



**nsba**  
**Equity**  
*Matters*

**Advocacy Agenda**  
**2018-2019**



 **National School Boards Association**

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# WE ARE

at a moment in history where we have an opportunity to make unprecedented progress to bring about educational equity, and we must.



# Equity Matters

Among the most recognizable words in the United States' Declaration of Independence are these: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness." Living up to this ideal—to have an opportunity to live an enriching life, to have opportunities to pursue your dreams, and to find meaning and satisfaction in life—can't happen without an education that enables students to fulfill their potential. And, some students need more support so that they may have an equitable opportunity to learn and develop in order to pursue and realize their inalienable rights.

Since our founding more than seven decades ago, the National School Boards Association (NSBA) has advocated for equity and excellence in public education, and our commitment to this core mission has never been stronger. We are at a moment in history where we have an opportunity to make unprecedented progress to bring about educational equity, and we must. The outcome of our efforts to drive a thoughtful conversation on this important issue and to secure sound public policies will have a profound impact on people's lives and communities and on the country's future for generations.

Far too often, students are deprived of equitable educational opportunities because of their disability, race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status. Even after more than 60 years since *Brown v. Board of Education*, we know there still are barriers to making a world-class public education "available to all on equal terms" as the U.S. Supreme Court required. Educational equity is about confronting and overcoming those barriers. NSBA continues to be committed to bringing about equity that recognizes children have unique needs and that obstacles to learning still exist. To achieve this, we must put in place policies that ensure resources, instruction, and opportunities are distributed according to need. And, we must identify and eliminate all biased practices and beliefs.

NSBA initiated a new phase of work to attain educational equity for public schoolchildren by defining it, because the concept can mean different things to different people. To have a meaningful conversation and to develop sound policies, public education leaders, teachers, administrators, policymakers, members of the media, and the public must have a mutual understanding of the issue and terms. When we start from a common construct and put students and their families first, we can establish a path forward and make progress. In 2017, NSBA and our Board of Directors developed the following defini-

tion of educational equity to guide NSBA's work in this important area:

*"We affirm in our actions that each student can, will, and shall learn. We recognize that based on factors including, but not limited to, disability, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, students are deprived of equitable educational opportunities. Educational equity is the intentional allocation of resources, instruction, and opportunities according to need, requiring that discriminatory practices, prejudices, and beliefs be identified and eradicated."*

With this statement as our beacon, NSBA will continue to work—with and through our federation of 49 state school boards associations and the U.S. territory of the Virgin Islands, and their more than 90,000 school board members—to inspire and lead a thoughtful dialogue and to advocate for policies that truly enhance learning opportunities. Indeed, no group is better positioned, or has been as successful, as NSBA and our members to bring about policies that ensure all children can receive a high-quality education. For more than 75 years, NSBA has led the effort to shape and elevate public education through local school board governance.

NSBA strives to strengthen our reputation as the leading advocate for public education, increase our reach and supporter base, and define public education so it is not defined by its detractors. This enables us to shape the debate on key issues, create a better understanding of the importance of school boards and the benefits of local governance, and generate greater appreciation for public schools.

We seek to build on our accomplishments in the legal, legislative, public, and regulatory spaces by continuing to use all of our resources including the Council of School Attorneys (COSA), the Council of Urban Boards of Education (CUBE), the National Black Council of School Board Members (NBC), the National Hispanic Council of School Board Members (NHC), the National American Indian/Alaska Native Council of School Board Members (AIAN), the Conference of State Association Legislative Staff (CSALS), the Federal Relations Network (FRN), the Friends of Public Education Network (FPE), the National School Boards Action Center (NSBAC), the Center for Public Education (CPE), the Stand Up 4 Public Schools campaign, and a vigorous media program.

As the Washington, D.C., office for our members, NSBA is building additional and stronger relationships with members of the congressional House and Senate education committees; officials at key federal agencies and on the White House Domestic Policy Council; opinion leaders at influential think tanks; legal scholars; leaders within the education and business communities; and members of the media to enhance our advocacy work. We will continue working diligently to secure legal outcomes in federal and state courts that result in equitable opportunities for students. We will continue to challenge regulatory actions that exceed the federal role and conflict with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), and to challenge other policies that would negatively impact students. We also will continue communicating with key stakeholders to tell the complete story of public education.

