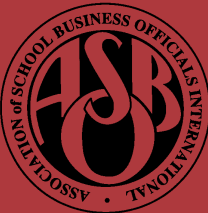


Association of School Business  
Officials International's  
**Professional  
Standards**



Association of School Business  
Officials International

Association of School Business  
Officials International's ®

# Professional Standards



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# Association of School Business Officials International's® Professional Standards

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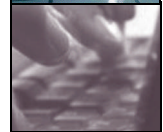
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# Preface

The Association of School Business Officials (ASBO) International® expresses its thanks to the Professional Standards Committee and its chair, Dr. Pam Deering, for bringing this important work to completion. The Association also extends its thanks to the many professionals who reviewed the work of the committee at various stages. Their comments and recommendations made a positive impact on the final version of this work.

The professional standards presented in this document are intended to a) assist those currently working in the profession of school business management to perform their duties as expertly as possible, b) better delineate the content of both the pre-service and professional development experiences of those entering or seeking growth in the profession, c) provide a framework for establishing accreditation standards for higher education institutions involved in training school business officials, d) present a model from which to build certification standards for the profession, and e) aid local decision-makers in seeking and securing the best person for the job of school business official.

They evolved from a combination of current writing and research in the field and the input of highly trained and well-recognized school business officials. The standards represent the best thinking of the profession in addition to decades of study and research ASBO International® has conducted regarding the role of school business officials and their importance to the overall educational management team.

While presenting the best thinking at this point and time, the standards presented in this document need to be viewed as dynamic. In our highly complex and quickly evolving society, standards such as these require regular review and refinement.

Today, school districts cannot meet the challenges of an increasingly demanding and diverse clientele without an efficient and effective business and financial framework within which to operate. Well prepared and dedicated school business officials, working in tandem with other members of the administrative team, can better assure that such a framework is in place. The standards presented in this document have been developed to assist training institutions, accrediting agencies, certifying entities, and members of the school business profession to define and achieve educational excellence through the work of the school business official.

# I ntroduction

Public education is a multibillion-dollar enterprise that is charged with the daunting responsibility of preparing youth for the complex world of the 21st century. The expectations of parents, communities, policy-makers, business leaders, and the taxpayer are myriad. The task of administering this vastly complex business of education requires professional leadership that is highly skilled and knowledgeable. One of the most vital members of the educational leadership team is the school business official. This person often is at the heart of the administration and management of one of the largest corporate endeavors in the community.

Without a doubt, a successful school business official must have certain knowledge and skills, whether gained through experience, formal education, and/or professional development. What these should be, however, has not remained static. The position, responsibilities, and qualifications for the school business official have been evolving over many years and are still developing. The concept of school business administration itself is constantly forming and reforming in much the same manner as the concept of public education. In that sense, providing a set of professional standards is a never-ending task; one that requires constant monitoring of the changing environments of both the field of education and society itself.

Realizing this, the Association of School Business Officials International® has been a leader since the 1960s in not only developing and disseminating standards that can be used to recruit, employ, evaluate, and compensate school business administrators, but in evaluating and revising them as times change. The standards presented in this document reflect the Association's long-standing and continuing commitment to ensuring the role of the school business official is clearly defined and understood.

In the 21st century, the school business official will be an increasingly vital member of the management team charged with delivering quality education. The standards presented in this document are intended to provide school business officials, as well as those who prepare, certify, and hire them, a framework that may be used to understand and structure the complex job of a school business official.

# Ethical Context

Though this document focuses on professional job standards, ASBO® considers it vitally important that anyone seeking the position, or any entity preparing or certifying individuals to serve as school business officials, recognize and demonstrate the importance of ethical conduct. The school business official is expected to model moral, legal, and ethical behavior, and always make decisions and provide input to policy makers with the best interests of the students in mind. ASBO® supports and promotes the continuous study of the ethics of the profession and is committed to ensuring the highest standards of conduct among school business officials. ASBO® presented a code of conduct in writing as early as 1960, and since then has periodically reviewed and revised its code. The code revolves around standards the school business official is expected to abide by in the performance of their duties. The code is available in the appendix of this document.

