



**Board
Development**

**Government
Relations**



**Protective
Trust
Management**

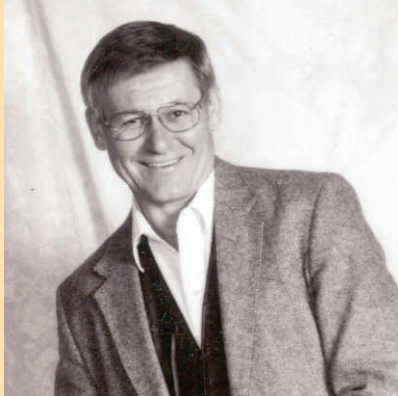
Coming Together

**Policy
Services**

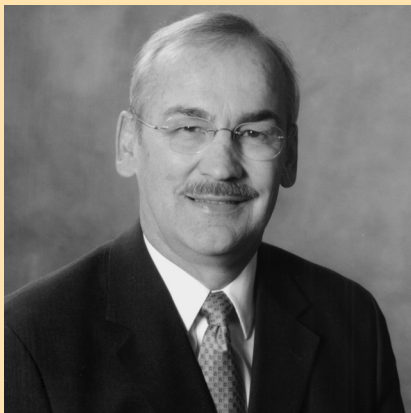
ANNUAL REPORT 2007

Executive Message

Building Unity



LeRoy Hellwig
President



Wayne Lueders
Executive Director

In 2005, your association's leadership established a directive for the future. Through the vision setting process, we charted a course focused on student achievement, advocacy and building unity.

True to our vision, ASBSD is coming together.

During the past year, ASBSD has taken incremental but significant steps to develop a shared meaning of the changing role of school board members. Staff carried research documents and trends around to board members and superintendents at a series of regional meetings, along with the proposed "Emerging Understandings about the Role of School Boards."

Establishing a common ground definition is an essential first step for creating new board development programs. ASBSD members expressed excitement regarding the "Emerging Role" document and shared collectively that ASBSD can provide necessary support as school board members embrace new challenges.

In the coming year, ASBSD will begin churning consensus into concrete by building first-level board development programs based on the emerging roles of school boards.

Your association has also been a facilitator and leader in building consensus among school board members and advocacy groups to develop and communicate a unified message on legislative issues.

A set of standing positions – co-authored through feedback from our membership – outlined school board member beliefs in four key areas. Your association assumed a greater role in communicating to members throughout the legislative process – we compiled data surrounding school funding to publish the first annual School Funding Realities, and we beefed up our communication efforts during session. At session's end, we led efforts to educate the public about the legislature's efforts.

As we move forward, ASBSD will continue to find ways to involve our members in ASBSD's decisions and planning. Just as a forward-thinking school board leaders seek community input on key decisions, your association believes our goals need to be tailored to your needs.

A sense of unity is not only valuable within the organization - it also helps your association better communicate the needs of South Dakota school districts with education's many stakeholders.

Children are maturing into a much different world – one where new skills are needed to stay competitive. As a community of school board leaders, we need to educate various groups and the public at large about the importance of a strong, modern education system. Education allows our communities, our state and our nation to stay competitive – and learning starts in our elementary and secondary schools.

Whether the issue is advocacy or system-wide change, it's a school board's function to represent students and the community to help shepherd our education system to meet the needs of a new global society.

A desire to move the system forward carries responsibility and obligation. Together in our understanding and united in our message, local school boards and your association can better communicate a vision for public education in South Dakota.

I see great things in our future. There is urgency in our mission and passion in our vision. We understand what it takes to continually improve, and we realize that the extent to which local school board members claim ownership in your association will determine the pace and scope of our efforts.

As school board members, we are elected - we are entrusted - with securing a brighter future for the children of South Dakota. It's a rewarding role, an important role, and a demanding role. As your school board association, we aim to help in every way possible.

ASBSD Past-President Don Young
2006 State of the Association Report

vision

Associated School Boards of South Dakota is the unifying voice for school boards and public education, creating a vision of excellence and equity for every child while leading the state in advocating for raising student achievement.

mission

The mission of Associated School Boards of South Dakota is to provide leadership in promoting excellence in school board governance and to advocate for public education.

beliefs

- All children can learn.
- Every student has a right to a holistic high-quality public education.
- Public education is essential for a free, self-governing society.
- Local control is vital for effective and efficient school board governance.
- The responsibility of providing adequate and equitable funding for public school students rests with the state of South Dakota.

