

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE
63rd ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE

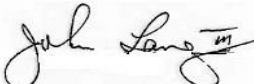
Socrates would be very pleased with ASBO MD&DC. The tag line on my email messages quotes this remarkable philosopher, playwright and thinker as follows: The secret of change is to focus all your energy, not on fighting the old, but building the new. ASBO MD&DC has embraced this sage advice and added its own - build professional development opportunities and they will come (pardon the obvious rip-off from Field of Dreams).

Your professional association now has well over 1,200 members, compared to 662 just three years ago – a 45% increase. Pre-registrations at this year's Fall Conference are up 22% over last year's total attendance, including walk-ins, of 170. Two seminars on aspects of the Affordable Care Act have attracted almost 170 school business officials and attendance at the Foundations of School Business Management courses is growing as members work towards achieving our new professional certification (please visit our new website at asbo.org to learn more about this program). More and more workshops are being offered, and ASBO is collaborating with MABE and PSSAM to continue to offer affordable professional development to our members. The first of the B.I.G. (Best Ideas Group) Forums was recently held and there was a lively and valuable discussion of school finance challenges and solutions. Other B.I.G. Forums are scheduled in each of our core business areas and you can find out when and where on our website. This is another chance to 'talk shop' with your colleagues.

For the first time, you were able to register and pay on-line for a conference and some of you have done that for several workshops as well. This is a giant step for ASBO and was made possible by the acquisition of a new, much more vigorous database and website. In the near future, you will be able to hold conversations on-line with your peers in Maryland, the District of Columbia, and Delaware to share best practices, find solutions to problems, and generally find out what is going on in other school districts. You also can update your own personal information, keep track of your professional development and progress towards certification, and view job openings in other school systems. The Board of Directors also is working towards providing continuing education credits for attending ASBO workshops and conferences.

Our membership is the best advertising that ASBO MD&DC can have. If you are excited about what your association is doing, please tell your colleagues who are not members about the value of joining ASBO - it's very affordable and several districts have used one of our Organization Dues options to have an unlimited number of memberships. Call or email me to find out if your LEA is one that offers ASBO professional development to everyone at a fixed membership cost.

We're growing and maturing. And we need volunteers to continue our progress and build for the future. Please get involved in making your professional association a benchmark that others strive for.



John Lang, III
Executive Director