# Executive Summary

The ambitious advocacy agenda NSBA set for 2017-18 and our robust action plan generated several important and positive outcomes, including the adoption of the Fiscal Year 2018 Consolidated Appropriations Act, which increased federal funding in public education by \$2.6 billion for a total investment of \$70.9 billion. The increase covers needed support in many areas including Title I Grants for Disadvantaged Students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Title IV Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers, and Head Start.

Our continuous engagement with federal policymakers included meetings with U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos and other key Trump administration officials assisting in the development and implementation of new policies. In these discussions, we covered significant issues including reducing federal overreach, recognizing and supporting local governance, and engaging stakeholders as ESSA implementation continues. During another meeting with Secretary DeVos, NSBA shared our perspective on the Education Department's 2014 Guidance on Discipline and Race. In particular, NSBA expressed our views of school safety as well as concerns with the application of a

disparate impact analysis and its impact on local educational flexibility.

In addition to many meetings with members of Congress, NSBA conducted a briefing on Capitol Hill to reframe the debate about "choice." The Center for Public Education's report on educational choice, *Busting the Myth of 'One-Size-Fits-All' Public Education*, was unveiled at the event and was provided to congressional offices and the media.

Advocacy Institute 2018 provided an opportunity for more than 500 state school board association executives and school board members to meet with their members of Congress just as the second half of the 115<sup>th</sup> Session was getting underway. The one-on-one and small group meetings were complemented by more than two dozen letters NSBA, on our own or as a member of a coalition, directed to members of Congress.

NSBA's position as the leading voice of public education provides weight to judicial consideration of our point of view on issues that impact public schools and students. Last year, NSBA exercised our legal voice on critical issues school board members are tirelessly working to address, including special education, the education of undocumented youth, and the need for the federal government to revise investigative procedures, to name a few.



## **NSBA'S POSITION AS THE LEADING VOICE**

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Several issues ascended to the top tier of the education agenda, and NSBA quickly acted to help frame the issues and begin advocating for sensible action and policy. Firstly, the effort to advance the Opioid Crisis Response Act of 2018 took a step forward as the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee unanimously voted to approve the bill. The legislation focuses on preventing substance abuse among children, adolescents, and youth.

Secondly, NSBA has been engaged in a concerted effort to secure more federal investment for school safety, which received additional funding in the Fiscal Year 2018 appropriations bill. We will continue to push for investments in school safety measures, including physical security, violence prevention, and services that address student mental health, safety, and social needs.

Finally, during the federal tax reform debate, NSBA worked to mitigate the full elimination of state and local tax deductibility, which could have impacted state and local government investments in per-pupil funding allocations for many states. Immediately following the enactment of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, NSBA began working to reinstate the ability for advance refunding of municipal bonds, and our efforts contributed to the introduction of a bill that would restore this valuable financial resource. The legislation would help school districts—and other state and local government bodies—refinance outstanding municipal bonds at lower interest rates.

### **Educational Choice**

Public schools are not the monolith that critics of public education make them out to be. In fact, the broadest range of educational and extracurricular options exists in the public schools. Students and their families can attend schools that include local magnet schools and charter schools authorized by local school boards; public specialty schools, such as military academies; and schools offering specialized curricula for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Public schools also offer a range of innovative teaching approaches and Ad-

**With direction from our Delegate Assembly, the association’s policymaking body, in 2018-19 NSBA will:**

- Champion educational equity.
- Work to ensure that ESSA is implemented in a manner that recognizes the law’s clear directive to restore local governance and community ownership in public education.
- Advocate for policies and funding to further enhance student and school safety.
- Defend against privatization by challenging vouchers, tuition tax credits, and similar schemes that would weaken public education and harm students.
- Work to secure adequate funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

vanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, honors, and gifted classes. And, there are opportunities for distance learning and in enrichment programs, as well as for participation in a broad range of extracurricular activities.