# Human Context

In addition to an ethical framework, the standards presented in this document also should be viewed within another context. In the past, one or two professionals comprised the support sector of a school district and were seldom involved in "educational" decisions. However, many school districts are staffed differently today. As a result of the increasing complexity of delivering public education, a new philosophy has emerged. It is now evident that educational decision-making without consideration of the availability of resources and awareness of legal and technical constraints related to the educational program will be ineffective. Similarly, it has become obvious that no one person can handle the myriad of tasks required to operate the district effectively and to satisfy the growing array of federal, state, provincial, and local laws, policies, rules, and regulations in which education functions.

Thus, the concept of "team" has become crucial to the successful operation of school districts. School districts recognize coordination and involvement of all district-level organizational components are critical elements in the success of educational initiatives. As a result, school business officials have become an integral and indispensable part of the district's cabinet-level decision-making team.

Most school business officials now have professional and technical staffs within their own departments or divisions responsible for carrying out specific management functions. Today's school business official must, in addition to serving effectively as a member of the district-wide management team, be able to institute a team concept within his or her own sector of the school district. District teams must promote effective communication and coordination among the variety of professionals and staff personnel who directly carry out the

school district's specific business and support functions.

School business officials must be technically knowledgeable and proficient as well as effectively use interpersonal skills. The standards presented in this document are vital to ensuring the success of a school business official, but must be viewed in the context of the human dimension in which the job takes place.

## D evelopment of Professional Standards

**A**SBO® considers the establishment of a set of professional standards for school business officials key to gaining and maintaining the trust of policy makers and citizen. The Association has been actively developing and disseminating standards for the position of school business official for nearly five decades. Throughout those years, the ASBO® has operated under the principle that public trust is built when written standards are in place, professional development supports the standards, and the performance of members of the profession are judged in concrete terms against the standards. Being judged as "professional" is critical to the school business official. The term engenders an image of expertise, trust, and dedication. ASBO® believes all school business officials today must strive for this image.

Through its strategic planning process, ASBO® set goals and developed action plans to bring forth standards that would solidify the image of the school business official as a consummate professional. ASBO's® Professional Standards Committee worked from 1999 through 2001 to review the research and gain the input necessary to develop meaningful standards.

The result was the identification of seven professional standards for which every school business official should be trained and held accountable to manage effectively. The standards address: The Educational Enterprise, Financial Resource Management, Human Resource Management, Facility Management, Property Acquisition and Management, Information Management, and Ancillary Services.

# The Educational Enterprise

The public has given more attention to the relationship between a school's sound business practices and the quality education of students in recent years. School business officials have been recognized as being central to the successful operation of the educational enterprise. School business practices permeate the entire school district. The local education enterprise often maintains the largest budget in the community. Therefore, due to the public's increased demand for accountability, the expanding complexity of our society, the challenge to do more with less, and the needed expertise to manage the financial resources of the school, the school business official must endorse certain standards in organization and administration, public policy and intergovernmental relations, and the legal framework of our public school district.

## **A. Organization and Administration**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Identify and apply various organizational leadership models
- Identify techniques for motivating others, delegating authority, decision-making, information processing, planning, and allocating resources
- Examine methods of assigning personnel and resources to accomplish specific goals and objectives and to utilize scheduling techniques for the coordination of tasks to maximize personnel and resource utilization
- Develop skills in identifying problems, securing relevant information, and recognizing possible causes of conflict
- Develop skills in questioning techniques, fact-finding, categorizing information, and retention of relevant data
- Apply concepts of change, group dynamics, interpersonal relationships, and effective problem solving
- Delegate and assign responsibilities to subordinates; collect, analyze, and evaluate information to generate contingency plans; and apply basic concepts of organizational development

## **B. Public Policy and Intergovernmental Relations**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Develop and apply the policies and roles of local boards of education,

state/provincial educational authorities, state/provincial legislatures, and the federal government

- Identify the role of special interest groups (public and private) within a school district and their ability to influence those who approve district policy
- Analyze the political and legislative process as it relates to local board elections, municipal governments, state/provincial legislatures, and other local governmental jurisdictions
- Use the skills necessary to interpret and evaluate local school board policies and administrative procedures to ensure consistent application in the daily operation of the school district

### **C. Legal Issues**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Identify the state/provincial and federal constitutional rights that apply to individuals within the public education system
- Review and analyze appropriate statutory and constitutional authority regarding the administration of public schools
- Review and analyze significant statutory and case law relative to financial resource management, human resource management, facility management, property management acquisition, information management including freedom of information and protection of privacy, and management of ancillary services
- Apply personal “values clarification” and “ethical performance” as it relates to the entire profession of school business administration

# F inancial Resource Management



**S**chool business officials must be able to demonstrate, understand, and comprehend the principles associated with school finance, budgeting, financial planning, accounting, auditing, financial reporting, cash management, investments, debt management, and technology for school business operations.

