

SOUTHEASTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS

*Happy
New Year*

Quarterly Newsletter - Winter 2019

President's Message

As I write this message, Alabama is playing Georgia for the Southeastern Conference Football Championship. Each year, you can almost always count on Alabama to be one of the top four teams playing for the National Championship. It is difficult to be at the top of your game every year. Other teams are gunning to knock you off and assume your position at the top. Coaches and teams must avoid becoming complacent and must always be recruiting the best players and willing and able to adapt.

In November the SASBO officers met to work on the SASBO's strategic plan. Like successful football programs, our SASBO team cannot rest on their past laurels and do things the way we always have, but must plan to make the necessary adjustments to remain relevant. In preparation for our meeting, we read "Race for Relevance: 5 Radical Changes for Associations." One underlying point of the book was Associations must become nimbler and more streamlined. We must discontinue practices that are no longer effective. Most importantly, we must define our market and allocate our resources efficiently and effectively. Over the next few years, expect to see changes as the Board makes the necessary adjustments to remain relevant.

A reminder that registration for the annual conference is now open. Make your plans to join us in Norfolk Virginia, April 30 – May 2. You will probably read this newsletter after the holidays, but I wish you all a Merry Christmas and joyous holiday season.

Rob Terry, President
Coordinator Risk Management and Audit
Huntsville City Schools, Alabama
robert.terry28@gmail.com



Inside This Issue

	Page
Virginia and Southeastern Association of School Business Officials Conference & Discovery Forum	2
Fake Savings	3
How to Handle Conflict Effectively	4
How to Be Creative When You're Feeling Stressed	5
Member Spotlights	6
State Highlights	
Alabama	7
Arkansas	7
Florida	7
Georgia	7
Kentucky	8
Louisiana	8
Mississippi	8
North Carolina	9
South Carolina	9
Tennessee	9
Virginia	10
West Virginia	10
ASBO International Executive Leadership Forum	10

SASBO DATES TO REMEMBER

2019

January 23-25, 2019	Leadership Summit The Kimpton Brice, Savannah, GA
April 30-May 2, 2019	VASBO - SASBO Joint Conference and Discovery Forum Hilton Norfolk The Main, Norfolk, VA

2020

January 22-24, 2020	Leadership Summit DoubleTree Hotel, Chattanooga, TN
April 21-23, 2020	SASBO Conference and Discovery Forum Marriott Downtown, Louisville, KY

2021

January 27-29, 2021	Leadership Summit DoubleTree Hotel, St. Augustine, FL
April 20-22, 2021	SASBO Conference and Discovery Forum IP Resort, Biloxi, MS

2022

April 5-7, 2022	AASBO/SASBO Joint Conference and Discovery Forum Embassy Suites, Hot Springs, AR
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Make your plans now to join us and register for the conference!

VIRGINIA AND SOUTHEASTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS CONFERENCE AND DISCOVERY FORUM

APRIL 30 – MAY 2, 2019



Registration Information

Conference Registration Packet – [Click Here](#).

Registration is Easy - The cost is \$350 for SASBO members and \$175 for guests and retirees. One-day registration for May 1 only is \$200.

Register - Online at www.sasbo.org or sasbo.org/2019-conference.

Hotel Reservations

Norfolk Hilton The Main Hotel is the site of the 2019 conference. Special conference rates are available through April 5th or until the group block is sold out, whichever comes first starting at \$134 per night plus taxes and fees. Two night minimum required to receive conference rates.



To make reservations go to: <http://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/personalized/O/ORFWAHH-SBO-20190428/index.html> or phone-in to 757-763-6200 and mention Group Code SBO.