The current debate positions “choice” in a binary way—with the sole focus on the choice of school. That approach fails to recognize the complexity of educating students and what is required to ensure they are prepared for college, career, and life.

As Congress explores policy concepts about educational choice, NSBA will encourage lawmakers to examine the impressive range of educational choices offered by our nation’s public school districts. We urge Congress and the administration to consider evidence-based solutions to help inform the policymaking process. Likewise, we also will encourage Congress to support the wide variety of

choices offered by our public school districts in the following manner:

- Foster a balanced dialogue about public education, including the diverse choices public school districts offer parents to maximize student outcomes for success and assure every child is prepared for college, careers, and citizenship.
- Support policies to “level the playing field,” so all schools that receive public funds are held to the same accountability standards.
- Establish full accountability for the use of public funds for any educational purpose, and support provisions that authorize public funds to be used solely within public schools.

Indeed, NSBA believes that public funds should not be used directly or indirectly through tax credits, vouchers, or a choice system to fund education at any elementary and/or secondary private, parochial, or home school.

### Federal Education Investments

Federal education investments support students and school districts working to advance achievement, college and career readiness, and school performance. From Title I grants for disadvantaged students that help raise proficiency levels in reading, math, and other subjects to the IDEA state grant program, federal investments through congressional appropriations provide more than \$30 billion each year for K-12 programs.

For Fiscal Year 2018, NSBA successfully advocated for significantly increased investments in Title I (\$300 million increase), IDEA (\$275 million increase), Title IV (\$700 million increase), and Perkins Career and Technical Education (\$75 million increase). NSBA also advocated for maximized investments in Title II programs that were funded at Fiscal Year 2017 levels. This was a significant victory for NSBA, as the President’s Fiscal Year 2018 budget had eliminated funding for Title II.

For Fiscal Year 2019, NSBA will continue to advocate for increased investments in public schools to help ensure that all students have access to the high-quality education they deserve. We will urge Congress to restore the earmarking process and to ensure that oversight is provided in a manner that does not extend or expand state authority in the distribution or suballocation process. And, NSBA will continue to oppose general budget reductions by formula, such as the across-the-board cuts imposed in Fiscal Year 2013 by sequestration, which circumvent Congress’ responsibility to set funding priorities among government functions.

### Student and School Safety

NSBA will continue to stress the need for flexible and sustained federal funding to strengthen local school districts’ efforts to create safe and supportive learning environments in the following areas:

- **A “wrap-around” approach to student mental health.** Federal funds should support school efforts to identify and assess mental health concerns in the school setting with an eye toward intervention and referral to appropriate counseling or treatment, and promote collaboration between local and state agencies on student mental health, safety, and social needs.
- **Comprehensive school safety plans and recovery efforts.** Federal funds should enable schools to intensify and broaden safety planning, and to replace facilities after a tragedy.
- **Engagement with law enforcement on school safety programs.** Federal funds should help ensure that local law enforcement in the form of school resource officers are available to schools.
- **School safety clearinghouse.** Federal funds should go toward gathering resources and technical assistance on student safety—from planning to dealing with the aftermath of a tragedy—in a centralized hub or clearinghouse for local school districts.



**Public schools are not the monolith that critics of public education make them out to be. In fact, the broadest range of educational and extracurricular options exists in the public schools.**

To enhance the safety of all children, NSBA will work with federal policymakers to ensure that private and home schools or other educational entities that receive public funds are enhancing their facilities and services to ensure the health and safety of their students.

### **Special Education**

NSBA celebrates the extraordinary success of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which provides a framework and federal funding stream that enables states and school districts to identify and serve students with disabilities and collaborate with their families, and which affords due process procedures for addressing disputes. NSBA urges policymakers to strengthen their commitment to families of students with disabilities and to the schools that educate them by fully funding the federal share of IDEA at the level originally promised.