## **A. Principles of School Finance**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Apply economic and financial markets/theories
- Recognize and forecast the major sources of revenue available to public schools from local, state/provincial, and federal levels of government
- Interpret the state/provincial funding model
- Analyze the impact of shifts in local, state/provincial, and federal funding and the effect on local spending plans
- Apply multiple techniques for identifying expenditures across cost centers and programs
- Explore alternative and innovative revenue sources
- Recognize and analyze significant social, demographic, and economic changes that may impact the financial plan of the district

## **B. Budgeting and Financial Planning**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Prepare a budget calendar to meet the time constraints of budget preparation
- Use multiple approaches to determine reliable enrollment and personnel projections
- Forecast anticipated expenditures by program
- Identify various methods of budget analysis and management
- Apply statistical process control techniques for budgetary analysis
- Apply the legal requirements for budget adoption
- Prepare revenue projections and estimates of expenditures for school sites and district-wide budgets
- Recognize and explain internal and external influences on the budget
- Maximize state/provincial/federal aids for the district

- Communicate the relationship between programs, revenues, and appropriations of the school district to the stakeholders
- Develop multi-year budgets that serve as a communications tool for the stakeholders
- Develop a financial model to monitor a school district's financial health

### **C. Accounting, Auditing, and Financial Reporting**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Use an internal and external auditor
- Establish and verify compliance with finance-related legal and contractual provisions
- Communicate the relationship between programs, revenues, and appropriations of the school district to the stakeholders
- Prepare, analyze, and report financial statements and support documents to the board of education periodically
- Use information conveyed in the annual audit report to improve financial tracking and reporting and internal controls
- Apply concepts and standards of accounting, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), and generally accepted accounting principals (GAAP), along with other standards applicable to a school district
- Report the financial status of the district to the appropriate state/provincial agency

### **D. Cash Management, Investments, and Debt Management**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Select professional advisors/contractors such as bond counsel, rating agencies, financial advisors, and underwriters
- Use lease purchasing and partner with other jurisdictions such as: municipalities, counties, and other school districts
- Develop specifications for the selection of banking and other financial services
- Apply concept of compensating balances
- Comprehend procedures and legal constraints for cash collection and disbursement
- Calculate the yields and understand the risks on various investment options available to a school district
- Apply various methods of cash forecasting
- Apply appropriate types of short-term debt financing instruments available to school districts
- Analyze monthly internal transfers and loans
- Analyze the legal constraints and methods of issuing long-term general obligation bonds including the bond rating process and the role of the bonding attorney and rating services
- Prepare a cash flow analysis, including a fund balance report, for the board of education

## **E. Technology for School Finance Operations**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Keep current with technology applications and programs
- Assess the district's needs related to available budget dollars for technology
- Ensure that the district technology plan is designed to meet the district's goals
- Develop an operational plan to meet the district's financial goals and objectives
- Apply economic and financial markets/theories
- Recognize and forecast the major sources of revenue available to public schools from local, state/provincial, and federal levels of government
- Interpret the state/provincial funding model
- Analyze the impact of shifts in local, state/provincial, and federal funding and the effect on local spending plans
- Apply multiple techniques for identifying expenditures across cost centers and programs
- Explore alternative and innovative revenue sources
- Recognize and analyze significant social, demographic, and economic changes that may impact the financial plan of the district

# Human Resource Management

In the education sector, the critical importance of human resource management can be demonstrated by considering the proportion of a school district's total budget that is allocated to salaries, wages, and employee benefits.



Human resource management, while involving many day-to-day practical considerations, also requires an understanding of both theory and practice, recognizing that theory often determines practice. School business officials cannot fulfill their human resource management role effectively and efficiently without being aware of relevant management concepts and theories as well as applicable leadership styles.