Conference Schedule

Monday, April 29, 2019

VASBO Executive & Management Team Meetings
SASBO Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, April 30, 2019

Conference Registration & Information Desk Opens at 8:00 am
VASBO SFO Study Group Meeting 8:00 am - 4:00 pm (For VASBO members)

VASBO User Group Meeting 8:30 am - 11:30 am (For VASBO members)

SASBO Emerging Leaders Meeting 10:00 am - 11:30 am
Conference Kick-Off Sessions 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm and 2:45 pm - 4:15 pm

VASBO User Group Meeting 1:00 pm - 4:15 pm
Opening General Session and Welcome Reception with Exhibitors 4:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Wednesday, May 1, 2019

Fun Walk/Run 6:00 am - 6:45 am
Breakfast with Exhibitors 7:15 am - 8:00 am
Concurrent Educational Breakout Sessions 8:00-9:00am/9:15-10:15am/11:00-12:00pm/1:30-2:30pm
Visit with Exhibitors 7:15 am - 4:00 pm
Exhibitor Appreciation Lunch, Annual Business Meeting & Awards 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm
Executive Director's Meeting 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm
VASBO Business Session 4:15 pm - 5:15 pm
VASBO Past President/New Member Reception 5:15 pm - 6:15 pm
Visit Norfolk – Free Night to See the Sights

Thursday, May 2, 2019

Breakfast Buffet 7:30 am - 8:20 am
Discovery Educational Tracks - Choose from 4 Tracks 8:30 am - 3:30 pm
SASBO President's Reception (by invitation) 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm
Welcome Aboard "The Spirit of Norfolk" Dinner Cruise and Fun 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm

Friday, May 3, 2019

Have a Safe Trip Home

Opening General Session Keynote Speaker

THE FREAK FACTOR

DISCOVERING UNIQUENESS BY FLAUNTING WEAKNESS

Do you want more happiness, fulfillment, and energy? Do you want to dramatically improve your productivity and increase employee performance? Our parents, teachers, and managers have told us that, if we want to succeed, we should find and fix our weaknesses. However, this is the wrong approach because each weakness is also a strength. We can create outrageous personal and professional success by amplifying flaws, instead of denying them.



DAVID RENDALL

Fake Savings

If you think "Fake News" is bad...try Spending Fake Savings

Written by: Edward D. McLiney

Submitted by: Jeff Davis, West Virginia Director

The Dream, "Guaranteed"

It was one of those presentations that you couldn't wait to bring to your school board. The district's name-brand energy service contractor (ESCO) was showing more than \$260,000 in annual savings.

Even with the \$3,000,000 price tag, you knew that your District couldn't say no. The energy savings each year would pay the cost of your debt repayment for the next 15 years.

The best part; if the energy savings don't materialize, our very deep-pocketed ESCO would make up the difference.

It was the dream presentation. The board approved.

Why wouldn't they with \$3,000,000 in improvements and the savings shown more than paid for the debt?

We even had money leftover. Our ESCO's spreadsheet clearly showed exactly how it could be accomplished.

We couldn't lose. We had their guarantee.

The Nightmare

As you might imagine, stories like this don't always end well.

In the above case, the *guaranteed savings* materialized. In fact, they were better than what the ESCO promised.

The thing is, this district fell short **\$50,000** of what they had anticipated in savings.

Not coincidentally, the District's budget fell short by exactly the amount shown on that fancy spreadsheet presented to the board by their ESCO.

Think about trying to get authorization from your school board to spend \$50,000 in *guaranteed savings* that never materialized. You'll quickly understand the nightmare faced by too many superintendents and business managers across the country.

Those Devilish Details

What happened was that the *total savings* was not the same as the *guaranteed savings*. Two numbers were presented. Both labeled correctly. One said energy savings. That's the number you can normal-

ly hang your hat on and is the only one guaranteed by the ESCO.

The other savings shown by ESCOs is called many different things. You'll see terms like "Capital Avoidance Cost" or "Operational Avoidance" or something similar. These are not guaranteed.

An example of *Operational Avoidance Savings* would be if your maintenance staff no longer needed to spend hours each week keeping your antiquated equipment running.

While your staff isn't spending time on the replaced equipment, it's very unlikely you're going to fire them. Most facility managers will allocate their time to other necessary facility improvements.

And, unless you are willing to fire someone to capture savings, those *operational avoidance costs* just went up in smoke.

And it's these small details, among others, that are seldom highlighted by ESCOs.

Where does a school district turn for advice?

The Dodd-Frank Wallstreet Reform and Consumer Protection Act expressly forbids ESCOs from providing financial advice to Districts. That same bill also forbids your local attorney, or even bond attorneys, from providing financial advice to the District.

