms working with the superintendent and district leadership, team boards can impact the way AI is utilized. Key responsibilities of the board include:

- Setting clear policies to ensure AI tools are used ethically and equitably.
- Allocating budgets to fund AI resources, professional development and infrastructure upgrades.
- Monitoring the impact of AI programs through measurable benchmarks and regular updates.

“

Generative AI has the potential to transform public education by supporting students, empowering teachers and fostering equity.

Florence Unifed leads the way in AI-powered learning cont...

Florence school board member and ASBA Pinal County Director Roger Biede emphasized the role of school boards in ensuring districts are not left behind in the AI era. “It’s our responsibility as board members to make sure our schools are adapting to new technology, not avoiding it. AI is already shaping the workforce, and we need to provide our students with the skills to compete. That starts with making sure teachers have the resources and support they need,” Biede said.

With a forward-thinking mindset and a commitment to responsible innovation, FUSD is proving that AI isn’t just a futuristic concept—it’s a tool that, when used wisely, can transform education today.

Moving Forward

Generative AI has the potential to transform public education by supporting students, empowering teachers and fostering equity. But its success depends on thoughtful implementation guided by informed leadership.

The MIT Sloan study highlights AI’s ability to close skill gaps and improve performance—an opportunity school boards can leverage to ensure all students have access to high-quality education. With the right policies and questions, board members can help their districts harness the power of AI to prepare students for a future where technology plays an increasingly central role.

Reference

Brynjolfsson, E., Li, D., Raymond, E., & Wang, S. (2023). Generative AI at Work: Experimental Evidence from Customer Support. MIT Sloan School of Management.



Book a Customer Service Training for Staff



Create District Customer Standards: Part 1 and Part 2

For districts to demonstrate quality customer service, it's crucial to first understand and identify their customer service standards. ASBA's customer service training is designed to help districts achieve this through a fun, interactive, and engaging approach.

This personalized training allows each district to create and define their unique customer service standards. Attendees will explore the importance of customer experience, fostering a positive culture, effective listening, and customer engagement. This training is a valuable professional development opportunity for both classified and certified staff, offered in 3-hour or 2-hour formats.



More —————>

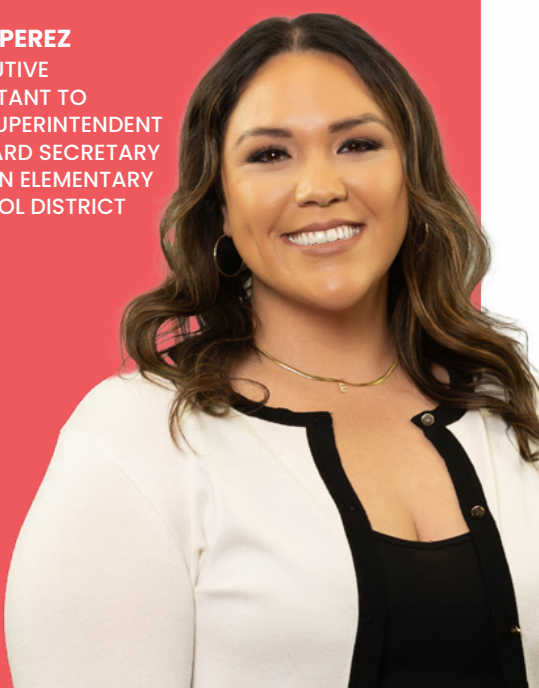
I recently took part in a customer service training program offered by ASBA, tailored for our front office staff and administrative assistants. As someone who directly interacts with customers, I found the experience incredibly valuable and pivotal in improving customer satisfaction.

Our team focused on the following;

- 1. First Impressions
- 2. Face to Face Interactions
- 3. Phone Etiquette
- 4. Email Etiquette

I highly recommend their services.

ELSA PEREZ
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE SUPERINTENDENT & BOARD SECRETARY
LAVEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT



Book a Customer Service Training for Staff

Measure Your District's Customer Service Standards

ASBA's Secret Shopper service objectively measures the customer service process within school and district settings. A third-party individual assesses and reports on their experiences, providing detailed feedback to help identify areas for improvement. This service includes in-person visits, phone call recordings and emails to schools and district departments. Utilizing this service can significantly enhance customer satisfaction and overall experience.

"Customer service training is crucial for the success of every school district. I strongly recommend the ASBA Customer Service training for its invaluable insights into improving your customer service strategies. Investing in this training not only enhances interactions and minimizes misunderstandings but also significantly contributes to the overall success of your educational mission."

MINNIE KAMARATA
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT TO SUPERINTENDENT AND GOVERNING BOARD
LIBERTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT



For more information or to book training, contact **Ellen White**, Director of Business and Conference Services at ewhite@azsba.org.

ASBA-ASA Annual Conference *Award Winners*

Congratulations to the 2024 ASBA and ASA award winners who were celebrated at the ASBA-ASA Annual Conference in Phoenix on Dec. 18-20, 2024.



**Lou Ella Kleinz
Excellence in Governance Award**

Madison ESD



**Barbara Robey School Board
Member of the Year Award**

Harry Garewal, Isaac ESD



**All-Arizona School Board
Member Award**

Julie Cluff, Safford USD



ASAP Member of the Year Award

Sheila Taylor, Deer Valley USD



**ASBA Golden Bell Promise
Program Award – Elementary**

*M.C. Cash P.A.T.H. to College
and Career, Laveen ESD*



**ASBA Golden Bell Promise
Program Award – High School**

*Flowing Wells HS Biliteracy
Program, Flowing Wells USD*



**ASBA Golden Bell Promise
Program Award – CTED/CTE**

*CAVIT Dental Assistant Program,
Central Arizona Valley of Institute
and Technology (CAVIT)*



**ASBA Golden Bell Promise
Program Award – Collaboration**

*Literature Hub at Lattie Coor
School, Avondale ESD*



Total Board Award

This award is part of the Academy of Board Development and is granted to a governing board when at least a quorum of members has attained the level of Certificate of Boardmanship, which requires 36 continuing education units. The remaining members must also have earned their Certificates of Orientation

Amphitheater Public Schools
Baboquivari USD
Catalina Foothills USD
Central Arizona Valley Institute of Technology (CAVIT)
Chevelon Butte ESD
Chinle USD
Deer Valley USD
Ganado USD
Isaac ESD
Madison ESD
Miami Area USD

Paradise Valley USD
Parker USD
Payson USD
Pima USD
Quartzite USD
Red Mesa USD
Saddle Mountain USD
Sahuarita USD
Scottsdale USD
Tolleson UHSD
Washington ESD

Honor Roll Award

This award recognizes retiring board members who have completed at least eight years of service on their boards and who were nominated by their boards for outstanding service

Richard Adler, Humboldt USD
Lela Alston, Phoenix UHSD
Nancy Case, Paradise Valley USD
Julie Cluff, Safford USD
Danielle Clymer, Litchfield ESD
Bob D'Elena, J.O. Combs USD
Lori Drake, Mingus UHSD
Christine Fredricks, Flagstaff USD
Helen Freeman, Camp Verde USD
Carole Gilmore, Flagstaff USD
Shelly Hargis, J.O. Combs USD
Shari Lowell, Sahuarita USD

Anthony Lozano, Mingus UHSD
Gregory Lucero, Nogales USD
Cynthia Matus-Morriss, Patagonia UHSD
Amy McScheffery, Creighton School District
Jim Migliorino Sr., West-MEC
Ann Ordway, Deer Valley USD
Pam Reicks, Glendale UHSD
Suzie Roth, Humboldt USD
Paul Ruwald, Humboldt USD
Chalmer R. "Pete" Shearer, Grand Canyon USD
Sarah Speer, Madison ESD
Carol Anne Teague, Mingus UHSD

Monica Trejo, Tempe ESD
Barbara Underwood, Payson USD

AASA Superintendent of the Year

Dr. Scott Menzel, Scottsdale USD



All Arizona Superintendent – Small District

Shannah Johnson, Mohawk Valley School District



All Arizona Superintendent – Medium District

Dr. Barbara Remondini, Wickenburg USD



All Arizona Superintendent – Large District

Dr. Curtis Finch, Deer Valley USD





New ASBA subscription service:

Empowering small districts with communication tools and training

Starting **July 2025**, ASBA will introduce an **annual subscription package** specifically designed to support **small districts** without dedicated communication staff.

This service will provide **monthly resources, access to an exclusive resource center and valuable tools and templates** to enhance communication efforts.

Subscribers will also gain the added benefit of **personalized materials** tailored to their district's identity. All resources, templates and communication materials will be **branded with each district's unique logo, colors and photos** ensuring that every piece reflects their community and reinforces their district's messaging.