## A. Personnel and Benefits Administration

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Coordinate the development and management of an appropriate personnel information management database providing seamless integration with payroll and other school district functions
- Manage and continually evaluate the effectiveness of the school district's payroll operations
- Administer employment agreements including interpreting contract language; considering the concept of "past practice," "just cause" provisions, and grievance procedures
- Research and explain various compensation arrangements including salaries and wages, employee health care benefit programs, and retirement options
- Coordinate the procedures for termination of employment including the concept of "due process"; and an awareness of the procedures, usually governed by collective agreements, with respect to reduction in work force

## B. Professional Development

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Identify areas and needs for professional development
- Build a professional development, supervision, and evaluation system, based primarily on adult motivation research, to improve the performance of staff

members and to assist staff in meeting the educational objectives of the school district

- Identify appropriate procedures for the management and evaluation of professional development programs
- Involve school district staff in determining their professional development needs that can significantly enhance the effectiveness of employee training and development programs

### **C. Labor Relations and Employment Agreements**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Analyze jurisdictional, state/provincial, and federal laws and regulations with respect to employment agreements
- Develop and analyze models for assessing the cost of current salary and employee benefit packages and proposals
- Analyze current employment agreements and develop comparative reports with local and state/provincial agreements
- Identify and monitor compliance with the grievance procedures as set out in employment agreements and state/provincial law
- Review local and state/provincial laws and regulations with respect to impasse procedures such as mediation, voluntary arbitration, and binding arbitration

### **D. Human Relations**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Diagnose, maintain, and when necessary, improve organizational health/morale including increasing focus on employee wellness programs
- Develop policies and procedures for the management of school district personnel
- Assist with the processes related to the recruitment, selection, orientation, assignment, evaluation, and termination of school district personnel
- Develop employee assistance programs and evaluate their impact on the school district's staff morale
- Identify and implement procedures for conflict resolution and team building to enhance morale and productivity
- Recognize and promote compliance with standards of ethical behavior and standards for professional conduct applicable to all school district staff
- Stay current with management theory and leadership styles including concepts of behavioral science, organizational structure theory, developing and maintaining organizational culture, and managing organizational change

# Facility Management

Research on learning conducted over the last 25 years has validated the effect of environmental stimuli on the learner. Factors such as sound, light, temperature, and the design of space affect the ability of individuals to learn and work. Hence, effective and efficient facility management contributes to the educational process by providing the environment in which instructional programs are delivered. Expertise in areas such as physical plant planning, accountability for capital resources, and administration of the substantial public investment in schools are basic performance competencies for school business officials.



## A. Planning and Construction

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Develop a long range facility plan that includes demographic data and serve as an integral member of the planning team
- Develop a working knowledge of funding sources and issues related to school construction including bond ratings, the rating process, and bond election processes
- Develop appropriate procedures for selecting architects, engineers, construction managers, and other professionals
- Apply the steps and procedures involved in developing and using educational specifications for selecting school sites
- Review the legal and administrative responsibilities for advertising, awarding, and managing construction contracts
- Recognize the impact of energy and environmental factors on the learning process
- Meet the requirements of federal and state/provincial agencies regarding construction and renovation of school facilities

## B. Maintenance and Operations

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Administer procedures required to keep schools clean, safe, and secure through effective custodial services and preventive maintenance
- Manage energy consumption and environmental aspects
- Determine resource allocation for maintenance and operations
- Develop a crisis management plan
- Maintain a positive working relationship with staff, contractors, and suppliers

# Property Acquisition and Management



**E**ffective acquisition of property and goods requires a systematic purchasing system, operated by established procedures. Acquiring the products and services needed for the educational enterprise is an integral part of the instructional program. Accountability in education begins with the procurement of school property and materials. The school business official coordinates the economic, efficiency, and cost effectiveness of property acquisition and management.