You'll find your commercial banker is ill equipped to provide a school district with helpful advice. Their business is making loans not deciphering performance contract spreadsheets. They know that even if all the guarantees provided are worthless, a school district is very unlikely to miss a payment.

Many ESCOs discourage school districts from hiring a professional because they do not want their projections to be challenged.

Simple Solution: Hire a Translator

Superintendents and District Business Officials rely on their legal expert to tell them it's a valid contract, and their local bank as a potential purchaser of the loan. Neither have the expertise to provide any advice on the performance contract of how best to structure the financing for the benefit of the school district.

Avoiding these mistakes requires one thing; a translator who is *fluent in* financing performance contracts.

A licensed Municipal Advisor (MA) can dissect the spreadsheets and will translate the numbers into real savings and potential savings and then market the issue to get the best possible terms.

The High Price of Inexperience

Many very smart superintendents or business managers are reluctant to hire an MA because they are told by the ESCOs that advisors are expensive or that they can avoid this cost by contacting their banker directly.

Avoid this mistake by remembering a quote from Red Adair, "*If you think it's expensive to hire a professional to do the job, wait until you hire an amateur.*"

In this case, their attempt at avoiding a \$25,250 municipal advisory fee is costing the district's budget \$50,000 a year, for the next 15 years, in unrealized "operational savings".

Edward D. McLiney, Chairman, McLiney And Company

McLiney And Company is an investment banking and municipal advisory firm that has kept their clients out of trouble since 1966. They have advised business managers regarding performance contracts nationwide.

Mr. McLiney will be speaking in more detail about ESCOs and performance contracts at the upcoming VASBO-SASBO Conference.



How to Handle Conflict Effectively

Written by: Kim Hofmann, RDN, LD, Owner, Kim H. Consulting

Turn Conflict Into a Productive Conversation

Peace is not the absence of conflict, it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means.
Ronald Reagan

What is the first thought that springs to mind when you hear the word “conflict”? Is it stress, anger, battle, fight, fear, frustration, argument? These are mostly negative terms. What about more positive outcomes? Some say conflict can solve problems, stimulate discussions, strengthen relationships, improve communication, clear the air, or lead to good decisions. Conflict is neither inherently negative nor intrinsically positive. Rather, it’s how you manage the conflict that determines how you perceive it, and ultimately how it plays out. If you handle conflict well, it can be a constructive, unifying force. Handle it poorly, however, and it becomes a destructive agent. No wonder conflict stresses us out, and we try to avoid it. Learning to deal with conflict in a positive way is what we need to do, because it won’t “go away” by itself. In fact, left unaddressed, conflict usually gets worse, a lot worse.

Strive to See Both Sides

Think of a recent conflict you’ve experienced. How did it go? Were you able to listen to what the other side had to say? Or did you get so entrenched in your own views that you spent all your time trying to invalidate the other person’s beliefs? This story line plays itself out every day in our current political environment, and it exemplifies how poor conflict management leads to division. This occurs for several reasons. Because our values often define us, we struggle when someone holds opposing or different ones. We try to prove we are right, and in doing that, we invalidate the other person’s values. Our words and actions put the other party on the defensive. We become so entrenched in championing our own perspective that we fail to remember the other person’s values are equally important to them. We don’t actually listen to them. Do you have a go-to behavior when you find yourself in a conflict situation? Do you recognize any of these typical behaviors people tend to exhibit

1. Shutting down
2. Talking louder
3. Globalizing (using words such as always, never, every time...)
4. Being sarcastic
5. Asking leading questions (“Don’t you think...?”)
6. Lodging personal attacks
7. Shooting down the other person’s perspective immediately
8. Using the phrase, “Yes, but...” (with the “but” negating everything that comes before it)

As you have probably figured out, these behaviors don’t help to resolve a conflict. Instead, they most often escalate it by invalidating the other person’s point of view.

More Effective Conflict Resolution

So, the big question is, how do we become more effective when dealing with conflict? There is no simple answer. There are no fix-all A, B, Cs that will make your conflicts disappear. However, switching your goal from eliminating all conflict, to having the right type of conflict, is a good first step. Your goal should be to find ways to handle conflict constructively, and ideally, to use the conflict to drive innovation, improve communication, and make good decisions.