NSBA believes stakeholders and policymakers can recommit to collaborative decision-making for students with disabilities by taking a fresh look at IDEA, which is long overdue for reauthorization. Keeping in mind the important framework that has served students with disabilities successfully, NSBA urges policymakers to explore opportunities for streamlining IDEA's procedural protections to make them more collaborative, effective, and efficient. Examples include: additional authority for schools when students have caused or attempted self harm, mandated

mediation, reasonable caps on attorney fees, clarity on "stay put" placement and burden-of-proof rules, shorter statute of limitations and appeal periods, and consistency between the requirements of IDEA and those of other statutes addressing students with disabilities. Additional flexibility in certain areas would allow schools to employ the unique expertise and dedication of educators to focus more on student success than on legal compliance.

### **School-Based Medicaid and Health Care Reform**

NSBA continues to advocate against proposals that could reduce and/or eliminate federal resources for school-based Medicaid services through grassroots calls to action and direct lobbying. We are maintaining these efforts in preparation against any legislation negatively impacting school-based Medicaid (approximately \$4 billion per year).

NSBA secured a legislative victory over regulatory proposals that would have significantly limited Medicaid reimbursement for school-based health services, and our efforts were acknowledged by Senate leaders for raising the level of awareness among federal lawmakers regarding the importance of protecting school-based Medicaid in any health care reform efforts. Because of NSBA's advocacy, the Senate's efforts to pass the Healthcare Reconciliation Act were rejected last year, as they would have diminished school-based Medicaid services.



Without school-based Medicaid services, students affected by health challenges—including those with special needs educated through the IDEA—may not receive the care they need that is conducive to healthy learning environments.

In another key program area, NSBA supported efforts to reauthorize the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) as a vital investment in nine million of our nation’s children and a key support for school readiness. NSBA has urged a bipartisan, multiyear reauthorization of the CHIP program to help sustain investments in our students and their well-being.

### **ESSA Implementation**

As state and local education agencies (SEAs and LEAs) are in various stages of implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), NSBA is closely monitoring the process and is engaging members of Congress and the administration to ensure the intent of the new law is followed.

At this stage, most states have secured final approval from the U.S. Department of Education for the required Statewide Plans. Whether ESSA truly restores local control in public K-12 education hinges on the ability of local communities to embrace the authority and decision-making afforded to them in the law and to collaborate with states for guidance on new accountability systems, capacity, and support for school improvements.

LEAs are now in the process of submitting their district ESSA plans to SEAs for approval. NSBA has prepared guidance specifically for local school boards and stakeholders to ensure they are able to seize this leadership opportunity and engage in the planning process.

NSBA will continue to monitor legislation with an eye toward ensuring new laws and appropriations do not dilute the flexibility afforded local school districts by ESSA. We will advocate for Congress

to require formal consultation with school boards by federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Education, regarding matters that impact local education, particularly if legislation directs federal policymaking or rulemaking.

### **Career and Technical Education (CTE)**

NSBA is actively engaged in bipartisan efforts on Capitol Hill to address the workforce skills gap with legislation to modernize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. Last updated in 2006, the program provides states and school districts with more than \$1 billion to help prepare students with the skills, training, and credentials needed for successful careers.

Among other improvements, the law should be rewritten to help school districts offer practical skills development through apprenticeships, expand dual and concurrent enrollment opportunities, hire and retain skilled CTE educators, and equip classrooms to deliver high-quality programs that meet the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce.

It also is important that local school boards have opportunities to partner with the local business community as well as with secondary programs and postsecondary programs to ensure students have access to the best education possible while also aligning programs with state and local industries.

In 2017, the U.S. House of Representatives passed bipartisan legislation with much-needed updates to the law. In addition to providing materials to committee staff, submitting letters of support, initiating calls to action and engaging with congressional staff, NSBA has offered success stories to demonstrate the value of CTE programs. NSBA is continuing to work with the business community to promote passage of this legislation in the Senate. In addition, NSBA is partnering with leading business trade associations to provide guidance to local school officials in closing the skills gap.