## **A. Purchasing**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Apply generally accepted practices and procedures in the purchasing process
- Administer an integrated electronic management system to maintain the purchasing process
- Formulate bid requirements for specifications, advertisements, and selection
- Analyze e-procurement issues

## **B. Supply and Fixed Asset Management**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Develop a system to manage and track inventories and distribution
- Develop a program for the acquisition, maintenance, repair, and disposal of equipment
- Develop a system for the financial analysis of life cycle costs and quality control
- Develop a system to track capital assets

## **C. Real Estate Management**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Develop procedures for the acquisition and disposal of land and buildings
- Coordinate with other governmental agencies regarding zoning, land use, and other real estate issues
- Develop real estate management policies and procedures

# I nformation Management



The school business official is required to process, manage, and communicate vast amounts of organizational information. In today's technological environment where information flows to and from school organizations in megabytes per second, the prerequisite competencies to direct, protect, analyze, and update this information has become a primary focus for the school business official. Ultimately, information management is more than simply overseeing technical data. It also involves the presentation and articulate communication of information to key decision making individuals and groups in the school environment.

## **A. Strategic Planning**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Participate in administrative and employee teams in the identification of short- and long-term goals in all aspects of school district activities
- Assist with the development and communication of a vision of the preferred future of the school district drawing from current research and best practice
- Assist in the development of a strategic plan that will move the district toward the achievement of its mission and goals
- Assist in providing "data-sets" required to facilitate the strategic planning process
- Assist in the implementation, monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and revision of a strategic plan

## **B. Instructional Support Program Evaluation**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Apply a practical and research based knowledge of the components and skills to evaluate programs and business services
- Identify various economic and cost factors inherent in program operation and evaluation
- Develop and apply procedures for the systematic evaluation of instructional support programs
- Analyze, develop, and apply various methods of measuring program outcomes and effectiveness

- Effectively manage a change process when evaluation determines that instructional support programs must be improved

### **C. Instructional Program Evaluation**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Support the components of the instructional programs within the school district
- Participate in the planning and implementation of instructional program improvement
- Analyze the various economic factors associated with the delivery and evaluation of instructional programs
- Develop procedures for the evaluation and reporting of the cost-effectiveness of instructional programs
- Utilize evaluation data toward the development of instructional program changes
- Effectively participate in the change process when instructional programs must be improved
- Assist in the direction and facilitation of the allocation of resources within the school district toward the improvement of instructional programs
- Assist in directing and promoting the allocation of resources for professional development leading to improved instructional programs

### **D. Communications**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Comprehend effective communication strategies and techniques related to mass and interactive communications (oral, aural, written, and non-verbal)
- Identify the primary components of public information management and public relations
- Develop a clear understanding of the major constituencies within the school district
- Present financial data to various school and community groups both in written, oral, and multi-media formats
- Assist in the development of a plan for a positive school-community relations program for the business office and the school district
- Assist in the development of procedures for the management of public information programs and departments that relate to school-community relations

### **E. Management Information Systems**

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Direct or develop management information systems
- Apply the most current technology to the storage, analysis and communication of data (fax, electronic mail, administrative and educational computer systems, etc.)

- Evaluate the cost benefits of producing information in relation to organizational value
- Develop a records management system using appropriate technology that complies with all legal requirements
- Develop an accurate database to facilitate management decisions using current data processing techniques
- Administrate a computerized management information system
- Ensure that appropriate data security is maintained
- Assist in the integration and gathering of information for public relations purposes
- Assist and coordinate the gathering and reporting of information for required state and federal reports
- Maintain the historical records archive of the school district
- Assist in the development and implementation of technology in the business office and the classroom environment
- Maintain a working knowledge of the technology and software that is available for school and business office use
- Direct or develop specific plans for secure student and employee access to the Internet
- Evaluate the cost of Internet access options for the school district
- Evaluate and apply various technology tools for use in the school and business office
- Assist in the development of long-range technology planning for the school district
- Promote and assist in the development of staff training in technology
- Allocate appropriate resources toward the purchase and installation of technology and technology infrastructures in the business office, the school office, and the classroom
- Develop appropriate specifications for technology purchasing and technology infrastructure contracting for the school district

# Ancillary Services

## A. Risk Management

The consequences of catastrophic risk are of major concern. Risk management needs to play a role in standards of benchmarking, best practices, and performance measurement. Financial standards such as claim statistics and cost-of-risk analysis are important measures of efficiency but are not true measures of risk management effectiveness when used alone. Other areas that need to be measured include strategies to contain costs of workers' compensation, litigation management, employee relations, loss control, and cost containment.