After deciding to openly participate in the conflict, try to be flexible. Adapt your approach to deal with others. Behavioral style models, such as DISC, teach us that people fall into four main behavioral styles, and that each style has unique needs and methods of responding. We tend to believe that everyone thinks (or should think) the way we do. The truth is, only a quarter of the people have the same behavioral style you do. The rest of the population has a different view of the world. Being able to adapt your approach in ways that respect the needs and behavioral styles of others is a proactive first step in conflict management.

(This article has been adapted from the course, ReDIScovering Conflict, offered by Kim H Consulting.)

After years as a school foodservice director, and a foodservice distributor sales representative, Kim Hofmann, RDN, LD, started her own consulting and motivational speaking business, Get to the Point. Her specialties are cost control and financial planning. www.kimhconsulting.com



How to be Creative When You're Feeling Stressed

Written by: Elizabeth Grace Saunders, Harvard Business Review - November 29, 2018

Submitted by: Anita Hays, Tennessee Director

More than just lightly toasted, your brain feels singed.

You're burned out, and the cumulative stress makes it hard to decide what to eat for dinner, let alone come up with innovative ideas. But people are still expecting you to produce creative solutions despite your current mental state. What do you do?

If you find yourself in this situation, I can't offer any guarantees that epiphanies will come to you. But I can offer ideas based on my experience as a time management coach and on the science of how our brains work that can give you the best possible odds of coming up with some decent new thoughts.

To start, you need to let go of trying to "make yourself" come up with something creative. If you're already struggling with stress, threatening yourself can further trigger the fight-or-flight mode. This causes you to operate out of the primal, least creative part of your brain. So instead of saying to yourself, "I *must* be creative," or "This *has* to happen now," it's better to tell yourself something like, "I'm going to see what happens," "I'm going to explore this possibility," or "I'm going to play around with some ideas."

You want to create a sense of psychological safety, so you don't experience debilitating performance pressure.

Once you've created psychological safety, then experiment with activities that can trigger the "diffuse-thinking" state. This type of thinking is one in which your brain operates in a looser manner, searching to make connections between different parts of your brain versus operating in the established neuropaths followed in the "focused-

thinking" state. Activities like walking, napping, eating, or taking other sorts of breaks naturally put you into the diffuse state and open your mind up to new possibilities.

To maximize the benefits of these in-between times, avoid multi-tasking and let your mind explore a particular idea. For example, you could feed your brain these kinds of prompts: What might be involved in making this promotion a success? Or what might happen if we approached our customers in a different way? An openness of mind and non-judgment toward the quality or quantity of your thoughts gives space for creativity to come forth.

In particular, I find that I am most creative when I not only am giving myself space from my computer but also positioning myself in a "happy place." In the warmer months, that's somewhere outside preferably along a lake. In the cooler months, it's likely a coffee shop with a fireplace. Beautiful, peaceful surroundings lift my spirits and creative mental capacity. Some of my coaching clients have found their happy, creative spaces in historic libraries, art museums, or even browsing through boutique shops. Know which environments naturally give you pleasure and immerse yourself in them to allow positive thoughts to arise.

If you still feel stuck and just can't come up with something new, then you may want to give your brain more material to work with. This could look like reading on the topic, taking a field trip to a place where you can see other people's creative solutions to a similar problem, or talking to experts. Sometimes by seeing what other people have done, you can come up with new ways to approach your own situation.



And then to even further increase your opportunity for breakthrough moments, collaborate with others. Alternating between solo thinking and time in groups proves the most effective way to develop the most creative thoughts. Have a brainstorming meeting with colleagues, get together for coffee with a friend, or do problem solving with a consultant. Two or more brains can work better than one. The process of talking through ideas can stimulate new thoughts and challenge your thinking.

Finally, give yourself time. When your brain operates at full capacity, you may have the ability to come up with creative thoughts on the fly. But when you're less than 100%, you'll have a much better chance of success by giving your brain time to percolate on ideas for a few days. When your mind feels blank and all you want to do is zone out, it's more difficult but not impossible to experience your breakthrough. By putting yourself in the right mental state and environments, you can find your creativity.

