Honoring the Past, Treasuring the Present and Shaping the Future

By: By Angie McArthur, CFO, MSBO President, Superintendent, Engadine Consolidated Schools

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Thanks for the Memories

By: Jeffrey P. Crouse, MSBO Immediate Past-President, Chief Financial Officer, Charlevoix-Emmet ISD

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MSBO Update

MSBO Executive Director David Martell’s monthly column begins on location at the Breslin Center and finishes at the MBSO office. He talks about MPSERS reform, state aid, school bond loan fund, and the court injunction concerning the current law on union dues as well as other upcoming MSBO events.

Coming Soon! MSBO to Launch Redesigned Website

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14th Annual Facilities and Operations Conference – October 7-9, 2012

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Spotlight on 2012 MSBO Award Winners

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MSBO  Meridian Award of Excellence
Honoring the Past, Treasuring the Present and Shaping the Future

Tagged: Newsletter • May • 2012

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When I joined MSBO in 1993, I recall being completely in awe of the leadership shown by the MSBO board and staff. My goal was to become a board member, and hopefully serve as president. I wanted to take the things I learned along the way to improve my district’s ability to educate our children. I know my increased involvement as MSBO Board member and committee member has helped me to improve the educational process in my district. It is truly an honor to be able to serve.

As MSBO turns 75 and as we take time to look back, take care of the issues of the day and make time to plan for the future, my theme for the year is “Honoring the Past, Treasuring the Present, and Shaping the Future”.

Honoring The Past

There is a wonderful passage in the book MSBO – The First Fifty Years - A Half Century of Progress, written by John Hamm, former Associate Superintendent at Warren Consolidated Schools, who also served as MSBO president in 1989. John outlines the first 50 years of MSBO’s history and uses language that conveys the drama of the times. "As the war clouds gathered over Europe and the South Pacific in 1937, four of our esteemed colleagues met in the Olds Hotel in Lansing to consider the establishment of a statewide professional organization for school business officials." Such was the beginning of MSBO, who knew we would grow to what we are today. The first MSBO “convention” was held in 1938 at the Post Tavern Hotel in Battle Creek with 159 members attending and 15 exhibitors. This year’s conference had over 1,000 members in attendance with over 320 exhibitors.

Over the last 19 years, I have sought the expertise and guidance from MSBO members and staff. The early 1990s was a time of great change in the way we finance schools in Michigan. Proposal A was still an unknown and districts were waiting to see how their local schools would be impacted. It has taken quite a few years to determine the true outcome of Proposal A. MSBO Past presidents such as Mike Flanagan, Jerry Hunsberger, Tim Raymer, Ric Montcalm, and Stephanie Eagan led MSBO through those challenging times and continue to lead. The list of MSBO leaders is so long... As we meet with past presidents every year, we are reminded our long history is filled with examples of members addressing all kinds of challenges – whether it was the creation of a new organization or dealing with the latest “school reform” legislation.

As we successfully navigate these rough seas in school finance, we truly “honor the past” by putting children at the forefront of our decisions.

Treasuring the Present

As business officials, we continue to face numerous challenges. We are doing more with less, yet we are experiencing an exciting time in education. Over the past year, we have seen legislative changes that have affected conversations around the negotiating table. Tenure law revisions, health insurance rulings, nutrition standards and retirement reforms all have highlighted and brought more public attention to the issues we deal with daily. As business officials, our guidance is needed more than ever. Our decisions today will have a great impact on the future of tomorrow’s students. We need to “treasure” our ability to improve the education of children in Michigan.

Shaping The Future

We can’t just sit on our laurels. As we transition to the Common Core Standards, discuss achievement on a
national level, and continually balance our dwindling budget dollars, the ability to appropriately shape and support our students’ learning will be crucial. This transcends ALL areas of school business: academic, financial, operations, technology, food service, and transportation. How will you choose to shape the future? I choose to shape the future by seeking the expertise of MSBO, by working with MSBO staff, by connecting with other MSBO members and by pursuing the professional development opportunities of MSBO and its partner organizations.