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Ensure that a comprehensive risk management program is in place
- Identify and apply models for the evaluation of potential risk management programs
- Adhere to legal requirements for insurance requirements
- Identify and evaluate alternative methods of funding and managing risk
- Assess risk management programs and recommend changes consistent with district needs
- Direct the process of selecting/employing an insurance consultant or risk manager
- Ensure the risk management program addresses safety and security
- Communicate the risk management program to all stakeholders

## B. Transportation

School transportation is the largest public mass transportation system. As the number of operating school buses increases, problems are inevitable. For many school districts there is no mandate to provide students with transportation to or from school. Accordingly, school transportation funding does not always receive as high a priority in budget decisions as mandated education programs. Where law requires transportation of students to and from school, funding shortfalls in recent years have created problems in maintaining an adequate school transportation program.



The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Support and maintain a student transportation program that adheres to all legal requirements
- Ensure that the school bus maintenance and replacement program is established and maintained
- Monitor the student transportation program and make adjustments as needed
- Analyze alternative methods available for providing transportation
- Ensure an efficient and comprehensive routing system is developed and maintained
- Ensure a comprehensive plan is in place for training and retaining bus drivers
- Communicate transportation needs to the public, administration, and state/provincial legislatures

### **C. Food Service**

More than 26.1 million children in the United States are served lunch every school day in more than 93,000 schools through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The NSLP is the largest federal child nutrition program in the United States, in terms of spending and the number of children served. The School Breakfast Program (SBP) was launched as part of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 in the United



States. It began as a pilot program with 700 schools. Today more than 70,000 schools serve breakfast to 7.3 million school children every day through the program. The number of schools participating in the SBP has nearly doubled over the past 10 years. While requirements for food service programs are not always mandated, as is true of the NSLP, studies have confirmed that children who eat nutritious meals perform better academically, show improved behavior, and are physically healthier. Canadian school food services are entirely self-funded.

The school business official understands and demonstrates the ability to:

- Establish procedures for the implementation and operation of the food service program
- Adhere to the legal requirements of the food service program
- Monitor the food service program and make adjustments as needed
- Ensure the management systems for tracking meals and inventories are in place and identify participant status
- Manage and control inventories and procurement
- Ensure compliance with required nutritional value is in place
- Analyze the methods available for providing food service and identify and recommend the most beneficial methods for a given situation
- Ensure cash handling procedures and effective internal controls

# C onclusion



**W**hy is ASBO® presenting new standards at this point in time? Because the world is changing dramatically. The population is aging and, as a result, there are more and more adults without children in school. They are increasingly reluctant to place taxes upon themselves for school use. The school population is becoming more diverse, with minorities in many communities becoming the majority. Finding middle or common ground about the purpose of education and where to place limited resources is becoming increasingly difficult. Further, a growing number of people are championing alternatives to public education, which exacerbates the problem of securing sufficient resources for public schools. Finally, technology is developing so rapidly that many are not sure what form schools will take as we march through the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Many are reluctant to embrace new ideas or provide the added resources that new ideas and technology require because they lack the vision of schooling for the new millennium.

Because of all these dramatic changes, and many others, it is important that school districts have access to highly knowledgeable, skilled administrators, including the school business official. The school business official is one of the most important members of the educational leadership team. The expertise of this person often is the critical ingredient in the success of school districts as they struggle to achieve excellence with limited public resources.

Since the job is so vital, ensuring school districts have access to professionals with the prerequisite skills and knowledge to effectively administer the business function of a school system is a very important task. Consideration must be given to appropriate initial preparation, as well as adequate continuing professional development. Accrediting agencies and certifying offices must have valid criteria to judge the needed training and experience required for the position. School districts need criteria to determine the skills and knowledge they desire in a school business official, as they recruit, hire, evaluate, and compensate persons for the position.

The standards presented in this document are intended to be used to develop and/or modify preparation programs, to determine certification requirements, and to make personnel decisions. Using the new standards, the educational community and policy makers should be able to: a) enhance the effectiveness of the school business official, b) assist higher education institutions in acquiring needed resources to provide adequate training programs, c) help school boards and policy makers monitor the quality of school business officials

being trained, d) provide school boards with measures to assess the productivity of their own business administrators, and e) build public confidence that public schools are effectively and efficiently using tax dollars.