Elizabeth Grace Saunders is a time management coach and the founder of Real Life E Time Coaching & Speaking. She is the author of How to Invest Your Time Like Money and Divine Time Management.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Maryanne Durski

Tennessee is spotlighting Maryanne Durski, our current Executive Secretary and Past President. Maryanne Durski is a native of Cleveland, Ohio. She holds a bachelor's degree in French from Assumption College in Worcester, Massachusetts and a master's in business administration with a concentration in finance from Boston College in Boston, Massachusetts. Maryanne worked for Bank of Boston in the Trust and Estate Division for ten years.



In 1991 her family relocated to Tennessee where she began her career in education finance. She worked in various school and district level positions for Sumner County Schools, including school bookkeeper, internal auditor and assistant director of schools for finance, a position she held from 1997 to 2011. In 2011 Maryanne joined the Tennessee Department of Education as the Executive Director of the Office of Local Finance. In this position she leads a team that is responsible for the allocations of state funds to districts, as well as ESSA and IDEA allocations. She also supervises six regional finance consultants who provide financial technical assistance and support to Tennessee's 147 districts and state special schools.

A member of TASBO since 1997, Maryanne has served on the board since 2000. She was president in 2007 and since 2011 serves as the executive secretary to the board. In 2011 she received the James D. McCullough Distinguished Service award from TASBO and was named Tennessee's Outstanding Business Official by SASBO.

Maryanne has been married to her husband, Zyg, for 41 years. They live in Hendersonville, Tennessee as do their two children and two grandsons, who are the light of her life.

William (Bill) Bowen

Virginia is spotlighting William (Bill) Bowen, a previous Virginia President and this year's Cardinal Award winner. He currently serves as the Chief Financial Officer for York County School Division. Bill has also served as the Executive Director of Finance in Poquoson City Public Schools and the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration for Henrico County Public Schools.



Before starting work in K-12 education, he spent nearly 20 years in state government. He thought because of this extensive experience with the state that the transition to education would be easy, but stated that he quickly found out he was wrong. "Funding streams, enrollment vs. Average Daily Membership, Local Composite Index, licensed vs. non-licensed pays scales vs bus driver and food service scales, and what the heck is Maintenance of Effort and Proportionate Set-aside? I can say had it not been for VASBO, I don't know if I would have survived."

Bill has supported VASBO in many leadership roles since joining in September of 2008 including as a member of the Legislative Committee, Scholarship Committee, a Director, Treasurer, President-Elect, President, Past President and ASBO Representative.

Bill is a native of the Virginia Peninsula, born and raised in Newport News. He now resides in Poquoson, Virginia. His son is a farmer in NC, and his daughter just graduated nursing school hoping to become a critical care nurse. He and his wife Alicia spend much of their leisure time with their five grandchildren (sixth on the way). When they are not with them they can be found on the Poquoson River with close friends or at Lake Gaston. Bill also enjoys going to live concerts, his all time favorite, Peter Frampton, which he has seen fifteen times!



The **proof** of the **pudding**
is in the eating.

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STATE HIGHLIGHTS



Alabama

Lynn Buch, Director

Alabama ASBO is pleased to announce the implementation of a new voluntary certificate program for school business officials that began in September. AASBO is offering the **Purchasing**

& Procurement Certificate Program. This program is designed for those individuals whose duties and responsibilities include the procurement of goods and services for their school district. There is no requirement for holding a specific position in a school district. The program provides the essential skills and knowledge that every effective school business professional should possess in the area of purchasing.

Also in September, AASBO implemented monthly "30-minute" Morning Break Webinars. The topics covered to date were:

- *Supplement Not Supplant under ESSA*
- *2108 Year End Close Procedures*
- *Internal Controls for Cybersecurity*
- *Preparing W2's, Calendar Year End Processing and Set up for 2019*

All webinars are archived for members as this is part of our ongoing effort to provide seasonal focused training opportunities outside of conferences. Alabama ASBO held our fall Professional CSFO and Payroll/Personnel Certificate training programs in Birmingham this past September. Our fall Local School Financial Management Certificate training program was held in Birmingham in late November and will gather again in March.

