

Moving Forward

We have made tremendous strides since 1946, but we are far from having reached a static position . . . A periodic review of what we are doing and what we can do better will continue to be important. In our educational organization, change will be the only thing that can be constant.

—WESLEY L. BROWN, *ASBO: The First 50 Years*

There have been many changes over the years; no organization could expect to succeed if it didn't evolve. And while ASBO will continue to adapt to changing conditions and needs, some things will—and should—stay the same.

RESEARCH

Any profession worthy of the name conducts research to gain more exact knowledge and to find the best practice. ASBO emphasizes research.

—WESLEY L. BROWN, *ASBO: The First 50 Years*

All ASBO's committees, past and present, were formed to do research in specific areas and to share their findings with the members through publications, professional standards, professional development programs, and annual meeting sessions.

In 2008, ASBO took its belief in the power of providing every child with an education to a higher level by creating the ASBO Research and Education Fund. Championing the behind-the-scenes work of school business professionals by funding research projects and initiatives, AREF is advancing the effective management of educational resources, which directly benefits students.

While research methods have certainly changed over the past century, the results—providing school business professionals with the tools they need to succeed—remain the same.

NETWORKING

The exhibit is now considered one of the finest and most educational features of the annual meetings.





1999

Enduring friendships, annually renewed, have sprung up among members, their wives, and booth attendants . . .

—GEORGE W. GRILL, *ASBO: The First 50 Years*

1958—New York . . . Instead of a ladies' tea, usually invaded by the men, ASBO had a Board of Directors Reception for all members and guests, a highly successful innovation . . .

—WESLEY L. BROWN, *ASBO: The First 50 Years*

Many people join professional organizations for the networking opportunities, but school business management professionals and ASBO have taken networking to a higher level. Their willingness to share best practices, to mentor, and to help others succeed is what sets ASBO's members apart.

Camaraderie extends beyond members. Spouses of ASBO members still attend the meetings in great numbers. The family atmosphere created decades ago carries on; strong friendships form and endure among people who would perhaps never have met otherwise.

The importance of being able to talk to others experiencing the same challenges cannot be underestimated. While email and other technologies have expedited communication among members, there is no replacement for face-to-face contact, which remains an important part of ASBO's annual meetings.



1956

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

While some people may be born leaders, they can strive to become better. ASBO recognizes this and believes that ongoing professional development is crucial to improving school business professionals' skills as education leaders and as leaders in general.

Globalization has not only drawn in ASBO members from around the world, it has increased their need to demonstrate a host of capabilities. School business officials need it all: technical skills to manage a school district's funds efficiently as well as broader knowledge that allows them to see, understand, and even alter the bigger picture as it affects their districts.

In light of these needs, ASBO has adapted its methods of delivering professional development opportunities, targeting them to hone specific leadership skill sets. Many technical skills are addressed in annual meeting sessions, which are also accessible online year-round through the ASBO Live Learning Center. The Executive Leadership Forum, the Eagle Institute, and the certification program are vehicles for delivering leadership skills development.

RECENT ADVANCEMENTS

In 2008, when the Internal Revenue Service revised the 403(b) retirement plan regulations placing significant new responsibilities on school business officials, ASBO represented its members in communications to the federal government and formed a council that developed critical online resources to help members' school districts achieve compliance.

When the U.S. economy was imperiled in 2008, ASBO quickly called an Economic Crisis Summit in Washington, D.C. ASBO members and education financing experts collaborated on a report that showed school districts how to go beyond simply remaining solvent and to use the crisis as an opportunity to advance fiscally sustainable education reform.

During this difficult period, ASBO rekindled a close and collaborative relationship with the U.S. Department of Education, under President Barack Obama, once again enjoying the kind of communication with the federal government that led to ASBO's birth in 1910.

By continuing to adapt to keep up with emerging trends and facing each challenge with a steady hand, ASBO will reinvent the profession in the next century.

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

Reflecting on how far we have come is valuable. ASBO and the school business profession have been through a lot in the past century: World Wars I and II, the Great Depression and the current recession, energy crises, national legislation affecting education, and countless challenges that districts face.



Now that we have looked back, moving forward is imperative. ASBO continues to seek solutions to school business management challenges.

In 2006, the Futures Task Force was formed to make recommendations about what ASBO would like to achieve in the next 5 to 15 years. The Board of Directors worked with ASBO staff to develop a strategic framework with specific strategies to meet and measure the goals and objectives set forth.

It began with a list of relevant assumptions that acknowledged the following: We live in a world that

moves and changes much more quickly than it ever has. Skills for the school business official will continue to evolve, and competition for positions within the field will increase. Expectations for immediate turnaround will be the norm. Costs will likely continue to rise while revenue sources may decline.

It continued by putting forth ASBO’s ultimate goal—to be “universally recognized, respected, and consulted as the expert in the school business profession”—followed by numerous descriptions of the association, its affiliates and members, and external perspectives of ASBO upon the achievement of its goals. Some of these goals include

- Recognition of ASBO as a global association, with communications, products, and services provided in multiple languages;
- Widespread professional certification; and
- School business officials viewed as integral members of the education system and recognized by key policy makers.

Reaching these goals won’t be easy, but school business has never been simple. During its first century, ASBO took quantum leaps forward. It was able to do so because it conducted meticulous research, took calculated risks, and encouraged its members to continue raising the bar.

Index of Advertisers

AXA Equitable	inside front cover
CPI Qualified Plan Consultants, Inc.	page 8
Edgemont Precision Rebuilders, Inc.	page 31
Grainger, Inc.	inside back cover
ING	pages 38-39
MetLife Resources	page 3
National Alliance for Insurance Education	page 6
Transfinder	page 67
Valic	page 78
Virco Manufacturing Corporation	back cover
Windsor Management Group	page 1

“The future of ASBO looks promising and encouraging. I have predicted that our profession is on the threshold of a new and exciting era and your enthusiasm and questing were a joy to experience. In the changes that are now taking place so rapidly, the duties of the business administrator are becoming highly specialized, and we have gained a high degree of recognition on the part of other professions.”

**H.C. Bleckschmidt,
President 1965**