Finally, while ASBO® hopes and assumes the new standards presented here will generate continued discussion regarding the interpretation and utilization of the standards, as well as the role of the school business official, there is no doubt that the new standards are unequivocally needed. The quality of schooling and, ultimately, the quality of life of our children depend on an educational team that includes a highly skilled and knowledgeable school business official in every school district. Developing and presenting the new standards for the position of school business official described in this document is one effort on the part of the Association of School Business Officials® to support and enhance the educational process.

# A ppendix

## Code of Ethics & Standards of Conduct

An educational administrator's professional behavior must conform to an ethical code. The code must be idealistic and at the same time practical so that it can apply reasonably to all educational administrators. The administrator acknowledges that the schools belong to the public they serve for the purpose of providing educational opportunities to all. However, the administrator assumes responsibility for providing professional leadership in the school and community. This responsibility requires the administrator to maintain standards of exemplary professional conduct. It must be recognized that the administrator's actions will be viewed and appraised by the community, professional associates and students. To these ends, the administrator subscribes to the following statements of standards.

The educational administrator:

1. Makes the well-being of students the fundamental value in all decision making and actions.
2. Fulfills professional responsibilities with honesty and integrity.
3. Supports the principle of due process and protects the civil and human rights of all individuals.
4. Obeys local, state and national laws and does not knowingly join or support organizations that advocate, directly or indirectly, the overthrow of the government.
5. Implements the governing board of education's policies and administrative rules and regulations.
6. Pursues appropriate measures to correct those laws, policies and regulations that are not consistent with sound educational goals.
7. Avoids using positions for personal gain through political, social, religious, economic or other influence.
8. Accepts academic degrees or professional certification only from duly accredited institutions.
9. Maintains the standards and seeks to improve the effectiveness of the profession through research and continuing professional development.
10. Honors all contracts until fulfillment or release.

### Standards of Conduct

Now, especially in this age of accountability, when the activities and conduct of school business officials are subject to greater scrutiny and more severe criticism than ever before, Standards of Conduct are in

order. The Association cannot fully discharge its obligation of leadership and service to its members short of establishing appropriate standards of behavior.

In relationships within the school district it is expected that the school business official will:

1. Support the goals and objectives of the employing school system.
2. Interpret the policies and practices of the district to subordinates and to the community fairly and objectively.
3. Implement, to the best of the official's ability, the policies and administrative regulations of the district.
4. Assist fellow administrators as appropriate in fulfilling their obligations.
5. Build the best possible image of the school district.
6. Refrain from publicly criticizing board members, administrators or other employees.
7. Help subordinates achieve their maximum potential through fair and just treatment.

In the conduct of business and the discharge of responsibilities, the school business official will:

1. Conduct business honestly, openly, and with integrity.
2. Avoid conflict of interest situations by not conducting business with a company or firm in which the official or any member of the official's family has a vested interest.
3. Avoid preferential treatment of one outside interest group, company or individual over another.
4. Uphold the dignity and decorum of the office in every way.
5. Avoid using the position for personal gain.
6. Never accept or offer illegal payment for services rendered.
7. Refrain from accepting gifts, free services, or anything of value for or because of any act performed or withheld.
8. Permit the use of school property only for officially authorized activities.
9. Refrain from soliciting contributions from subordinates or outside sources for gifts or donations to a superior.

In relationships with colleagues in other districts and professional associations, it is expected that the school business official will:

1. Support the actions of a colleague whenever possible, never publicly criticizing or censuring the official.
2. Offer assistance and/or guidance to a colleague when such help is requested or when the need is obvious.
3. Actively support appropriate professional associations aimed at improving school business management, and encourage colleagues to do likewise.
4. Accept leadership roles and responsibilities when appropriate, but refrain from "taking over" any association.
5. Refrain from using any organization or position of leadership in it for personal gain.

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### **Internet Sites**

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 National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services—  
[www.nasdpts.org](http://www.nasdpts.org)  
 Risk Insurance Management Society—[www.rims.org](http://www.rims.org)  
*School Transportation News*—[www.stnonline.com](http://www.stnonline.com)