Examples of a few topics:

- **Social media management** – Best practices for engaging audiences, increasing reach and maintaining a positive online presence. Topics include **content creation, scheduling strategies, managing comments and analytics tracking**.
- **Crafting impactful newsletters** – Strategies for developing compelling content and improving readership. Topics include **writing attention-grabbing subject lines, structuring content for readability and leveraging visuals to boost engagement**.
- **Engaging with families and communities** – Techniques for strengthening relationships and increasing stakeholder involvement. Topics include **hosting virtual town halls, fostering two-way communication and organizing community outreach events**.
- **Effective branding strategies** – Building a recognizable district identity and cohesive messaging. Topics include **logo consistency, storytelling through visuals and creating district-wide communication guidelines**.

Additionally, in 2025, we're excited to launch two new specialized training opportunities:

Media and public speaking training

This interactive session will equip school leaders with **the confidence and skills to engage with media, deliver impactful messages and handle interviews effectively**. Attendees will participate in mock interviews, press conference simulations and speech delivery exercises to refine their public speaking presence.

Crisis communications training

Designed to help districts **prepare for and navigate crisis situations this training will cover strategic response planning, message control, stakeholder coordination and media management** during emergencies. Participants will learn **how to develop crisis communication plans and practice real-time response strategies** through hands-on scenarios.

These targeted trainings and resources are designed to give **small districts the tools they need to confidently manage communication challenges and build stronger connections with their communities**.

New in July 2025! ASBA's annual subscription offers small districts expert-branded communication tools, templates and personalized resources—no dedicated staff needed!

Toolkit topic examples:

- Social media management
- Crafting impactful newsletters
- Engaging with families and communities
- Effective branding strategies

Two brand new trainings covering:

- Media and public speaking training
- Crisis communications training

*This subscription will be offered through a **tiered pricing model** based on district size. Promotions and early bird sign-ups will begin in **March 2025** so stay tuned.*

Member districts shape ASBA's political agenda through delegate assembly

Arizona governing board members play a crucial role in shaping ASBA's political agenda and advocacy efforts. Their voices influence policies that impact students, teachers and communities statewide. ASBA is committed to ensuring its advocacy reflects member districts' needs, and the delegate assembly provides a key opportunity for school boards to exercise their membership rights.



Your voice, your impact

Each year ASBA facilitates a structured member-driven process to establish its political agenda, guiding advocacy at the Arizona Legislature. School boards submit proposals highlighting legislative priorities crucial to their communities. The ASBA Legislative Committee reviews these proposals and drafts a political agenda, which is shared with member districts for input. Members can view the current political agenda on ASBA's website.

ASBA strongly encourages governing boards to:

- Review the draft political priorities outlined by the ASBA Legislative Committee
- Discuss priorities at local board meetings to ensure alignment with district needs
- Select a board member to serve as their district's delegate at the ASBA delegate assembly

Continued virtual option

To enhance participation, we are excited to continue offering a virtual option for the ASBA Delegate Assembly on Saturday, Sept. 6, 2025, at the JW Marriott Scottsdale Camelback Inn. The virtual option ensures all district delegates can participate in the voting process and have their voices heard. Our goal is to eliminate attendance barriers and ensure every delegate can take part.

Shaping the 2026 Political Agenda

In June 2025, the ASBA Legislative Committee will review proposals submitted by school governing boards statewide to develop ASBA's 2026 political priorities. These priorities will be voted on at the 2025 Delegate Assembly.

We extend our thanks to all district member boards who will submit proposals in May 2025. Your input is vital in shaping education policy in Arizona. With the continued virtual voting option, every member district can participate, ensuring our collective voice is stronger than ever.

ASBA urges all governing boards to:

- Review the draft political agenda document
- Select a board member to serve as your voting delegate
- Attend the delegate assembly and help shape Arizona's public education policies

Stay informed, get involved and make your voice heard in shaping ASBA's Political Agenda for 2025 and beyond.



Adequately and Equitably Fund District Schools to the National Median per Pupil Funding

- Maximize state funding to:
 - Provide competitive salaries to attract, recruit, and retain talented teachers and staff;
 - increase the pipeline of certified teachers;
 - increase the diversity of the teaching workforce, and fill difficult positions, including CTED instructors
- Provide consistent, dedicated sources of base funding that equips all Arizona public schools with adequate support to address the academic, social and emotional needs of its students including:
 - Up to date curriculum, technology, and classroom support to enrich academic success and engagement.
 - Student support staff dedicated to enhancing safe and effective learning environments;
 - Exceptional student services, gifted students, and early intervention programs;
 - Before and after school programs;
 - Fine arts education;
 - Career and technical education
 - Transportation.
 - Ensure the formula addresses the unique financial needs of schools serving students in poverty and in rural and remote schools.
 - Fund distance learning at 100%.
 - JROTC
- Repeal the constitutional aggregate expenditure limit via legislative referral to the voters.
- Fully fund full-day kindergarten and include kindergarten students in the override calculations.
- Preserve and protect the voters’ original intent of Propositions 123 and 301. Protect voters’ intent in funding k-12 education and

- oppose legislation that attempts to supplant or divert additional voter-approved funding streams.
- Index district additional assistance (DAA) funding for inflation.
 - Provide funding for new space before existing schools become overcrowded; advocate for the SFOB to set a standard for replacement of buildings that have exceeded their useful life; advocate for the SFOB to use a professional demographer firm in determining school construction; advocate for capacity standards that reflect the design of instructional space.
 - Provide consistent, dedicated and flexible sources of ongoing state capital funding to Arizona public schools to fully maintain and renew physical assets that were built with either local or state taxpayer dollars.
 - Eliminate unfunded mandates and administrative burdens.
 - Protect desegregation funding and return it to a primary tax levy.
 - Increase funding for exceptional student services based on the cost study, including for rural or remote areas, gifted students, and early intervention programs.
 - Fully fund the cost of student transportation for school bus services and maintenance supporting for CTEDs and rural schools.
 - Fully fund preschool programs in the K-12 funding formula for districts that offer preschool.
 - Replace current year funding with a transparent, reliable system that provides districts stable annual budgeting ability and technical reliability.
 - Prorate funding over the entire school year among all schools that a student has attended during the year.
 - Give all districts the authority to provide affordable housing options to faculty and staff.

Preserve, Respect, and Strengthen Local Control

- Ensure local control and flexibility in managing funds and programs, within the Arizona constitutional requirements of a general and uniform public school system.
- Change “override/budget increase” language to better reflect what voters are being asked to support. Update requirements associated with school district voter-approved bonds and overrides to improve efficiency and permit more accurate presentations of estimated property tax rates.
- Allow school districts full flexibility in the divestiture or use of taxpayer- funded assets.
- Oppose legislative intrusion on school site budgeting decisions.
- Maintain exclusive local authority over any measure that would propose to consolidate, unify, or restructure school districts.
- Support local board authority for student suspensions and open enrollment policies based on capacity.

- Amend current statute to allow school board members to use the e-equal system in addition to in-person signatures to appear on the ballot.
- Oppose any legislation that intends to lessen or curtail the legal authority of locally elected school boards including their authority to approve curriculum.
- Oppose legislative efforts to ban educational and supplemental materials that provide an inclusive and historically accurate, well-rounded education.
- Oppose any legislation that seeks to make school board elections partisan.
- Modify the number of signatures required for CTED board to align with similar school board candidates.



Improve Opportunities and Outcomes for All Students

- Increase the compulsory attendance age from 16 to 18 years or the attainment of a high school diploma or GED before the age of 18.
- Repeal and replace Prop. 203 with research-based bilingual education.
- Reform English Language Learner models of instruction to increase integration of English Learners and give schools flexibility and resources to administer them.
- Fully restore 9 th and 13 th grade CTED funding and allow them to serve students through age 21 regardless of graduation status to expand the window of opportunity students have to complete industry-recognized CTE programs.
- Support policy that recognizes, respects, and promotes teaching as a profession.
- Defend against efforts to limit the free speech rights of school employees.

- Oppose regulations, policies, and restrictions that overburden or unreasonably penalize educators and support staff as they educate and care for students.
- Redefine the role and purpose of standardized testing and develop meaningful assessments and other measurable outcomes.
- Support policy that protects school district employees and students from discrimination including on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Support legislation and access to funding that would allow school districts to offer school meals to all students free of charge.

Require Public Accountability And Transparency for Taxpayer Dollars Spent on Education

- Establish financial and academic transparency for all institutions and individuals who accept public funds. Enforce financial audit requirements and seek recovery of improperly received and/or expended funds by individuals, charter and public schools, private schools, and organizations.
- Repeal any program that gives funds for private schools, vouchers (Empowerment Scholarship Accounts) and private school subsidies (School Tuition Organizations) and prevent any future expansion.
- Require comparative classroom spending audits for school districts and all other institutions that accept public funds and define “classroom spending” as both instructional spending and student support spending.
- Support policy that encourages all eligible voters to exercise their right to participate in elections.