ASBSD Board of Directors

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LeRoy Hellwig, President

Duane Alm, 1st Vice-Pres.

Susan Humiston, 2nd Vice-Pres.

Don Young, Past President

Wayne Lueders, Executive Director

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Orland Geigle, Pollock

James Hulm, Timber Lake

Susan Knippling, Chamberlain

Troy Heinert, Todd County

NORTHEAST REGION

Krysti Mikkonen, Frederick Area

Dawn Baird, Redfield

LeRoy Hellwig, Sisseton

Duane Alm, Aberdeen

Joanne Groves, Huron

SOUTHEAST REGION

Peter Preheim, Marion

**Theresa Hoarty,
Wessington Springs**

Sue Christensen, Beresford

Neil Putnam, Mitchell

Darin Daby, Sioux Falls

WESTERN REGION

Susan Humiston, Edgemont

Kim Richards, Newell

Don Young, Custer

Jan Jungemann, Douglas

Margie Rosario, Rapid City

GOAL ONE

Inspire and equip school board members and superintendents to become leaders of public education to improve student achievement.

GOAL TWO

Build the capacity of the staff to deliver services necessary to meet the goals of the association (enhance current tools available - i.e. e-mail, web site, Bulletin.).

GOAL THREE

Implement a broad-based advocacy program to provide a unifying voice for public education.

Continuing down a path toward a new line of comprehensive board training programs, ASBSD took a research-driven white paper to the membership, resulting in a shared definition of what school board members can do to improve public education. The Emerging Understandings about the Role of School Boards was embraced by the membership as the ways in which school boards can positively impact student achievement. ASBSD worked with Gov. Rounds to initiate the first-ever School Board Recognition Week. To help make the event a success, staff developed a 13-page resource kit that highlighted the important work of school boards. ASBSD Policy Services continues to evolve. This year, we made our ASBSD Policy Manual available online. We've also worked with several districts - large and small - to develop custom, up-to-date policy manuals. ASBSD staff continues to lend expertise where needed - whether it's in school reorganization discussions, financial planning, whole-board workshops or mediation sessions.

ASBSD completed an in-depth communications audit to better define how members perceive our efforts and what you would like to see from your association. With the audit in hand, we continued efforts to improve our communication efforts. The Bulletin received a make-over. We streamlined content, making our official publication easier to read, and added an editorial section to offer more original views on emerging education issues. ASBSD also added a new communication vehicle, a blog called Open Forum. Launched just prior to session, the dynamic communication tool delivered the latest legislative information as it happened. We teamed Open Forum up with the new ASBSD Bill Tracker to provide the most comprehensive legislative information available to education leaders - prompting Spearfish Superintendent Dave Peters to say, "It is by far the best information on education issues during the session."

Your association worked with other groups to educate voters and help pass the tobacco cessation initiative and defeat two dangerous constitutional amendments. ASBSD also led efforts to defeat an initiated measure that sought to mandate the school start date. During November's Delegate Assembly, we finalized work on the first-ever ASBSD Standing Positions - documents that acted as a unified stance on student achievement, local governance, school finance and school district reorganization. ASBSD's inaugural publication of School Funding Realities - the data-driven resource on school finance - worked its way from ASBSD meetings into news coverage and editorials, advancing the debate on school funding. We've also adopted a new Government Relations Plan to focus our advocacy efforts into a more powerful, year-round approach. ASBSD also provided leadership to the Alliance for Education, and worked with the PTA to broaden support for the Alliance.

ASBSD: Myths must be debunked

A meeting Thursday at Mitchell Middle School that included area school board members, administrators and other targeted “myths” about school funding that educators say must be debunked.

Distilling the two-hour meeting to its essentials, Wayne Lueders, executive Director of the Associated School Boards of South Dakota, said education is not getting its fair, and much needed, share of state revenues.

Education is not getting its fair, and much needed, share of state revenue.

The percentage of the state budget the education receives is decreasing, said Lueders.