## **Student Rights and Privacy**

### **Student Data Privacy**

It is time to update the 40-year-old Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) to address the 21st century needs of students, school districts, parents, state education agencies, and federal education policies without compromising the protection of stakeholders. NSBA will urge policymakers to modernize the statute so that schools can use information to best serve students and families, while at the same time protecting the privacy and security of personal information and the health and safety of school communities.

NSBA will assist policymakers in taking a fresh look at the definition of “education records,” including electronic media, and “directory information,” which should not comprise address, telephone listing, and date and place of birth. NSBA will encourage an approach to data privacy that addresses current contracts to avoid undue disruption and administrative burden, and makes any update to FERPA or other laws and regulations affecting school district management of student data consistent with those affecting online educational service providers. NSBA urges federal efforts that support school district and state policies as well as effective training regarding data usage, privacy, and security protections for administrators, teachers, and related personnel/stakeholders. And, NSBA will engage with policymakers as we balance the privacy interests of the individual with the well-being of the community when there is a threat to safety. Policymakers should discuss this crucial framework with constituencies that include school board members, state school boards associations, and school attorneys.

### **Gender Identity**

NSBA supports and encourages federal policy that prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, like that afforded other protected classes such as age, race, religion, gender, national origin, and disability. NSBA invites a discussion with stakeholders at the federal, state, and local

levels to determine how federal protection of all students and staff based on these protected categories affects state and local law and policy.

NSBA takes a firm stance against all forms of violence, threats of violence, hate, hate-motivated actions, hate speech, or violent crimes based on race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, and disability, particularly regarding minorities in a school setting. Keeping in mind public schools’ mission to serve all students, NSBA will engage policymakers in the important conversation about how schools can respect the privacy rights of students and staff while facilitating access to a non-hostile and supportive educational and work environment.

### **Immigration Reform (DACA)**

Since its inception, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program has provided immeasurable benefits to our nation’s students and educators. Since the program began, many DACA recipients have completed high school and college, and thousands of them have joined the education workforce. The elimination of the program would destroy the hopes of countless young people and, more importantly, would destabilize and disrupt the education communities where they live, work, and attend school. DACA-supported teachers have helped to alleviate overcrowding in schools and are role models for the many students they serve daily.

NSBA will continue to advocate on behalf of the program through our amicus curiae briefs. It also will encourage Congress to develop legislation that will provide a pathway to citizenship for DACA recipients.

### **Civil Rights (Student Suspension)**

NSBA shares the goal of Title VI that race not be used in a discriminatory manner in the discipline of students. NSBA supports an appropriate role for the federal government to enforce the nation’s nondiscrimination laws. To that end, NSBA will continue to advocate for federal policy positions that pro-

vide commonsense, workable solutions for school districts, including best practices and resources that schools may use to address issues in this area.

NSBA will continue to urge the administration to enforce federal laws in a way that reduces and eliminates the discriminatory use of race in discipline in a measured manner, keeping this important issue at the fore and ensuring safe and nurturing school environments.

### **Education Technology**

NSBA will continue to support efforts in Congress and before federal agencies for net neutrality (open internet). NSBA penned a letter to the U.S. Senate in support of S.J.Res.52, a measure to reverse the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) ruling to eliminate its 2015 Open Internet Regulations, which permit internet providers to restrict access to the internet based upon cost. NSBA supports the E-rate program for schools and libraries and continues to express concern that the FCC ruling could negatively impact school districts and curricula, especially for instructional content delivered online and supported through E-rate.

NSBA will continue to oppose the ability of broadband companies to charge vendors additional fees to deliver data-heavy digital learning content, charges which ultimately may be passed on to school districts and their taxpayers.

NSBA recognizes this challenge and will continue to advocate for the FCC and Congress to work with school districts to modernize and strengthen the E-rate program to ensure its efficient and equitable operation; to improve the capacity, quality, and speed of connectivity in our nation's schools; and to address the technology gaps that remain.

### **Child Nutrition**

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act authorization expired in 2015 despite the need to provide children with healthy food in school and the benefits

of school meal programs on student learning and well-being. NSBA continues to advocate for the reauthorization of legislation that reduces burdensome federal mandates and provides much-needed flexibility for school districts to administer programs that best serve students, including protecting those who are most in need.