Arizona’s Rural and Remote Schools

- Ensure that students in Arizona’s small, rural and remote schools are considered by policymakers alongside students in large metropolitan schools.
- Equitably invest in technology modernization, reliable internet broadband access, technology support capability and professional development.
- Protect rural and remote school districts from inequitable impact due to formula adjustments, including transportation.

School Safety and Security

- Provide funding to individual districts to implement locally directed research-based school safety programs and mental health and wellbeing initiatives.
- Support policy that promotes social-emotional wellness as a critical component of improving social climate, safety and learning for all students and staff.

- Arizona’s school boards call upon all state, federal, tribal and local officials to address the causes and impact of increased self-harm and violence at K-12 schools.
- Arizona’s school boards call upon all state, federal, tribal and local officials to address the causes and impact of increased gun violence directed at K-12 schools.
- Fund programming to engage and support families and caregivers in culturally relevant and appropriate ways.
- Develop a more comprehensive harassment/bullying definition and system to better enhance the clarity of understanding and the protection of our youth. 15-341(A)(36)

Federal Advocacy

- Advocate for federal and tribal assistance for bus routes on tribal and federal land.
- Fully fund Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Oppose efforts that would reduce or interrupt impact aid funding and the secure rural schools program to Arizona school districts that receive it.

Bring the 4Cs to your board

Discover how this and other ASBA training opportunities can support your district's leadership. Contact Julie Bacon at jbacon@azsba.org or call 602-254-1100 to schedule a session today!



Effective governance starts with strong communication. A well-functioning governing board thrives when every member contributes their insights, perspectives and expertise. However, discussing agenda items and making collective decisions can sometimes be challenging.

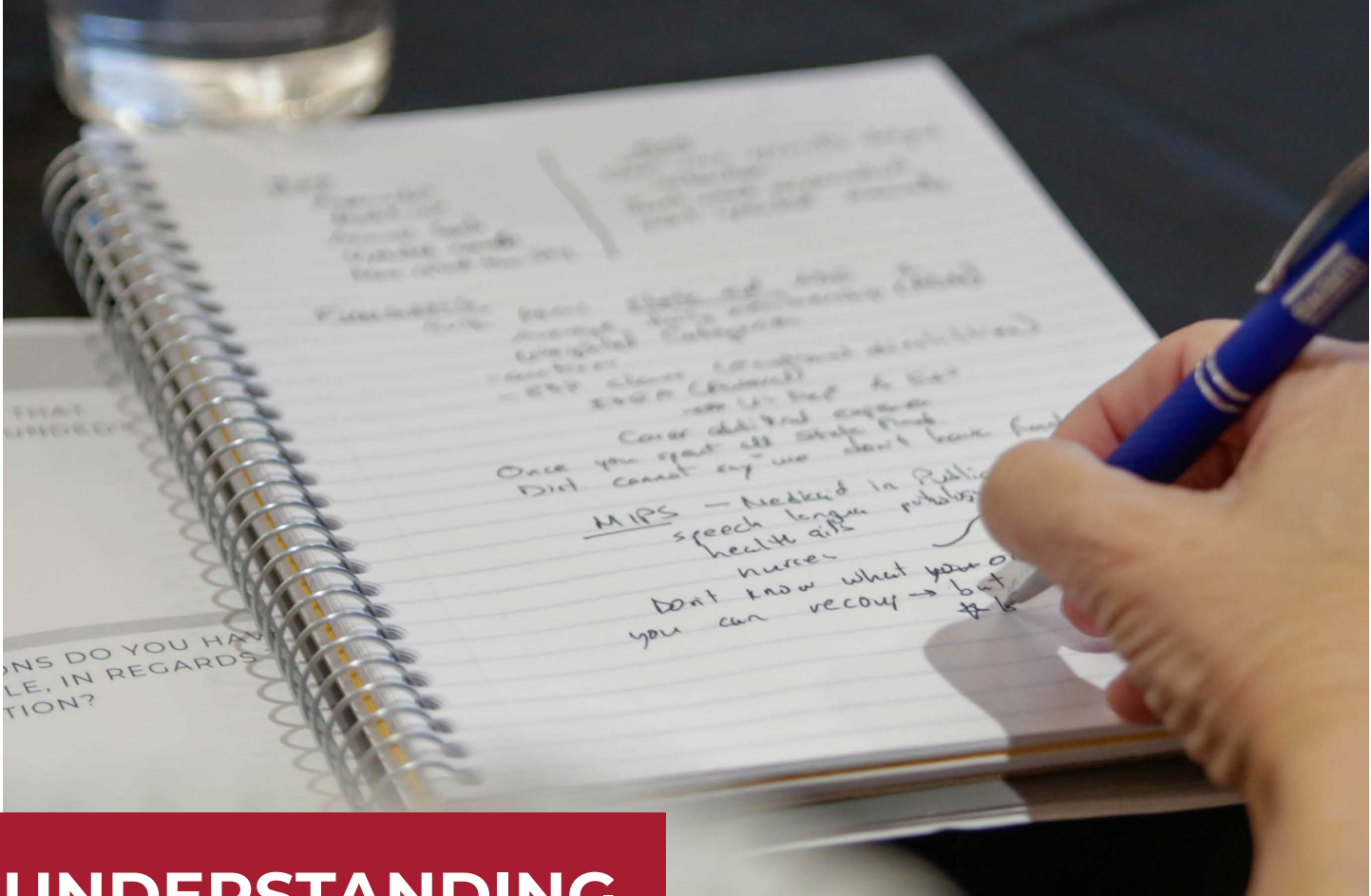
That's why ASBA, in partnership with The Ohio State University, is bringing you a powerful communication framework: The 4Cs of Civil Discourse. In this instance, civil discourse refers to the complex and difficult decisions policymakers and elected officials must make in public settings.

This interactive, two-hour training introduces the 4Cs which encourages us to be curious, charitable, conscientious and constructive—and to use those as guiding principles for productive and respectful board discussions.

By applying these key strategies, boards can navigate difficult conversations, improve collaboration and strengthen decision-making, and ultimately improve outcomes for students in their community.

ASBA is committed to providing tailored training and professional development designed to enhance board effectiveness and support continuous learning. Professional development is available when and where you need it, ensuring your board has the tools to succeed.

BUILDING STRONGER BOARDS WITH THE 4Cs OF CIVIL DISCOURSE



UNDERSTANDING FINANCIAL RISK

How can school boards assess their district's fiscal health?

School district finances are more than just numbers on a spreadsheet, the way those dollars are allocated directly impact students, teachers and the overall success of a district. As governing board members, understanding your district's financial risk report from the Arizona Auditor General is essential for making informed decisions that ensure long-term fiscal stability.

ASBA is committed to helping school board members navigate financial oversight, which is why we are launching a School Finance Boot Camp, an in-depth multi-session training series designed to provide boards with the tools to assess financial risk, interpret spending reports, read budget documents and develop strategies to monitor the financial health of your school district.

What is a financial risk report?

Each year, the Arizona Auditor General releases a school district financial risk analysis, which evaluates the fiscal health of Arizona school districts based on ten financial risk measures across seven categories:

- 1. **Change in weighted student count** – Is declining enrollment leading to revenue loss?
- 2. **Budget limit reserves** – Is the district depleting its reserves or exceeding budget limits?
- 3. **Financial position** – Is the district spending more than it receives, creating a deficit?
- 4. **Capital monies redirected to operations** – Is the district using capital funds for operational expenses, leaving less for infrastructure?
- 5. **Small school budget limit adjustment** – Has the district lost or gained access to small school funding adjustments?
- 6. **Frozen tax rates** – Has the property tax rate been frozen, limiting revenue growth?
- 7. **Receivership** – Is the district under state control due to financial mismanagement?

These risk indicators help school board members identify financial warning signs before they cause serious problems. Regularly reviewing this report as a team allows governing boards to take proactive steps to maintain stability and ensure responsible spending.

How does your district compare? Reviewing the spending report

In addition to financial risk analysis, the Arizona Auditor General’s Classroom Spending Report provides insight into how districts allocate their budgets. This report evaluates operational spending trends in seven key areas:

- Instruction (classroom spending)
- Student support
- Instruction support
- Administration
- Plant operations
- Food service
- Transportation

The report also compares each district’s spending to state and national averages, and similar districts as well as teacher salaries and student performance highlights.