As MSBO’s turns 75, let’s celebrate and honor our past; treasure the present times we are in and our ability to rise to the challenges; and let’s take advantage of the opportunities presented to us to shape the future for the benefit of Michigan’s children.
Thanks for the Memories

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By: Jeffrey P. Crouse, MSBO Immediate Past-President, Chief Financial Officer, Charlevoix-Emmet ISD

As most of us know the year isn’t winding down it’s actually heating up and that’s not just the temperature. We are scrambling to complete our budgets. It’s audit time. And for many of us negotiations continue or are beginning in earnest.

I appreciate the opportunity you have given me to serve you as an MSBO board member and especially this past year as your president. Representing our organization this past year has been challenging, motivating and exciting.

It has been a year of change in the way we do business in schools from “Best Practice” categorical funding to MPSERS reform to cyber charter school legislation. An interesting item I recently came across concerns the State Board of Education adoption of what they call four essential education policy positions.

These include:

A transition from the "paper and pencil" MEAP test to an online assessment system linked to rigorous state learning standards (including the Smarter Balanced Assessment) in the 2014-2015 school year
Performance-based funding, focused on student progress
Maintenance of the rigor required in the Michigan Merit Curriculum
Michigan Department of Education (MDE) staffing as requested in the Executive Budget to support a strong Department that implements State Board of Education policies, and state and federal legislation

State board members have said they will continue to advocate for these positions with members of the state Legislature. Many times state board action can serve as a “crystal ball” into what may be on the horizon legislatively for Michigan’s schools.

Of course, we really can’t predict what the future holds in terms of legislation. We can’t even predict what level of financing we will receive from the state from year to year. What I can predict is that MSBO will continue another 75 years of great service to Michigan’s school business officials.

As I did when I passed the gavel in May to the 75th President of MSBO, Angie McArthur from Engadine Consolidated Schools, I want to assure members that under the leadership of Angie, an excellent MSBO staff, a diverse and committed MSBO Board, and members from across the state - MSBO will continue to be a great organization serving our members, Michigan Schools, and ultimately the school children of the state.

I leave this position with the greatest sense of pride of having been associated with people who are dedicated to and concerned about public education in Michigan.
Coming Soon! MSBO to Launch Redesigned Website

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One focus of the MSBO Board of Directors’ Strategic Plan was the enhancement of technology. Part of the MSBO technology plan included online membership, which was implemented last summer, an online membership directory and a redesign of MSBO’s website.

MSBO’s redesigned website offers easier navigation, a streamlined home page with quick links to our most popular features like the School Purchasing Pages, job opportunities, committees and regional groups. Members can also take advantage of an enhanced search engine.

Other features include new navigation buttons where you can find the following information:

Events: MSBO’s 2012-13 calendar, online registration link, faxable registration forms details on various events and maps & directions. (You can also download event items to your electronic calendar with ease.)
Finance: State School Aid, Dynamic Budget Projections, GASB, MPSERS, and more…
Business Solutions: All the products and services endorsed by MSBO
Support Services: Facilities, Transportation, Food and Nutrition Services, and Technology
Certification: Details on MSBO’s 12 certifications, including FAQs, and applications
Communications: eblasts and newsletters
About: Board of Directors, MSBO staff, Annual Reports, Bylaws, awards and scholarships information, and more

Our login feature allows you to access our new online membership directory, which will replace our current membership directory. MSBO’s online membership directory provides you with the most up-to-date information on MSBO members.

In order to continue to deliver quality resources to our members and protect the valuable information you receive as part of your membership, we will have other members’ only pages. This feature will be launched in mid-summer and will have a mobile-friendly design and a revamped electronic library.

We believe that you will find MSBO’s new website easy to use and a valuable resource.
Custodial Services – Keeping the Work In-House

As a Vision Sponsor of the MSBO Leadership Institute for 2012-13, GRBS has provided the following article.

Seems strange coming from a custodial contractor, but if you have a good in-house team, we believe your district will benefit from loyal, dedicated employees who deserve the opportunity to keep their positions. That being said, they must be both efficient AND effective. Here are some questions to ask when evaluating custodial efficiency:

1. Do you have a checklist of tasks (specifications) that are applied across your district? For consistency, all schools should be on the same checklist, though there may be minor additions or deletions for elementary schools vs. secondary schools. Several such task lists or specifications are available on the MSBO website. Modify them, no reason to start from scratch.

