

FOR YOUR *information*

A MONTHLY UPDATE ON
STATE BOARD PROCEEDINGS,
ASSOCIATION NEWS & K-12 TOPICS

this issue

Board Member Recognition Month [P.1](#)

Volunteer for an AASB Committee [P.2](#)

March Conference Registration [P.2](#)

February Webinar: Data Breach [P.2](#)



#ThanksBOE

Alabama is celebrating January as School Board Member Recognition Month. [AASB's online toolkit](#) includes resources to honor school board members for their commitment to public education. Be sure to share your recognition efforts on social media using the hashtags #ThanksBOE and #SuperHeroes4AlaStudents.

It's a date!

Feb. 7 (1 hour)

[Webinar: Avoiding & Responding to a Data Breach](#)

Feb. 23 (6 hours)

[Board Officer's Workshop](#)

March 1 (2 hours)

[Understanding Dyslexia Early Bird Workshop](#)
Birmingham, Ala.

March 2 (2.5 hours)

[Poverty Simulation](#)
Birmingham, Ala.

March 1 & 2 (6 hours)

[Spring Academy Core Conference - Leadership for Financial Accountability](#)
Birmingham, Ala.

March 19 (2 hours)

[Advocacy Day-Districts 7-9](#)

April 2 (2 hours)

[Advocacy Day-Districts 4-6](#)

April 16 (2 hours)

[Advocacy Day-Districts 1-3](#)

May 21 (2 hours)

[Advocacy Day-All Districts](#)

SBOE Receives Reports on School Safety Assessment, AMSTI Program

State Superintendent of Education Dr. Eric Mackey presented resolutions at Thursday's State Board of Education meeting commending the service of [Betty Peters](#) (District 2) and [Mary Scott Hunter](#) (District 8) at their final board meeting. Neither sought re-election at the end of their terms. Newly elected board members Tracie West (District 2) and Dr. Wayne Reynolds (District 8) will be sworn in next week to fill these posts.

In other action, the board recognized 2018 Milken Educator Award winner Heather Hurt. The fifth-grade teacher at Vestavia Hills Elementary School Central (Vestavia Hills City Schools) was presented with the award in October, receiving \$25,000 with the recognition.

The board also announced its intent to amend the [Alabama Administrative Code](#) pertaining to teacher preparation programs, specifically for grades 4-8. The SBOE holds the authority to approve college of education programs for Alabama's universities and colleges. That authority helps ensure high-quality teacher preparation programs that prepare new teachers for their careers as 21st-century educators.

In its work session, the board heard an [assessment report](#) about school emergency notification systems conducted by [nSide](#), a Florence-based firm that helps schools use assistive technologies to address safety. An outgrowth of the governor's task force on school safety, the assessment is the first phase of a project examining the process school systems use to communicate critical information before, during and after emergencies. Mackey explained the assessment is part of an effort to implement a unified emergency alert system for schools across the state. The discussion included potential ways to improve communication such as opportunities to submit safety tips, sending alerts and the ability of outside safety officials to access existing surveillance cameras.

The math, physical education and health courses of study committees will present reports at next month's board work session, and the board is expected to take action on the courses of study during the March board meeting. Mackey announced the SBOE will appoint volunteers to the courses of study committees for English/language arts and career technical education at next month's board meeting.

The board received a [report](#) from research firm [Empirical Education Inc.](#) about the impact of the Alabama Math, Science and Technology Initiative (AMSTI). The research was conducted pursuant to a request by the state legislature for an outside organization to assess the program's efficacy. The report indicated a positive result for students whose teachers were AMSTI-trained. Those students had a two-percent greater gain on math assessment results and a four-percent greater gain on science assessments than those with non AMSTI-trained teachers. Students in poverty and special education made a one-percent greater gain in math and science when they had an AMSTI-trained teacher; however, English Language Learners performed worse.

Board members asked about the cost and practical workings of AMSTI, including how the toolkits, which require annual refurbishment, had been factored into the study. The report also sparked questions about the program's use across the state, how the research was conducted and how schools were selected for the study. Mackey said AMSTI staff will present additional information and answer questions at a future work session.

Next State Board of Education Meeting

The next State Board of Education meeting will take place Feb. 14 at 10 a.m., in Montgomery, followed by a work session to follow at 11 a.m.