Key questions for board members to ask their superintendent:

1. Are there any risk factors in the Auditor General’s financial risk report that need to be addressed?
2. How do our spending levels compare to similar districts and state averages?
3. Are we using capital funds for operational needs, and if so, how does this impact our long-term financial health?
4. Are we maintaining sufficient budget reserves to cover unexpected expenses?
5. How are declining or increasing student enrollment trends affecting our budget?
6. What strategies are in place to ensure we remain financially stable in the coming years?
7. How does our district’s spending impact teacher salaries and student outcomes?
8. Have we faced audit findings or compliance issues that need to be addressed?
9. What steps can the board take to support responsible financial planning?
10. How do we communicate financial health and budget priorities to our community?



Coming Soon!



To help governing boards understand the complexities of school finance and provide oversight ASBA is launching a School Finance Boot Camp—a hands-on training that will provide:

- ✓ An overview of Arizona’s school finance system
- ✓ Lessons on reading school district budgets
- ✓ A deep dive into the Auditor General’s financial risk and classroom spending reports
- ✓ Guidance on financial oversight and budget planning
- ✓ Best practices for ensuring transparency and accountability

This interactive training will be available to ASBA member boards, with flexible in-person and virtual options to accommodate districts statewide.

Take control of your district’s financial future

Understanding school finance is essential for effective governance, and ASBA is here to help board members build the knowledge and skills needed to oversee district finances with confidence.





ASBA DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

Beginning in August 2024, ASBA embarked on a journey across Arizona, showcasing the innovative educational programs and vibrant communities that shape the state's rich educational landscape.

Deer Valley Unified School District

Community Closets

How DVUSD is Transforming Student Support Through Compassion

The Deer Valley Unified School District (DVUSD) is demonstrating its ongoing commitment to fostering a supportive environment for students and families through its Ann E Community Closets initiative. These closets, located at Barry Goldwater High School, Deer Valley Middle School and Paseo Hills Elementary School, provide essential resources such as clothing, school supplies, and hygiene products to students in need.

The inspiration behind the Ann E Community Closets came from Ann E. Ordway, former DVUSD Board President, who recognized a need within the community.

"I would hear about it, so I'd fill things up in my car. I'd have backpacks, clothes, food and whatever. This blossomed and I grew out of one of the schools. I ended up in my garage with some of the stuff and then Goldwater became my home, which just got bigger," Ordway said.

The closets have grown into a network of resource centers thanks to the efforts of DVUSD staff, volunteers, and community partners. They ensure that students have access to what they need to succeed, both in and out of the classroom. Superintendent Dr. Curtis Finch highlighted the involvement of student groups in supporting these efforts.

"We have student councils and groups that help raise money or collect items for the closets. Our big plan is to have our TSW Transition School of Work, special needs students running the backside of all these closets," Finch said.

Local businesses and community members play a crucial role in keeping the closets stocked. Donations have been so abundant that the district no longer relies heavily on non-profit organizations for support.

"Initially, we were working with non-profit organizations to help backfill and keep the store established and stocked, but with an outpouring from business leaders and the community, we've had so many donations that we haven't needed to rely on non-profit organizations," said Ray Utter, Deer Valley Middle School Principal. The Ann E Community Closets

address more than just physical needs. They contribute to students' overall well-being by providing a sense of dignity and support during challenging times.

"Behind all of it is my belief that no matter what your geographical location is as a child where you live you didn't get to pick; you didn't get to pick your parents," Ordway said. "Someone somewhere must pick up what might be a void in your life and it's nice to be able to go to school in clothes that are your choice, with a belly full of food and a mind full of imagination." As the district continues to expand and

improve the Ann E Community Closets, their impact on students and families is expected to grow, further demonstrating the power of community collaboration in supporting education.

"We also have in our district 21 Boys and Girls Club bins that collect clothes. We get dollars from the Boys and Girls Clubs when clothes are donated to bins, so that's one form of our revenue. The revenue is used to buy things that cannot be donated to families in need," Finch added.

The Ann E Community Closets are a testament to what can be achieved when a community comes together to support its members, ensuring that all students thrive.

“

**Someone
somewhere
must pick up
what might be a
void in your life.**

– Ann E Ordway

Founder of Ann E's Closets



Community Pride

Celebrating Community Pride at Alpine Elementary School District

What makes Alpine Elementary School District (AESD) shine is its unwavering sense of community and commitment. Despite its small, rural setting, the bond between staff, students and families creates an environment rich in support and collaboration. Alpine educators go above and beyond, offering personalized attention and instruction to ensure each student’s success. Whether in the classroom, during extracurriculars or in one-on-one moments, its staff’s dedication is palpable and inspiring.

“We have a team that is not only committed to meeting state standards but also passionate about making a meaningful impact on students’ lives. Whether it’s in the classroom, during extracurricular activities or in one on-one moments, our staff consistently demonstrates genuine care and commitment,” said Brad Pico, Superintendent and Principal of Alpine Elementary School.



The district’s close-knit, family-like atmosphere allows its educators to provide big opportunities and experiences despite its size. Witnessing its students thrive and feel supported is a source of immense pride for all AESD.

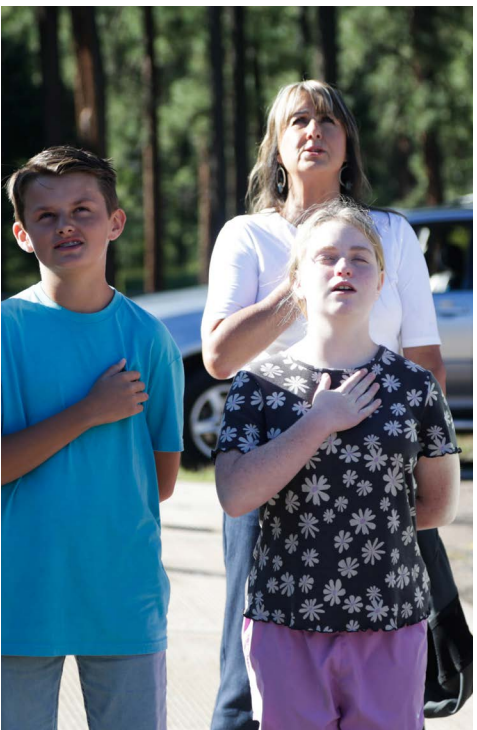
Alpine Elementary stands out for its personalized approach to education and deep community ties. In the small district, every student is known and supported individually, something larger districts often find challenging.

AESD’s flexibility and responsiveness enable it to tailor instruction and adapt to students’ needs swiftly.

The strong relationships AESD foster—between students, staff and families—create a supportive network that enhances its students’ educational experiences. This sense of community fosters a nurturing environment where each student can excel and feel valued.

“In a small, rural district like ours, every student is known by name and our staff has the ability to tailor instruction and support in ways that simply aren’t possible in larger settings. We can quickly implement new ideas, adjust to challenges and offer opportunities that cater specifically to our students and their interests. Whether it’s innovative classroom practices, creative extracurricular activities or unique community partnerships, our district can be nimble and forward-thinking in ways that benefit our students directly,” added Pico.

AESD’s agility allows it to quickly implement new ideas and adapt to challenges, offering dynamic and relevant education. This close-knit environment also enhances community involvement, creating a collaborative atmosphere that benefits both students and their families.



The close-knit nature of the district enriches the educational experience by fostering a strong sense of belonging. Students are more engaged and confident when they feel valued as individuals. Teachers benefit from this community spirit as well, leading to enhanced collaboration and communication.

“When students feel that they are part of a caring community where they are known and valued as individuals, it boosts their confidence and motivates them to engage more actively in their learning. This strong sense of belonging leads to better academic outcomes, as students feel safe and supported in taking risks and challenging themselves,” noted Pico.

Active family and community involvement further strengthens this partnership, providing mentorship opportunities, community events and real-world learning experiences.

One standout moment for AESD was when its staff united to set district goals. This collective effort reflected the team’s commitment to improvement and growth, and it was a testament to Alpines shared vision for the future. The collaboration and dedication displayed were truly inspiring and set the stage for meaningful change. As AESD moves forward, it’s excited about the potential for growth and innovation. The district’s focus is expanding opportunities—through new STEM initiatives, enhanced arts programs and real-world learning experiences—demonstrates its commitment to a well-rounded education.

Alpine Elementary School
District Cont...

“Our staff came together with a shared sense of purpose and commitment to begin the important process of writing district goals. Setting aside differences, each member brought a willingness to collaborate and a determination to create positive change,” shared Pico.

AESD is also investing in professional development for its staff, ensuring they have the tools and strategies needed to deliver exceptional instruction. This commitment to growth will positively impact our students and community.

“I’m excited about our emphasis on professional development for our staff. By investing in our educators and ensuring they have access to the latest teaching strategies and tools, we empower them to continue growing as professionals and deliver even more effective instruction. This commitment to continuous improvement will have a lasting impact on the quality of education we provide,” stated Pico.