“We went from nearly 36 percent of the budget in 2004 to just over 30 percent,” he said. “We are getting slightly more money, but as a percent of the budget and a priority in the budget, K-12 education funding to public education has decreased five percent over those four years.”

Education entities represented at Thursday’s meeting included the ASBSD, the School Administrators of South Dakota and the South Dakota Education Association. Also, the event drew District 19 lawmakers Rep. Jim Putnam, R-Armour; Rep. Gary Jerke, R-Tripp; and Sen. Frank Kloucek, D-Scotland; and about 25 board members and administrators.

District 20 lawmakers did not attend, but Lueders said he met earlier with Sen. Ed Olson, R-Mitchell, and briefed him on the evening’s program.

Some points made during the presentation:

- In the opinion of the ASBSD, South Dakota does have money to fund education but that money has gone to other priorities. Since 1998, the state budget has grown an average of nearly 5 percent but state aid per student has grown only 2.8 percent.
- Opt-outs continue. To maintain current programs, 77 of the state’s 167 school district have opted-out of the property tax limitation. That produces \$21 million annually that receives no state match.
- One-time money from the state can’t be used for salaries, which are on ongoing fiscal commitment. Bill Lynch, ASBSD’s CFO, said from 2004 to 2006 state school received about \$16 million in one-time money. Tony Sieler, a member of the Mitchell School Board, said, “One-time money is not for anything except special projects.”
- District fund balances are generally down, not up. In cases where fund balances are higher, suggested the report, it’s partly because the inadequate funding of education causes school districts to be fiscally conservative.
- South Dakota is so far behind neighboring states that it will take an investment of \$46.1 million to put districts in a competitive position to recruit and retain high quality teachers. An administrator at the meeting said an area school district advertised for a math teacher for months are received one application. That shortage will eventually flow to other subject areas, he said.

This article, by the Mitchell Daily Republic’s Ross Dolan, was first appeared on Dec. 15, 2006. Reprinted with permission.

It’s about priorities

Growth of state government - of spending and positions - isn’t really the issue. Neither is funding. We’ve proven we have the money to spend.

The issue is how we grow, and how we spend our money.

The issue is priorities. And that’s where we have problems.

Neither the governor nor legislators have been willing to put limits on state government growth. That’s obvious.

But neither have they been willing to take the limits off schools - or even give schools a reasonable amount of growth.

By state law, the education funding formula is limited in growth to 3 percent, or the rate of inflation - whichever is less. As a result, according to the Associated School Board of South Dakota, education funding has grown at about 2.8 percent from 1998 through this year, while state government has grown at about 4.9 percent a year.

“It looks to me like our priorities are screwy,” says state Sen. Ben Nesselhuf, a Vermillion Democrat.

He’s right. The governor and legislators say we can’t increase the education funding base for fear we wouldn’t be able to afford it later. Yet, that’s exactly what they’ve been doing with state government. The governor and legislators say we don’t have the money to adequately fund education, but when it comes to adding positions and programs in state government, there’s never any lack of funds.

It’s all about priorities.

Has our state government growth been bad? Not necessarily. But should that be our priority? Or should education be our priority?

If education is as important as our politicians say, how can we keep throwing money at state government while telling educators - as well as students - they have to make do with what they have?

The governor can change that. Legislators can change that without the governor. It’s all a matter of setting priorities. The right priorities.

This editorial appeared in the April 2, 2007, Argus Leader. Reprinted with permission.

Board training programs go into development

Steady progress on program outcomes, scope and delivery leaves one final step.

After 30 years of helping board members become better board members, ASBSD Executive Director Wayne Lueders says educating civic leaders on their roles, authority and leadership potential is more important than ever.

"The stakes are higher in the 21st Century," Lueders said. "Society is changing rapidly and it's critical that our public education system keeps pace."

That's why, over the past two years, ASBSD has been putting the pieces in place to begin work on a new board development program.

Foremost was direction and commitment from the board, which came early last year in the form of a new board development policy.

After making a policy statement, the board and administration zeroed in on content.

"There's a lot of directions we could have gone," Lueders said. "We wanted to make sure it was forward-thinking and the right fit for South Dakota."