In Tuscaloosa on February 11th-12th, we will hold our winter Professional CSFO and Payroll/Personnel Certificate training programs.

Work has already started on the sessions for our annual conference on April 30th – May 3rd. This will be our 50th annual conference and is titled, "Celebrating the Past, Building the Future: #AASBO50yrs". *We can't wait to see you there!*



Arkansas

Sharon Chuculate, Director

Happy New Year! It's so funny to think back to Y2K and wondering if our computers would function when we returned from the holidays, yet here we are 19 years later and still working right along.

This newsletter likely finds us all in the midst of W2 processing, 1099 filing as well as 1095 forms (will these ever go away?!). Our mentoring group has discussed all these forms as well as other timely topics for our newest members.

As with the seasons, school business begins anew in January with the renewal of Superintendent contracts, Administrator contracts, teacher renewals and then classified staff. We've begun seeing notices of retirement in my district and anticipate many more in the coming months.

The AASBO annual conference is scheduled for February 6-7 at the Hot Springs Convention Center. We are excited to have Georgia Director Jackie Sparks presenting at our conference. We will have Denise Ryan as our special guest during the conference. If you've not had an opportunity to see her presentations, you are certainly missing out! We will also be drawing for scholarships to the SASBO conference to be held in Norfolk, Virginia this spring. We can't wait to meet back up with our old friends and make new ones as well!



Florida

Robert Waremburg, Director

FASBO held its annual conference October 2-5th at the beautiful Cape Coral Florida with excellent professional development sessions presented by state and national experts. The networking with colleagues and friends is what make membership valuable and rewarding. The FASBO board is already busy making arrangements for a joint conference with our sister organization the Florida School Finance Officers Association and have scheduled the conference to take place November 11-15, 2019, at the Double Tree, Orlando, Florida.

In education news, Commissioner of Education Pam Stewart announced earlier this year that November is Family Engagement in Education Month. Family Engagement in Education Month focuses on schools and families working together to support learning for every child.

"We know that when parents and families are involved in a child's education, the result is higher student achievement and more students prepared for future success," said Commissioner Stewart. "I encourage all Florida families to get involved throughout the school year, stay informed and continue to make their child's education a top priority." This reflects the commitment of school business officials across the state.



Georgia

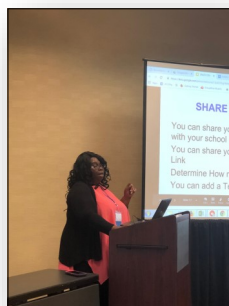
Jackie Sparks, Director

The Georgia Association of School Business Officials conducted their Fall Conference November 5-9, 2018 at the Augusta Marriott Convention Center in Augusta Georgia. With 512 attendees and 50 vendors with 95 guests for a total of 657. Our annual conference continues to grow and become more successful each year.

Our theme this year was GASBO: Let The Adventure Begin, and the Georgia attendees, as well as our SASBO Extended Family, really took the theme to heart posing for pictures including suitcases, life size Georgia letters, and an amazing map backdrop! The tables were decorated with travel themed globes and suitcases, which if you attend SASBO Leadership conference may look very familiar!



GASBO was pleased to have Sandy Halliwell, SASBO Executive Director, and Latresa Carlisle, Florida SASBO Emerging Leader attending our conference. Sandy brought greetings to our Georgia attendees and at the SASBO booth they both explained all the benefits that our Georgia members have access to since we are a dual enrollment state! Both Sandy and Latresa presented sessions, showing how well trained our SASBO extended family truly are, and Georgia was honored and thrilled to have them with us! Georgia was also pleased to have SASBO Associate Member Rep, Todd Manning of Virco. Pictured below from Left to Right is Latresa Carlisle, Sandy Halliwell, Todd Manning, and Jackie Sparks.



On Wednesday, GASBO recognized Ken Overman, Lowndes County Assistant Superintendent, as the Outstanding School Business Official. Mr. Overman has moved his school district into a successful direction with his innovative experience and training. The recommendation letters from staff across the entire Lowndes County School System were undeniable, and our GASBO board was pleased to honor him with this award.