AESD’s mission and vision are guided by its values of personalized education, collaboration, and continuous improvement. These principles are reflected daily in its operations—through personalized student support, strong community partnerships, and a commitment to staying current with educational best practices.

These guiding values are not just ideals but the foundation of the district’s success and the driving force behind its efforts. Community comes together to support its members, ensuring that all students thrive.

“
We have a team that is not only committed to meeting state standards but also passionate about making a meaningful impact on students’ lives.

– Brad Pico
Superintendent & Principal at AESD



Patagonia Public Schools

Learning Labs and Restorative Circles

Patagonia Public Schools leads the way with Learning Labs and Restorative Circles

Nestled at an elevation of over 4,000 feet in the beautiful riparian corridor of Sonoita Creek, Patagonia Public Schools reflects the tight-knit values of the town it serves. Located between the Santa Rita and Patagonia Mountains, the town of Patagonia spans 1.3 square miles and is home to just 896 residents. Despite their small size, Patagonia Public Schools are making a big impact with their innovative use of Learning Labs and Restorative Circles. These programs are not just changing how students learn—they are transforming the entire school culture.



Learning Labs: A hub for inclusivity and support

Ann Gortarez, Special education director at Patagonia Public Schools recalls how the Learning Labs were born from a desire to support students who didn’t necessarily have IEPs or learning disabilities but still needed extra help. “When I started working here, there were a lot of kids that just needed help... so we rebranded our resource rooms as Learning Labs,” she explains.

Now, these labs serve as safe, welcoming spaces where students can receive help in any subject area and they also serve as calming corners for students in Patagonia Elementary School who need a quiet place to decompress. “It’s not just academic support; it’s a place where students can come to be calm and refocus,” says Gortarez. At both the elementary and high school levels, Learning Labs are fostering a more inclusive and supportive educational environment.

Learning Labs: A hub for inclusivity and support

In addition to the Learning Labs, Restorative Circles are playing a critical role in strengthening relationships and addressing conflicts at Patagonia Public Schools. Restorative Circles provide students with a structured, safe environment to express their thoughts and feelings, promoting open communication and mutual respect.

At Patagonia High School, English teacher Journee Hayes explains how the circles first serve to build community and then, as the year progresses, help resolve more serious issues. “Restorative circles give students a safe space to speak and share their stories... everyone gets a chance to speak,” says Hayes. This process has proven invaluable for addressing both day-to-day challenges and more complex conflicts, with the involvement of school administration when needed.



“It’s really helped strengthen community and build relationships—not just between students, but also between students and teachers,” Hayes adds.

At Patagonia Middle School, teacher Kate Peake shares how Restorative Circles have had a transformative impact on both student behavior and academic achievement. “We have seen huge improvements... students are much more willing to address issues when they come up,” says Peake. She notes that students are now requesting circles themselves, demonstrating that they value the opportunity to hear each other’s perspectives and work through conflicts together.

Patagonia Public Schools: A reflection of community values

Patagonia Public Schools, encompassing Patagonia Elementary School with an enrollment of 101 students, Patagonia High School with an enrollment of 79 students and Patagonia Middle School with an enrollment of 38, mirrors the close-knit, caring values of the community. With a mission of nurturing and empowering both academic and individual excellence, the district aims to create multi-talented individuals prepared to pursue their potential and contribute meaningfully in a complex world.

The success of Learning Labs and Restorative

“
We have seen huge improvements... students are much more willing to address issues when they come up

– Kate Peake
Middle School Teacher, Patagonia Public Schools

Circles is a testament to Patagonia Public Schools commitment to fostering a supportive, inclusive environment where every student can thrive. As the district continues to embrace these innovative practices, it not only enhances academic achievement but also cultivates empathy, respect and strong interpersonal connections.

A blueprint for success

In a world where schools are seeking to balance academic excellence with social-emotional development, Patagonia Public Schools is leading by example. Their Learning Labs and Restorative Circles offer a clear path forward for schools across Arizona, demonstrating that when students are given the tools to support one another and resolve conflicts peacefully, the whole school community flourishes.

Patagonia Public Schools mission to nurture both academic and individual excellence reflects the spirit of the town it serves. As their success continues to grow, their model serves as a beacon for schools across the state to follow.



We are Somerton

The community spirit and pillars of Somerton School District



Nestled just 12 miles from the U.S.-Mexico border, Somerton School District is a dynamic community rooted in resilience and a commitment to education in Yuma County. Established in 1902, the district emerged from the determination of early settlers who overcame the challenges posed by Colorado River floods to unlock the agricultural potential of the area. Today, that spirit of perseverance continues to thrive, fostering a supportive environment for students in grades Pre-K-8 across its seven schools.

At the heart of Somerton’s mission are innovative programs that enrich the educational experience, from Fine Arts to STEM initiatives. These offerings enhance academic achievement and promote personal growth, making Somerton a standout district dedicated to shaping well-rounded future leaders. “Knowing that I can come to work and work with people who love the community is something I cherish every day,” shared Omar Duron, Superintendent of Somerton School District.

“
**My message is that
here in Somerton
we’re so united
and we know that
here we are somer,
somos, somer**

–Omar Duron
Superintendent at Somerton School District



As a close-knit community where many residents have deep roots, Somerton benefits from a smaller district environment. Many staff members are residents who understand the importance of nurturing their students—not just for their schools but for the entire community because they are part of this community. The district emphasizes three essential pillars: safety, academics and enrichment, which are woven into the fabric of every school.

At the heart of this commitment are Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) that operate district-wide, enabling administrators and educators to collaborate closely. This teamwork ensures that all students receive data-driven instruction tailored to their needs. “During these PLC meetings, our instructional strategist emphasizes how we can continuously grow to impact student learning,” explained Selene Arredondo, Principal of Desert Sonora Elementary. This collective approach not only

enhances academic performance but also fosters a safe and effective learning environment across the district.

Tierra Del Sol Elementary offers a variety of Fine Arts programs, including art, music, PE and other specials that enrich the educational experience by exposing students to subjects beyond the standard curriculum. Their commitment to enrichment is exemplified in their thriving robotics club, where 20 enthusiastic students are preparing for competition. “Our main focus is on exploring different interests, so students can consider future careers in technology or STEM opportunities,” said Gema Felix, Principal of Tierra Del Sol Elementary. The success of these programs highlights how Somerton enriches the whole child, fostering creativity and collaboration.

Additionally, the district celebrates its cultural heritage through the Folkloric Dance program, which encourages students to engage with their roots while promoting teamwork and self-expression.



Somerton School District Cont...

The Somerton Middle School Cobras Wrestling team exemplifies the district's dedication to development, recently claiming league championships. This achievement reflects not only the hard work, dedication, and sportsmanship of the student-athletes but also the pride of the entire community, who rally behind their team and celebrate their success together.

Somerton stands united in its mission. Together, the district is committed to building a bright future for its students, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to thrive. "My message is that here in Somerton we're so united and we know that here we are, somer, somos, somer," says Duron.

The district's commitment to the three essential pillars of safety, academics and enrichment resonates throughout the community. Each school embodies these principles, fostering an environment where students feel secure, challenged and inspired to explore their passions. This shared dedication strengthens the bonds among educators and community members, creating a vibrant network of support. Together, they cultivate a nurturing atmosphere that empowers every child to thrive and become a leader, ensuring that the legacy of resilience and commitment continues to flourish in Somerton for generations to come.



Central Valley Institute of Technology

Building Futures

The Impact of CAVIT Programs on Student Success

Nestled in the heart of Pinal County, the Central Arizona Valley Institute of Technology (CAVIT) is more than just a public school district—it's a launchpad for career success. Working in partnership with seventeen high schools, CAVIT is dedicated to preparing 11th and 12th-grade students for high-wage, high-demand occupations. By equipping students with technical skills, industry certifications and even free college credits, CAVIT is not only shaping futures but also strengthening the local economy.

At CAVIT, students don't just learn—they thrive. The programs offered are as diverse as they are dynamic, aligning with the demands of today's workforce and providing hands-on training that ensures graduates are job-ready. "Instruction is scaffolded during clinics ensuring students receive a deep understanding of theory and practice. Teachers provide rigor and relevance so students can apply knowledge in relative ways," said Steve Johnson, CAVIT faculty.

Exploring Career and Technical Education at CAVIT

CAVIT provides students with comprehensive career and technical education programs that combine classroom instruction with hands-on experience, preparing them for real-world challenges. Each program emphasizes both technical mastery and community engagement, allowing students to develop skills that have immediate, practical applications.

The **Dental Assistant program** offers students the opportunity to gain hands-on training in dental procedures while emphasizing the importance of patient education.