In August, following adoption of five research-driven concepts on which the new board development programs would be built, the board offered a final directive - open the concepts for public input.

Lueders said gathering member input was an important move. "Board

members will attend programs, they have helped create," he said.

At the ASBSD Region Meetings in October, local board members worked their way through the roles, eventually approving of the concepts and voicing their support for ASBSD's continued efforts.

The steps taken this year build on successes from last year. The driving force behind reviewing the regional structure was to ensure the association is in a position to effectively deliver the programs.

After building consensus about the board's role, Lueders is excited to start on the next phase - program development.

"This is what we've been working toward," Lueders said. "We've put ourselves in a good position, and now it's time to deliver on a promise to our members."

An ounce of prevention

To manage insurance costs, ASBSD Protective Trust Management helps districts handle potential risks.

While insurance costs are a function of many factors - the amount of claims, the marketplace and the level of coverage - ASBSD Assistance Executive Director Malcolm McKillop believes that one of the most effective ways for districts to keep costs down is to reduce risk.

When it comes to insurance cost, McKillop hangs his hat on an old adage: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

That's why McKillop has stepped up his efforts to help districts avoid costly claims.

"Emergencies aren't preventable," McKillop said. "But, there are situations where, with a little knowledge and some planning, risk can be avoided."

With rising health care costs impacting everyone in America, the ASBSD Protective Trust has implemented wellness incentive programs, free screenings and free flu shots - all targeted toward identifying risk and rewarding prevention. But, if you ask McKillop, a recent weight management study has enormous potential to reduce risk.

The program, studied last year as a pilot program, helped health pool members lose between 80 and 100 pounds each. The success prompted McKillop to make the program available on a large scale.

"It's not only helping our school personnel live healthier lives, but it heads

off several problems that could arise later in life," McKillop said. "It helps people lose weight and it teaches them long-term behaviors that will help them keep it off."

The ASBSD Protective Trust is also taking steps to help districts prevent future legal liabilities. McKillop includes education sessions at the annual ASBSD/SASD convention, and earlier -this year he arranged for a special speaker to talk to districts about cyber bullying and sexual predators.

"There's a growing threat from cyber bullies and predators," McKillop said. "We wanted to take steps to educate our members about how to handle situations and when and how school districts should take action."

Cost is only one factor to consider when deciding on insurance services, McKillop says. But focusing on prevention strategies will benefit everyone. "Prevention measures help the pools, which is better for everyone," he said.

ASBSD SERVICES AT A GLANCE

ADVOCACY

ASBSD advocates for public education at the state and federal levels. We represent your beliefs and priorities and ensure lawmakers have the information they need to make decisions.

COMMUNICATIONS

ASBSD provides news, information and analysis of both the state and national education environment through the Bulletin, ASBSD.org and other targeted communications. Your association also works as a source of information for the media.

CONSULTING

ASBSD staff provides advice and information over the phone and via e-mail on a daily basis. By request, ASBSD meets with districts on a variety of issues. ASBSD's

experience in school board leadership, effective board relationships, school finance, school law, insurance and communications is at your disposal.

CONVENTIONS, MEETINGS and SEMINARS

ASBSD travels around the state offering board member orientation programs, legislative meetings, school law seminars, negotiations workshops, election workshops, region meetings and the annual joint convention.

POLICY AND LEGAL SERVICES

ASBSD's general counsel is available in an advisory capacity. From negotiations and labor issues to inquiries about policy, ASBSD has the expertise on hand.

PROTECTIVE TRUST MANAGEMENT

ASBSD administers three insurance pools that help districts keep insurance costs low while providing the best possible coverage for their district and staff.

PUBLICATIONS

Our publications provide detail on: the board's role, school elections, the role of the board president, reorganization planning, and school facilities planning. ASBSD members also receive a calendar with important dates and the Education Directory.

RECOGNITION

Yearly awards recognize student achievements, community involvement and school board leadership.

SOUTH DAKOTA TEACHER PLACEMENT CENTER

ASBSD runs the South Dakota Teacher Placement Center, a cost-effective, web-based system that makes filling staff positions easier.

SUPERINTENDENT SEARCHES

Through an agreement with a professional search firm, ASBSD helps districts find a quality chief administrator.



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