2. Do you have job descriptions and if so, are they organized by TIME for each task? Is it achievable? The custodian will fail if the task is too much. Is it too little? The custodian isn’t efficient and will use up the time doing other things. There are measurements available by task so you can create good job descriptions. Check out www.issa.com as a resource for productivity by task, or ask your current cleaning chemical provider for a workload database.

3. How much square foot per hour is each custodian cleaning? They should NOT all be the same (remember, depends on the tasks), but they should be in the ballpark, especially when comparing elementary school custodians with each other and secondary custodians with each other. Do you have a significant disparity between custodians? That happens over time and needs to be checked every other year to make sure there is equitable distribution of task.

4. Do your custodians have the right equipment to be efficient? Walk Behind and Ride-On Automatics will have the greatest impact to efficiency in cleaning as well as vac-pac vacuums. These machines also perform better when used properly and produce a healthier environment. The key is to RE-workload to the efficiency these machines bring to the table; the custodians will go faster and can cover more square footage. If you just give the same amount of time, it won’t pay for the machines. Ask your vendor about machines that produce greater efficiencies.

5. And the key to success in implementing the above items? Do you have a willing staff that will accept and embrace a scientific approach to cleaning? The good news with this difficult economic time is your staff is more likely to understand there needs to be change and how that will positively impact their likelihood of staying in-house. Their open minds and willingness to be more efficient will save real dollars. When a custodian retires, the staff can absorb the work, not by doing more, but by being more efficient.

Certainly, there are many ineffective cleaning programs in Michigan School Districts where Contractors can make an impact. But there are also programs that are running efficiently with long-term in house employees. Dismissing them outright to privatize may be a mistake.

Karin Wysocki, President, GRBS
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The knowledge required to effectively manage our school facilities is extensive and diverse. You must understand the vast sea of regulations that schools are required to comply with, along with how to effectively lead and manage people - all while working with continually shrinking budgets.

Providing the highest level of service requires getting out and learning from others – trying to do it without exposing yourself to new and different ideas is really difficult.

The Route to Success in Facilities and Operations management begins at the 14th Annual Facilities and Operations Director Conference, October 7 – 9, 2012 at Crystal Mountain in Thompsonville, MI.

There is absolutely no better place to access high level information on school facilities than this conference. School facilities represent a tremendous resource and responsibility for districts and require the knowledge and understanding of a myriad of issues. Included in those responsibilities are always the need to be as efficient as possible in our operations - whether that means better energy management, working successfully with contractors and the implementation of lean practices. Doing things inefficiently because “that's the way we've always done it” is no longer acceptable.

Registration information will be available in mid-summer, but mark your calendars now for Oct 7 – 9, 2012. We hope to see you at Crystal Mountain.
Good News for Michigan Schools Energy Cooperative Electric Choice participants!

If you're participating in Electric Choice and have new facilities, but these buildings are not being included through MISEC your district might be missing out...

MISEC recently challenged of the law that caps the participation in the electric choice program and has resulted in a favorable outcome for those districts that have been participating in the MISEC electric program since 2008. MISEC can now start any of your districts facilities on electric choice that are new or newly acquired since 2008.

As you are most likely aware, in 2008 a law was passed that limited or capped the amount of load that could participate in the Michigan Choice Programs. This cap was reached in late 2009 and since then no new customers can participate in the Choice program. This law still exists; however, the new “facility exemption” may present you with a great opportunity for savings (typically 15%-18%).

If you have any accounts that you feel might qualify please contact Jan Rogers at 888-345-0440 or email her at jan.rogers@summitenergy.com to discuss.