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Developing Excellent School Board Leaders Through Quality Training, Advocacy and Services

Boost Your School Finance IQ at AASB's March Academy Conference



Brush up on school finance basics and dig deeper with all-new topics at AASB's [March Academy Core Conference: Leadership for Financial Accountability](#), March 1 and 2 at the Hyatt Regency Birmingham - The Wynfrey Hotel. Earn 6 training hours and get the latest guidance on financial forecasting, best practices for handling cyber security threats, innovative ways to cut expenses and more!

Extend your learning even more by registering for one of two pre-conference sessions:

- **March 1, 9 to 11:30 a.m. - [Poverty Simulation](#)**
This eye-opening experience offers an up-close view of the hardships and emotional challenges faced by students and families living in poverty, promoting greater empathy and awareness among educators and administrators (2.5 training hours).
- **March 1, 1 to 3 p.m. - [Early Bird Workshop: Understanding Dyslexia](#)**
Saraland City Schools Dyslexia Therapist Sonya Yates will lead a simulation illustrating what students with dyslexia often experience with reading, writing and processing. This session is designed to strengthen understanding of children and adults who struggle with dyslexia (2 training hours).

Feb. 7 Webinar: [Avoiding & Responding to a Data Breach](#)



Get expert advice on how to shield your school system from the dangers of a data breach during the next installment of AASB's Power Lunch Webinar Series. Alabama's Chief Information

Security Officer, **Ryan Allen**, will discuss the best strategies to avoid a costly data breach and how to respond should your school system become a victim. [Register now](#) for this important webinar, which will be held Thursday, Feb. 7 from noon to 1 p.m.

Volunteer by Feb. 15 to Serve on an AASB Committee



Interested in taking a more active role in AASB? Consider volunteering to serve on an AASB committee. Committee members are appointed for one-year terms by the association's president and with the approval of the Board of Directors. Most committees meet once or twice a year. Committees include:

Board Training Advisory Committee: Assists with planning conferences/convention and district meetings.

Advocacy Committee: Assists with developing strategies to enhance education policy advocacy.

Bylaws Committee: Reviews bylaws governing

AASB. Meets by conference call prior to convention and attends pre-Delegate Assembly hearing and Delegate Assembly.

Equity Committee: Assists in creating awareness of unique needs of diverse membership and student population. Develops goals aligned with AASB's advocacy efforts.

Resolutions Committee: Assists with reviewing and revising educational and legislative positions. Meets once a year and members are asked to attend pre-Delegate Assembly hearing and Delegate Assembly.

Nominating Committee: Nominates individuals for association offices.

To volunteer, [complete the "Get Involved" form](#) on AASB's website or notify AASB Executive Director Sally Smith at exec@AlabamaSchoolBoards.org.

School Board Member Recognition Month



Schools and communities across Alabama are celebrating January as School Board Member Recognition Month, an annual observance to thank the state's more than 800 school board members for their service to public education. This year's theme is "Superheroes for Alabama's Students." Visit AASB's [online toolkit](#) for resources and ideas to recognize your local school board leaders. And remember to share your photos and posts on social media using the hashtags **#ThanksBOE** and **#Superheroes4AlaStudents!**

AASB Announces 2019 Advocacy Days

Spend a day in Montgomery with AASB staff during the association's annual [Advocacy Days](#), where you'll get an up-close view of the legislative process and meet your lawmakers at the State House. We've designated special dates for each district; however, board members may participate on any date.

March 19: [Districts 7-9](#)

April 2: [Districts 4-6](#)

April 16: [Districts 7-9](#)

May 21 & 22: [All districts](#)

Less than Six Months Remaining to Earn State-mandated Training Hours



It's hard to believe more than half the 2018-19 training year has passed! Has your board completed or scheduled this year's state-mandated Whole Board Training?

The training year ends June 30, and slots will begin filling quickly! Visit our website to check out our [Whole Board Training Catalog](#) and choose from one of 33 training topics or contact training@AlabamaSchoolBoards.org to request a custom workshop to meet your board's unique needs.

2019 Resolutions and Bylaws Posted

Visit AASB's website to view the 2019 [Resolutions](#) and [Bylaws](#), as determined during the Delegate Assembly held prior to AASB's 2018 Annual Convention.