Through the Dental Clinic, students provide essential services to community members, such as cleanings and brushing/flossing education, building both their technical skills and their understanding of patient care.

In the Massage Therapy program, students delve into the art and science of therapeutic massage, focusing on wellness and rehabilitation. They apply their skills in the Massage Spa, where they provide services to enhance the health and well-being of community residents, connecting their training to real-world outcomes. The Fire Science program equips

students with the skills needed for careers in fire safety and emergency response. With hands-on simulations and training in industry-standard protocols, students gain the experience necessary to confidently address real-world emergencies.

Students in the Law Enforcement program study the fundamentals of public safety, including investigations and community engagement. Through immersive training, they prepare for careers in law enforcement, learning how to balance legal knowledge with practical application to serve their

communities effectively.

The Veterinary Assistant program allows students to work directly with animals through the Animal Day Spa. Here, they provide grooming and wellness services, honing their technical skills while contributing to the well-being of pets in the community.

In the Medical Assistant program, students develop both clinical and administrative skills essential for healthcare careers. They operate the Wellness Clinic, where they provide basic health screenings to community members, gaining invaluable experience in patient interaction and care.

The Pharmacy Clinic provides students with an opportunity to apply their knowledge by creating products such as lotions and lip balms for community use. This hands-on experience reinforces their understanding of pharmaceutical practices while allowing them to directly engage with clinic participants.

CAVIT's programs not only equip students with industry-relevant skills but also foster a sense of community responsibility. By integrating education with real-world application through clinic days, students leave prepared to make meaningful contributions to their chosen fields and beyond.

Impacting the Local Economy

CAVIT's mission extends beyond its students, contributing directly to the vitality of Pinal County. By addressing workforce needs and providing job-ready graduates, CAVIT helps sustain industries vital to the community.

Programs are designed to meet the demands of high-growth sectors, ensuring that students are prepared to step into in-demand roles upon graduation.



“
This is high-stakes learning in clinics that students manage and service as a foundation to their learning

–Steve Johnson
CAVIT Board President

Student Success and Beyond

CAVIT isn't just about training—it's about transformation. Through industry-aligned programs, students gain more than skills; they earn confidence, credentials and a head start in their careers. “There is no second chance for clinical clients to receive poor service. Students recognize this and this is the real deal,” explained Johnson. By combining technical education with opportunities to earn free college credits, CAVIT positions its students for success, whether they choose to enter the workforce directly or pursue higher education.

A Partnership for Opportunity

The collaboration between CAVIT and seventeen high schools is a testament to the power of partnerships in education. Together, they inspire students to achieve their potential while supporting local industries with a skilled workforce.

In every classroom, lab and simulation, CAVIT is shaping the leaders, caregivers, protectors and innovators of tomorrow. “There is no haphazard or inappropriate behavior allowed. This is high-stakes learning in clinics that students manage and service as a foundation to their learning,” stated Johnson. For students in Pinal County, CAVIT isn’t just an opportunity—it’s the start of a bright and rewarding future.



Showcase Your Success

Do you have an outstanding program or want to share your district pride?

Contact **Dani Cole**, Multimedia Communications Specialist, at **dcole@azsba.org** to schedule a visit and be featured in ASBA District Highlights!

Stay Informed and Engaged with ASBA's Specialized Communications!



ASBA is proud to introduce our suite of specialized communications designed to keep you at the forefront of educational developments. Whether you're a school board member, superintendent, or administrative professional, our goal is to provide targeted information that meets your unique needs and empowers you in your role.

Connect E-newsletter

Stay connected with the broader ASBA community through our Connect E-newsletter. Released twice a month, Connect brings you the latest news, updates, and resources from across Arizona. Whether you're in a large urban district or a small rural community, Connect ensures you stay informed about the issues and opportunities that impact your district the most.



Superintendent's Corner

Exclusively for district superintendents, the Superintendent's Corner delivers focused content addressing the specific challenges and opportunities faced by educational leaders. From leadership insights to policy updates, this monthly e-newsletter is a vital resource for navigating the ever-evolving educational landscape effectively.

ASAP Corner

Administrative professionals are essential to the smooth functioning of our school districts. The ASAP Corner e-newsletter is tailored specifically for administrative professionals, providing practical advice, updates on best practices, and the latest tools to support your crucial work. Delivered monthly, ASAP Corner ensures you have the information and resources needed to excel in your role.

ASBA Monthly District Highlight

Introducing the ASBA Monthly District Highlight, showcasing exemplary practices and achievements across Arizona's school districts. Celebrate successes, learn from innovative approaches, and stay inspired to drive positive change in your community.

Pulse on Policy

Your exclusive monthly update as an ASBA policy subscriber, keeping you informed on key legislative developments, policy updates and important insights that impact Arizona schools. Stay ahead with expert analysis and the latest policy news—all in one place.

If you are not currently receiving these communications, please contact Ben Adams, Membership Services Coordinator at badams@azsba.org to ensure you stay connected with all the latest updates and resources.

ASBA earns prestigious Copper Medallion for rebrand journey campaign

ASBA was presented with the coveted Copper Medallion Award for the third time on **Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2025**, at the annual ASPRA*tion Awards and Superintendents' Luncheon. This prestigious recognition was awarded for ASBA's **Rebrand Journey Campaign**, which effectively highlighted the transformation of ASBA's brand to better reflect its mission, vision and commitment to serving Arizona's school boards.

Each year, ASPRA celebrates standards of excellence in school public relations and honors the people and organizations supporting public relations efforts in Arizona's schools.

The award submissions for a Copper Medallion are rigorous and include clear demonstrations of **research, planning, implementation and evaluation** of a major communications project.

ASBA also earned additional awards for excellence in school communications, including:

- **Award of Excellence for the Back-to-School Newspaper**, recognized for its compelling content and engaging design.
- **Award of Merit for Photography**, celebrating ASBA's ability to capture powerful images that tell the story of Arizona's school boards and public education.

The ASPRA*tion Awards program recognizes creative and effective work in school communications in a number of categories, evaluated by judges across the U.S. through writing, photography, video, social media samples and more. Projects submitted were completed between **August 2023 and November 2024 and demonstrated strategic planning, implementation and measurable success.**

ASBA's continued recognition in school public relations underscores its commitment to **effective communication, innovative outreach and advocacy for public education** in Arizona.



ASBA Policy Services: What We Offer



Ensure Compliance with State and Federal Laws

A subscription to Policy Services provides ASBA member districts with a comprehensive, cost-efficient way to keep the District Policy Manual in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. We offer a license to the ASBA Model Policy Manual® and timely Policy Advisories issued throughout the year, along with various supports to ensure effective and efficient policy adoption, implementation, and review.

Comprehensive, Cost-Effective, Compliance-Based

Subscribers to ASBA Policy Services gain access to:

- **On-Call Consultation:** Our team of policy and governance experts are available for on-call consultation at no additional cost.
- **Policy Amendment Assistance:** Assistance with policy amendments.
- **Online Publishing and Hosting:** Through our PolicyBridge® platform, we offer online publishing and hosting of the District Policy Manual.
- **Policy Manual Reviews:** Comprehensive reviews of the District Policy Manual are recommended every four years and available for a nominal additional fee.
- **Complimentary Employee Handbook Service:** Access to the ASBA Employee Handbook Service, customizable to connect district policy with employment rules and expectations.
- **PolicyBridge® Queue Management Free Assistance:** ASBA offers free assistance with managing your PolicyBridge® queues. Collaborate with our team to tackle this task, or simply provide us with your adoption dates, and we'll handle the rest at no additional cost.

Our equitable pricing structure ensures affordability for every ASBA member district, from the largest to the smallest, with top-notch service and support.

The ASBA Model Policy Manual®

The ASBA Model Policy Manual® compiles all ASBA original policy content and Policy Advisories to ensure member districts comply with state and federal laws. Subscribing districts are licensed to use this manual as the basis for their own District Policy Manual.

Policy Advisories

Subscribers receive timely Policy Advisories containing model policies, regulations and exhibits developed by ASBA in response to changes in state and federal laws. These advisories ensure governing boards can adopt up-to-date policies.



On-Call Experts with a Commitment to a 2–3-Hour Response Time

Policy implementation can be complex. Our policy and governance experts, who are experienced educators with first-hand expertise in applying policy in educational settings, are available for on-call information and assistance at no additional cost to Policy Services subscribers. ASBA is committed to providing timely support, ensuring a response time of 2–3 hours via phone and email.

Online Hosting of the District Policy Manual

ASBA hosts the most current version of the District Policy Manual through the PolicyBridge® platform at no additional cost. This web-based format provides 24/7 public access, is easily navigable, and is available on both the district and ASBA websites. The platform includes editing, search, and comparison functions to save time and enhance customization.