In 2017, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) released an interim final rule that maintains Target I sodium limits for school meals through school year (SY) 2018-19. NSBA will work with the USDA to encourage the agency to extend this deadline through SY 2020-21. We call for a rule that enables states to continue to offer waivers to schools demonstrating hardship in procuring or preparing specific whole-grain rich foods that are acceptable to students.

To further increase the flexibility afforded to school districts, NSBA supported a proposed USDA rule in 2018 that would simplify the standards required for small (2,499 students or fewer) LEAs to retain school nutrition professionals.

NSBA will continue to work with members of Congress and the administration to advance proposals that provide public schools with the flexibility needed to deliver to students the nutritious meals they deserve.

### **Higher Education**

Attracting, supporting, and retaining effective educators are priorities for the nation's school boards. Many factors contribute to a student's academic performance, but research shows that among school-related factors, teachers and school leaders matter most. Attracting great teachers, especially in high-need subjects and in isolated and low-wealth areas, is a major challenge for school districts. Given the significant impact a teacher can have on student performance and as an influence on student life paths, the next reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) must do more

# **INVESTING IN STUDENTS AND OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

has a profound impact on lives and society.

NSBA believes public officials at all levels of government should model civil discourse in their deliberations, allowing for the thoughtful, beneficial, productive exchange of perspectives and ideas.

to strengthen educator preparation and induction and provide incentives to encourage high-performing students to enter the profession.

In 2018, the House Committee on Education and the Workforce passed legislation reauthorizing HEA. Unfortunately, the legislation eliminated the following provisions that are essential to supporting and retaining effective educators:

- **Title II Teacher Quality Enhancement:** Title II is important to school districts across the nation as it helps with teacher recruitment efforts and helps ensure that educators have the skills they need to be successful in the classroom.
- **Title IV Student Assistance—Sec. 465**

**Cancellation for Public Service:** The Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program (PSLFP) is a valuable tool used to recruit high-quality educators into the field. Many rural and impoverished school districts rely on the PSLFP to attract effective teachers to their schools. Maintaining and updating this important program will help to ensure that all students, regardless of their socioeconomic background, have effective teachers in their classrooms.

NSBA is actively engaging members of Congress and the Senate HELP Committee to retain and improve these important HEA investments that ultimately help school districts to ensure that all students have highly competent and dedicated teachers.





# Special Programs

## **National School Boards Action Center**

The National School Boards Action Center (NSBAC) is a not-for-profit organization founded by NSBA to advocate on behalf of the more than 90,000 local school board members who are responsible for governing nearly 14,000 school systems serving 50 million public school students. Through its national grassroots engagement initiatives, NSBAC offers the resources and tools needed for education stakeholders to effectively amplify the importance of public education in their local communities and in Washington, D.C.

NSBAC initiated the First 100 Days Campaign to coincide with the start of the new administration and the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress. The effort generated awareness of key policy issues and ideas among key policymakers, new members of Congress, and new staff at key federal agencies. This helped these federal policymakers to gain perspective on the scope of issues impacting students and public schools and on NSBA's ideas to enhance public education.

The education and advocacy work continued with the Public Schools 1<sup>st</sup> Campaign, which was launched in June 2017. This initiative mobilized thousands of local school board members and other education stakeholders that generated productive engagements with members of Congress from both

political parties. Indeed, more than 10,000 messages supporting NSBA's federal legislative priorities were received by lawmakers, including strong appeals to:

- Preserve funding for school-based Medicaid that is reimbursed for schools.
- Fund key education programs, including Title I and IDEA, through annual federal appropriations.
- Ensure tax reform preserves incentives for financing and investment in public education and related infrastructure.
- Recognize and support the educational choice offered by public schools.

Over the coming year, NSBAC will support NSBA as it bolsters its thought leadership position on Capitol Hill and within the administration, mobilizes our grassroots network, and provides information to members so they can confidently and effectively participate in the midterm elections.