The GASBO conference featured presentations from the Georgia Department of Audits, Georgia Department of Education, Georgia DOE School Nutrition, Georgia DOE Federal Programs Directors, Georgia Teachers Retirement System, and Georgia School Board Association, which are all relationships that the GASBO Board is proud to have represented at our conference.

Believe it or not the GASBO Board has already begun planning the 2019 Conference and we are looking forward to growing our membership and what the Board can offer to them moving forward. So from all of us in Georgia we send you greetings and hopes for all of our state ASBO's to enjoy their adventures!



Kentucky

David Stokes, Director

KASBO is now gearing up for our 2nd Annual MUNIS academy in March. MUNIS is our accounting software, and our academy will provide hands-on training for Finance employees both new and seasoned. It was so successful last year, we are going to expand it to a full week. The first half of the week is tailored towards payroll, while the rest of the week will be mainly directed toward finance. Our members may go to either half or sign up for both to gain even more knowledge.

KASBO is also planning sessions for our Spring Conference at the Galt House in Louisville, Kentucky. The theme this year is WELCOME TO THE (KASBO) JUNGLE. Our Thursday night event will be held at the Louisville Zoo. We will have fun and games!

KASBO switched the event management software to CVENT at the Fall Conference. The new process was extremely successful. The software provided a very smooth onsite experience for our members, and everyone loved the quickness of the check-in process. Our members simply typed their name on a tablet at check-in, and their name badge printed out on the spot. The badges were then scanned as the members entered each session to give them credit.



Louisiana

Lesia Casanovas, Director

After a successful fall workshop in November, LASBO members returned to their districts with more knowledge and networking connections to reflect on over the holidays. Both will likely be needed as the Louisiana Department of Education launches its "SuperApp" for the 2019-20 school year. This process consolidates all federal grant applications into one focused application based on the district's goals and needs. Under this new plan, budgets, which have had a due date of June 30, will now be due on February 1st. January will be action packed with that task added to all the IRS reporting, but we'll have a chance to rejuvenate at the LASBO Spring Conference, April 2-5, 2019 in Lake Charles, LA.



Mississippi

Earl Burke, Director

The 2019 Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature began Tuesday, January 8, 2019. As lawmakers settle in to their work for the 2019 year, they will face many challenges. Considering lawmakers, since 2009, have spent \$1 billion less than what the state's education funding formula calls for, it will be interesting to watch how the session progresses. Among the continuing pressures they will likely attempt to tackle will be teacher shortages, teacher pay, growth of charter schools, school accountability grades, and the politics of state testing. Mississippi legislators faced, in the prior legislative session, an outcry from parents and educators about the punitive effects of state exams on graduating seniors. Though actions and concerns ultimately got no action, the issue could resurface during the 2019 session.

The Mississippi Association of School Business Officials will host its 49th Annual Conference, in Jackson, Mississippi, from February 4-7, 2019. The conference will be attended by approximately 700 school district business officers, superintendents, support personnel and vendors. The conference features a lot of great professional development and networking sessions, and vendor sponsored activities. You may register to attend by visiting www.masbo.us.



North Carolina

Adam Steele, Director

Winter is here, and North Carolina school districts are almost halfway through the school year. That can only mean 2019-2020 budget season is coming up. The General Assembly will convene around January 16, 2019, for their long session and we are expecting some changes based on election results. The Republicans have lost their supermajority in both the House and Senate. With a Democrat governor the upcoming session could be interesting.

North Carolina ASBO is excited about the Annual Conference at the Sheraton Four Seasons in Greensboro, NC, scheduled for February 18-21. The theme of this year's conference is "Break Through to Excellence: Challenge Accepted!". The conference is always exciting, and we expect this year will be no different. We would love to have some SASBO visitors to help promote our great organization.

NCASBO would like to wish all SASBO members a Merry Christmas and happy New Year!