Policy Manual Reviews: A Streamlined, Time-Saving Process

ASBA recommends a policy manual review every four years for subscribing districts to ensure compliance and address local needs, priorities, and practices. Our policy services team now handles the entire process, conducting an in-person, comprehensive comparison of the District Policy Manual to the ASBA Model Policy Manual®. This streamlined approach reduces the time required from district staff, saving your district valuable time and effort while identifying gaps and opportunities for customization.

Policy Amendment Assistance

Policy amendment assistance is available at no additional cost. Subscribers can add or customize policies to reflect local needs, with the understanding that such policies are considered the district's own and not subject to ASBA copyright.

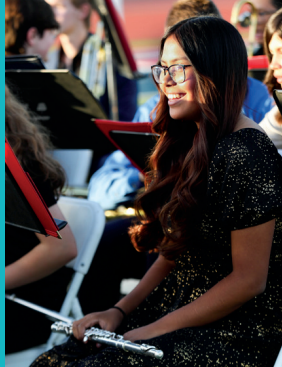
Access to ASBA's Complimentary Employee Handbook Service

Available exclusively to Policy Services subscribers, the ASBA Employee Handbook is complimentary, customizable and connects district policy to employment rules and expectations. Subscribers receive updates on legal changes and support from Policy Services staff.

2025 New Services:

- **New Policy Subscriber Super User Webinars**
- **Regional Hands-on Training Sessions**
- **User-Friendly Training Materials and Videos**
- **Policy Subscriber Super User Listserv**
- **Updated Policy Manual**
- **Upgraded PolicyBridge Platform**

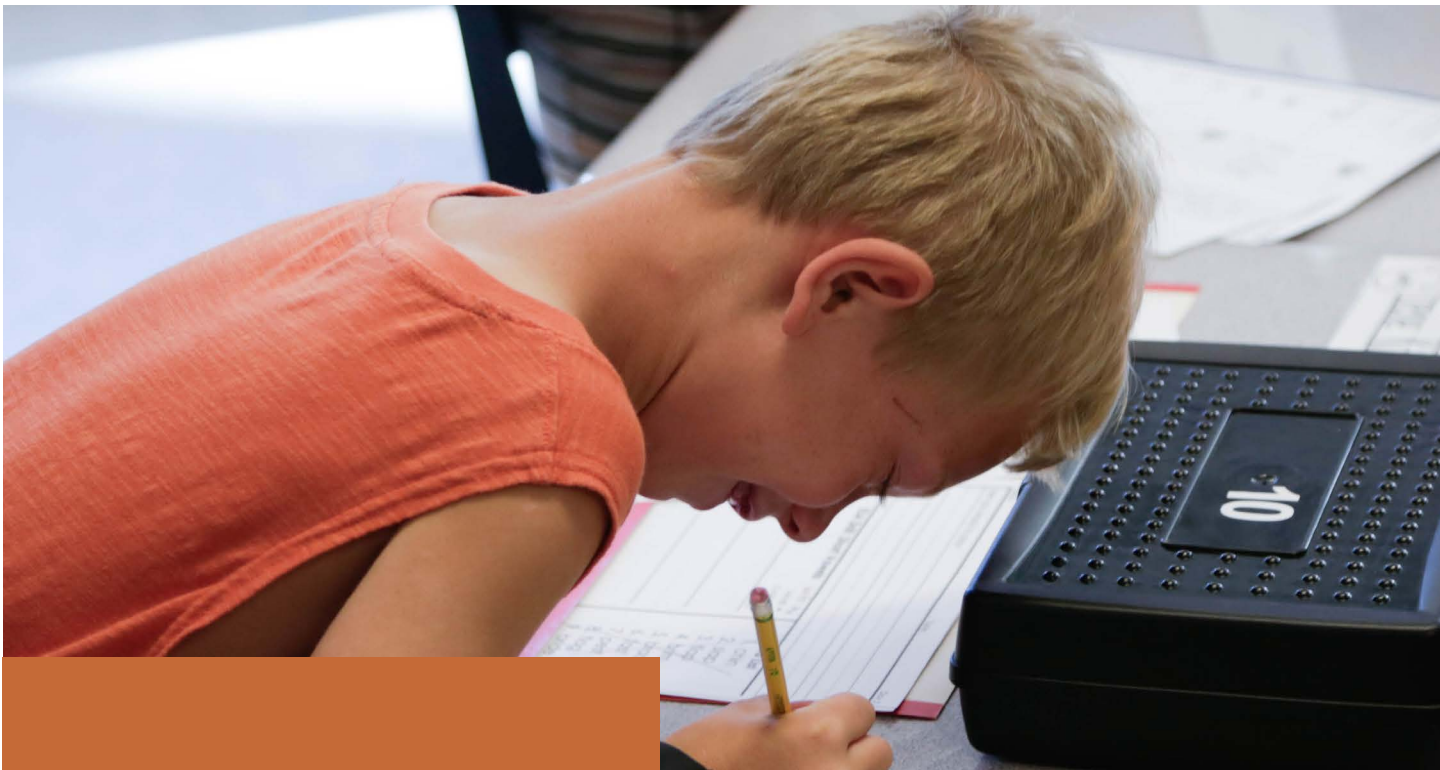
With the ASBA Policy Team, it's all about relationships, two-way communication, and exceptional customer service. We're here to support our policy subscribers every step of the way.



For more information, visit the ASBA website:
azsba.org/policy or call **602.254.1100**



EDUCATE. ADVOCATE. ELEVATE.



2025 ASBA POLICY SERVICES

Recommended
& Required Dates

What can you find in the calendar provided by your ASBA policy team?

The policy services team maintains a calendar of recommended and required dates for subscribers. This calendar is not a comprehensive list of everything ASBA offers or every date a board member must know about. Instead, it is a comprehensive list of statutory deadlines and where those deadlines are listed in the ASBA model policy manual. The calendar is intended for use by district administrators in conjunction with the ASBA policy manual.

This calendar may be used by district administrators and executive staff to identify deadlines to achieve statutory compliance.



2025 Calendar of Recommended and Required Actions by Arizona School Districts — Quick Reference

JANUARY & FEBRUARY

- Jan.** BDA—Board Organizational Meeting
- Feb. 28** JQ—Student Fines, Fees, and Charges

MARCH & APRIL

- Mar. 31** JFAB—Tuition/Admission of Nonresident Students
- Apr. 1** IHB—Special Instructional Programs
- Apr. 15** EB—Environmental and Safety Program

MAY & JUNE

- May - June** Sine die, the Arizona legislature adjourns its session annually in May or June, usually.
- May 15** DBC-R—Budget Planning, Preparation, and Schedules
- June 30** JFAB—Tuition/Admission of Nonresident Students

JULY & AUGUST

- July 1** IHB—Special Instructional Programs
IHB—Gifted and Talented Education
- July 5** DBC-R—Budget Planning, Preparation, and Schedules
- July 15** DB—Annual Budget
IHAA—English Instruction
- Aug. 29** DBC-R—Budget Planning, Preparation, and Schedules

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER

- Sept.-Oct.** Conduct first and second reads of annual policy advisories
- Sept. 1** JEB—Entrance Age Requirements
- Sept. 15** IHAA—English Instruction
- Sept. 30** JFAB—Tuition/Admission of Nonresident Students
- Oct. 1** IHB—Special Instructional Programs
- Oct. 15** DIC—Financial Reports and Statements
FA—Facilities Development Goals/Priority Objectives
GCBA—Professional Staff Salary Schedules

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

- Nov. 15** JLCB—Immunizations of Students
- Dec. 31** JFAB—Tuition/Admission of Nonresident Students

WHY I SERVE

The Why I Serve campaign highlights newly elected school board members, providing them with a platform to share their personal motivations and aspirations for making a difference in their communities.



WHY I Serve

Why I Serve – Newly Elected Board Members share their stories

The Why I Serve campaign shines a spotlight on the newly elected school board members, offering a platform for them to share their personal motivations and aspirations for serving their communities.

For many, the commitment to advancing education is rooted in a belief that every student deserves the opportunity to succeed, regardless of their background. Others are driven by a passion for fostering equity, ensuring that resources and opportunities are distributed fairly across all schools in their districts.

By highlighting these diverse and inspiring stories, the campaign emphasizes the unique perspectives each board member brings to the table, showcasing their individual journeys and the varied experiences that shape their vision for educational success.



"I've been in education for the last nine years. First five years I taught as a teacher and then the last four years of administration. I just want to bring that experience back to my community."