## **Stand Up 4 Public Schools**

The Stand Up 4 Public Schools campaign, NSBA's national education program, continues to heighten awareness of the importance of public education and generate broad support for it by sharing the rich story of our nation's public schools. Through personal stories, the Stand Up campaign accentuates

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that every day in a public school is unique, rewarding, fruitful, and filled with acts of heroism. It is also the best way for people to demonstrate their support for children and their community, which almost 1,000 people did during a two-day period at NSBA's Annual Conference in San Antonio.

The Stand Up campaign provides the public with an accurate and thorough perspective of public schools. It highlights the creativity that is prevalent in public schools, which offer unique programs and experiences and produce amazing outcomes every day. The public will learn more about innovative programs in communities, from the smallest to the largest school districts across the country, and about the dauntless and bold actions of educators, administrators, parent volunteers, and nonprofit and business executives helping prepare students for the future. They also will see public schools going beyond academics by providing food, clothing, health care, and more services. They will see people being offered GED classes and career and technical training. They will see public schools welcoming all children and people who want an education.

The short award-winning movie titled *No Ordinary Day* is a resource produced by NSBA that state school boards associations have used to raise awareness of the national education campaign and to encourage school board members, administrators, teachers, parents, and citizens to submit their stories that capture extraordinary activities that take place during a school day. NSBA is working with and through our state associations as well as accepting information through [www.standup4publicschools.org](http://www.standup4publicschools.org).

For far too long, detractors have defined the state of public schools, and much of their opinion is based on misinformation about what happens in our nation's classrooms. This misinformation undermines support for public education. The campaign challenges the old narrative that is based on incorrect assumptions. Vibrant public schools are essential to the economic, civic, and social health of the country, and they need the public's support to do great work. NSBA will continue, through the campaign and other advocacy work, to make sure public schools get the support they deserve.

## ABOUT NSBA

The National School Boards Association (NSBA) is the leading advocate for public education. For more than 75 years, we have been leading the effort to support and enhance public education. We are succeeding in creating the best possible environment in which students can realize their dreams.

NSBA is a federation of 49 state associations and the U.S. territory of the Virgin Islands, representing their more than 90,000 school board officials. These local officials govern more than 13,600 local school districts serving more than 50 million public school students. Working with and through our state associations, and serving as their Washington, D.C., office, NSBA advocates for equity and excellence in public education through school board governance.

We believe public education is America's most vital institution. It is a civil right necessary to the dignity and freedom of the American people, and all children deserve equal access to an education that allows them to reach their potential.

In pursuit of these beliefs, NSBA and our members will continue to lead the national conversation about public education, advocate for public policies that ensure all students everywhere have access to a great public education where they live, create a better understanding of the importance of school boards and the benefits of local governance, and enhance the effectiveness of school boards.

NSBA and our members utilize our resources including the Council of School Attorneys (COSA), the Council of Urban Boards of Education (CUBE), the National Black Council of School Board Members (NBC), the National Hispanic Council of School Board Members (NHC), the National American Indian/Alaska Native Council of School Board Members (AIAN), the Conference of State Association Legislative Staff (CSALS), the Federal Relations Network (FRN), the Friends of Public Education Network (FPE), the National School Boards Action Center (NSBAC), the Center for Public Education (CPE), the Stand Up 4 Public Schools campaign, and a robust and continuous media program to fulfill our mission.

NSBA is a not-for-profit organization. The public policy agenda is determined by a 150-member Delegate Assembly made up of local school board members who represent their state associations of school boards. The Board of Directors translates this policy into action. Programs and services are administered by the NSBA Executive Director and CEO and by professional staff. NSBA is headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia, in the metropolitan Washington, D.C., area.

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## NSBA Officers and Executive Director

### **President**

Frank C. Pugh

### **Secretary-Treasurer**

Charlie Wilson

### **Executive Director & CEO**

Thomas J. Gentzel

### **President-elect**

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### **Immediate Past President**

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For more information about NSBA's advocacy agenda and insight into key public policy issues, please contact:

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