South Carolina

John Gardner, Director

Winter is here and once again; it is time for the Bowl Championship Series! South Carolina Fans will be glued to the television on December 29 as the South Carolina Gamecocks will be facing the Virginia Cavaliers at the Belk Bowl in Charlotte and the #2 Clemson Tigers face the #3 Fighting Irish in New Orleans at the Cotton Bowl. We anticipate victories from both of our respective schools!

On a more subdued note, it is time to begin the planning for the 2019-20 Fiscal Year and wonder how we will address the unfunded mandates. We know that the employer rate for retirement will increase by 1% next fiscal year. In addition, there has been much discussion regarding teacher salaries, the shortage of people entering the profession, and the earnings limitations imposed on certain classes of working retirees.

Recently at a South Carolina School Boards Association conference, the Senate Finance Committee Chief of Staff announced that initial projections indicate \$497.9 million in recurring revenues and \$546.5 in non-recurring revenues for FY 2019. Of course, there will be many people in-line seeking their share of the pie.

Good luck to each of you as you develop your respective budgets. In South Carolina it looks like we will once again be on "Mr. Toad's Wild Ride"!



Tennessee

Anita Hays, Director

TASBO recently held its 52nd annual fall conference on November 13 – 16 in Murfreesboro. This year the theme of our conference was "The Magic of School Business" and featured thirty-eight sessions presented by staff from various departments in the Tennessee State Department of Education as well as attorneys from the area. The conference was a great success due to such outstanding presentations from keynote speaker, Denise Ryan, as well as Sandy Halliwell and Michael Johnston, who brought greetings from SASBO and ASBO International, respectively. At the end of the conference TASBO had raised over \$2,000 in donations to the Ronald McDonald House.

The November election has yielded some new faces at the State level in the Governor's office as well as several legislative positions. Bill Lee was elected the 50th Governor of the State of Tennessee on November 6, 2018. We were also informed the Commissioner of Education, Candice McQueen, would be stepping down in early January to become CEO of the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching. Tennessee's education chief is leaving state government to lead a nonprofit organization focused on attracting, developing, and keeping high-quality educators. An interim commissioner will be named soon.

With winter approaching, it is time to start planning for the 2019-20 fiscal year. The perennial discussions will be held to determine if the State funding will be increased and what will shake out after the changes are made at the State level. Good luck to all as we move forward with our budgets.





Virginia

Christie Fleming, Director

Our fall conference was held at Wintergreen Resort in October and received an uninvited guest – Hurricane Michael! VASBO continued on in spite of many not being able to attend. Thank you to Horace Mann for sponsoring a \$5,000 scholarship to support our SFO Program.

Our winter conference is being held January 6th through the 8th in Richmond in conjunction with the Virginia Association of School Superintendents. This will be the second year both associations have joined together at one conference. It provides an excellent opportunity for both Superintendents and Chief Finance Officers to network and receive up to date information regarding state funding. The Honorable Ralph Northam, Governor of Virginia has been invited and expected to speak to the group about his introduced budget.

Virginia is very excited to be hosting the SASBO conference this spring. Many exciting things have been planned. We look forward to having you come visit our beautiful state. See you in Norfolk!



West Virginia

Jeff Davis, Director

WVASBO held its annual fall conference at Lakeview Golf Resort, Morgantown, WV October 23-26, 2018. This was a great conference to unwind after completion of the annual financial statements. Monika Weldon, President and Annette Hughart, President Elect had a great agenda prepared. The conference started on Tuesday with Randall Dean leading a session on “From Distracted to Productive - An Extra Hour”.

In addition, to the guest speaker there was a golf scramble at Lakeview resort for vendors and county finance staff. The general session began Wednesday morning with Randall Dean again presenting “Taming the E-mail & E-mail etiquette beasts.”

There were many other sessions throughout the remainder of the week that helped the school finance departments understand the latest state and federal guidance. There was a great network building event on Thursday evening because the West Virginia University Mountaineers played host to the Baylor Bears and came up victorious. There was a large group that went to the game and for all others there was a tailgate party at the resort for everyone to watch the game.

WVASBO will hold its annual spring conference at Embassy Suites, Charleston, West Virginia May 14-17, 2019. This conference is our large vendor show and will include all Child Nutrition Directors throughout the state as well as all county finance staff.





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