– **Michael Butts, Roosevelt USD**



"I'm serving because I'm an alumni of PVUSD and I know the value of the public education I got in Paradise. Serving as a board member, I'll be able to continue to help students grow in our district and get that positive public education that I experienced when I was here as a student."

– **Dr. Amanda Courtwright-Lim, Paradise Valley USD**

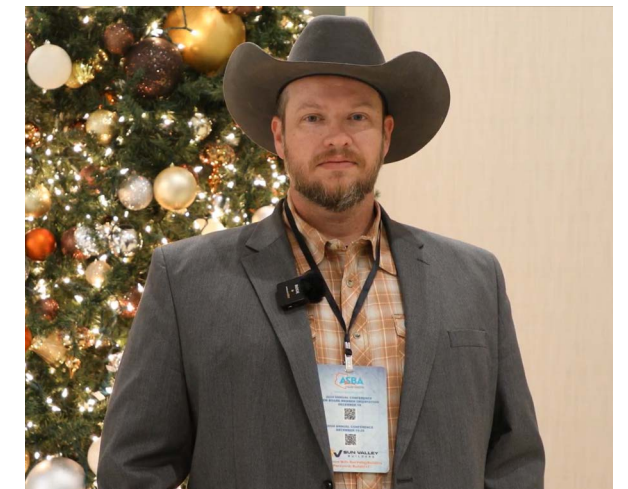


"I serve because representation is important. As a proud product of public education, I think it's important to have leaders making decisions that come from the community. As a first generation low income student, I bring my experiences with me. But not only that, as a college advisor, would like to share those opportunities with students and college and career readiness does not start in high school it starts in kindergarten."

– **Victoria Castor-Corral, Roosevelt USD**

"I ran for a school board because I have 3 kids in the school district. I graduated from the school district myself. I have a lot of school pride. The community is very supportive of the school district and I wanted to be able to contribute and do the best that I could."

– **Tyler Attaway, Safford USD**



The testimonials not only reflect the personal commitment of these leaders but also serve as a call to action, encouraging others to get involved in their communities and support the advancement of public education. Through their dedication, these school board members are paving the way for meaningful change, fostering environments where students, educators and families can thrive together.

Ultimately, the Why I Serve campaign celebrates the strength of community leadership and the shared goal of improving Arizona's schools for the benefit of every student, laying the foundation for a brighter and more equitable future in education.

We want to hear why **YOU** serve.

Share your story with us! Email Jayla Alston, Multimedia Communications Specialist, at jalston@azsba.org to be featured on our social media as we follow new school board members embarking on their first year of service.

Explore New Horizons with ASBA's Monthly Webinars!

Register now for
Monthly Webinars



Unlock new insights and empower your role as a school board member with ASBA's dynamic Monthly Webinars. Every month, we invite you to join engaging sessions tailored to enhance your ability to govern effectively and lead positive change in your school district.

Upcoming Topics:

What is YOUR decision making framework

This session explores decision-making frameworks and diverse community opinions, leaving you with fresh ideas and a renewed commitment to representation.

Governance Team Retreats

With careful planning, board retreats become powerful team-building experiences—discover what they look like and get ideas for yours.

How Does Your Board Operate?

Feeling adrift as a board member? ASBA's NEW Board Operations Manual provides the tools to navigate roles and relationships effectively.

From Idea to District Policy

Explore how a legislator's idea evolves into district policy, navigating the challenges and roadblocks along the way.

Can't attend live? No problem! All webinars are recorded for convenient on-demand viewing. Register in advance to receive the recording directly via email.

Dates:

- **Feb. 11, 2025** | It's Your Vote: What is YOUR Decision Making Framework?
- **Mar. 11, 2025** | Governance Team Retreats: Using Board Retreats to Build Team Culture and Collaborative Relationships
- **April 8, 2025** | How Does Your Board Operate? ASBA's Board Operations Manual
- **May 13, 2025** | From Idea to District Policy: The Long and Winding Road



Don't miss this opportunity to deepen your expertise and stay informed about critical education topics. Strengthen your role as a school board member by registering now for ASBA's Monthly Webinars.



azsba.org/events-asba



2025

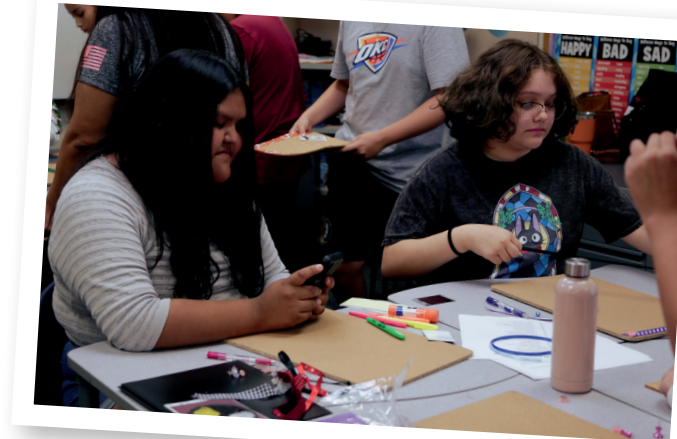


February

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 1 | Freedom Day, the National |
| 2 | Groundhog Day |
| 3-7 | School Counseling Week |
| 5 | Mexican Constitution Day |
| 10 | National African American Parent |
| 10-14 | Involvement Day |
| 14 | Valentine's Day |
| 15-22 | National FFA Week |
| 17 | Presidents' Day |
| 24-28 | National PTA Founders Day Public Schools Week |

ALL MONTH

African American History Month
Career and Technical Education Month
Children's Dental Health Month



March

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 1 | Korean Independence Movement Day
Peace Corps Anniversary
First Day of Ramadan |
| 2 | Read Across America, NEA |
| 2-8 | Foreign Language Week
School Social Work Week |
| 3 | Lent (Orthodox) |
| | National Anthem Adoption |
| 3-7 | National School Breakfast Week |
| 5 | Ash Wednesday
Lent begins |



2025



- 8 International Women's Day
 - 9 Campfire Birthday
 - 13-14 Purim
 - 16-22 National Poison Prevention Week
 - 17 St. Patrick's Day
 - 20 Absolutely Incredible Kid Day
 - Bahá'í New Year's Day
 - 21 Elimination of Racial Discrimination Day
 - 22 World Water Day
 - 31 Eid-al-Fitr
- ALL MONTH
- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Irish American Heritage Month | American Red Cross Month |
| Middle Level Education Month | Social Work Month |
| Music in Our Schools Month | Women's History Month |
| Nutrition Month | Youth Art Month |

April

- 1 April Fools' Day
- 2 Autism Awareness Day
- International Children's Book Day
- 5-11 Young Child Week
- 6-12 National Library Week
- 7 World Health Day
- 8 Buddha's Birthday
- 9 National Library Workers Day
- 12-13 First days of Passover
- 14 Baisakhi
- 17 Lent ends
- 18 Good Friday
- 19-20 Concluding Days of Passover
- 20 Easter Day
- 20-26 Administrative Professionals
- 20-26 National Volunteer Week
- 21 Patriot's Day
- 21-25 Public School Volunteer Week
- 22 Earth Day
- 23 Administrative Professionals Day
- 23-24 Holocaust Remembrance Day
- 24 Yom Hashoah
- 24-30 Armenian Genocide
- 25 Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day
- 29 National Student Leadership Week
- National Arbor Day
- International Dance Day



- ALL MONTH
- Autism Month, World
 - National Occupational Therapy Month
 - National Poetry Month
 - School Library Month

2025



May

- 1 Law Day
- 1-7 National Physical Education and Sport Week
- 2 School Lunch Hero Day
- 4-10 Be Kind to Animals Week
- 4-11 National Music Week
- 5 Cinco de Mayo
- 5-9 National Teacher Appreciation Week
- 5-11 National Children's Book Week
- 6 National Teacher Day
- 7 National Bike to School Day
- 8 National School Nurse Day
- 11 World Red Cross Day
- 11-17 Mother's Day
- 17 Food Allergy Awareness Week
- 26 Armed Forces Day
- 29 Memorial Day
- Ascension
- Ascension of the Baha'u'llah
- World No Tobacco Day

- ALL MONTH
- Asian Pacific American Heritage Month
 - Better Hearing and Speech Month

June

- 1-3 Shavuot
- 5 World Environment Day
- 8 Pentecost
- Race Unity Day
- 14 Flag Day
- 15 Father's Day
- 16 International Day of African Child
- 19 Juneteenth National Independence Day
- 20 First Day of Summer

- ALL MONTH
- Caribbean-American Heritage Month
 - Fireworks Safety Month
 - Great Outdoors Month
 - LGBTQI+ Pride Month



Arizona School Board Association
appreciates the support for public
education shown by its business
partners who are ASBA Organization
Affiliate Members

IGPA

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