Please note: all other accounts that do not qualify for the “exemption” above and are not already participating in the MISEC electric choice program still have a chance to save! MISEC can get you prepared for the day that the cap is increased. Simply email or fax (269-324-1048) one utility bill (all pages) for each account to MISEC.
Dedication to Leadership and Learning - We believe each of us should be a leader and that effective leadership and management require a defined set of knowledge and skills as well as common sense. – **MSBO** Core Values

The **MSBO** Leadership Institute is designed to help members reach that next level in their professional and personal life through a rigorous and challenging curriculum that will help them grow as leaders and implement solutions. The enrollment period for the 2012-13 **MSBO** Leadership Institute is now open.

This leadership opportunity is **open to all members in all areas of management** in Michigan school districts. You will be engaged in reflective dialogue and establish realistic and clear professional goals that will work in your unique circumstances. The **MSBO** Leadership Institute includes four group sessions, personal executive coaching, as well as other smaller group meetings held throughout the 2012-13 year.

**Download the Application**

Please don't hesitate to contact Scott Little and get all the details! Scott Little at slittle@msbo.org or 517.327.2582

The **MSBO** Leadership Institute can be substituted for the requirement to attend the Group Solutions in the five-year period for renewal of the CFO and BOM certifications.
Michigan Districts Win ASBO Meritorious Budget Award

A well thought-out, well-communicated budget is vital to developing the support of the school district’s stakeholders and promoting transparency and accountability. The Meritorious Budget Award (MBA) sponsored by ASBO International, promotes and recognizes excellence in school budget presentation and enhances school business officials’ skills in developing, analyzing, and presenting a school system budget and reviews the accounting practices and reporting procedures.

2011-12 Meritorious Budget Award Winners from Michigan include:

Farmington Public School District
Farmington, MI

Grand Blanc Community Schools
Grand Blanc, MI

South Lyon Community Schools
South Lyon, MI

Walled Lake Consolidated School District
Walled Lake, MI

Congratulations to Michigan’s ASBO’s Meritorious Budget Award (MBA) recipients.
The following individuals and school districts were honored at MSBO’s 74th Annual Conference held at Cobo Center in Detroit.

**MSBO Meridian Award of Excellence**
This special recognition award acknowledges successful practices in all areas of school management and education. Award winners are presented a crystal award and a monetary donation to their district’s student scholarship fund as part of their recognition. MSBO recognized John Fitzgerald from Lake Orion Community Schools as the 2012 Meridian Award of Excellence recipient. Fitzgerald established a district Transportation Advisory Committee to address parental concerns regarding transportation, which frequently become emotional and can take up a great deal of board and administrative time. Appointed by the Board of Education, this unique Advisory Committee made up of school personnel, local law enforcement and more than 50% parents, provides a valuable mechanism for hearing parent concerns, assessing student walk areas, as well as transportation policy. The end result is that few issues are elevated to the superintendent and Board of Education level. They are effectively addressed at the committee.

**Friend of Education**
This special award honors individuals who are not members of MSBO and yet, have been dedicated to serving the best interests of education and students. This year, MSBO recognized Mary Ann Cleary, Director of the House Fiscal Agency as MSBO’s Friend of Education for her many years of providing nonpartisan economic and budget information to the school community through countless presentations and all the behind the scenes work to get the word out on the economic realities facing Michigan and the need to restructure financing for the state and public education. President Crouse congratulated Cleary on her achievement and thanked her for her service to MSBO and public education.

**MSBO Distinguished Service Award**
The Distinguished Service Award is one of the highest honors MSBO presents. It is given to a member who provides exemplary and inspirational service to MSBO and the school business management community. MSBO honored Mike Keast from Ionia ISD as the recipient for the 2012 Distinguished Service Award. Mike has served Ionia County since 1976 and is known to be the “expert” resource on school finance for Ionia County. His reputation is one of always being willing to reach out to those in need and offer solutions to difficult problems and he is known for his honest and accurate advice.

**School Business Official of the Year (SBOY)**
Chuck Wolford from Wayne RESA is this year’s SBOY recipient. This award honors an individual for their accomplishments and contribution to their profession and school district within the past two years. Chuck has provided leadership to local school districts far beyond what is normally expected from a person in his position. Chuck was acknowledged for his groundbreaking and innovative work that he has led regarding the processing and delivery of federal food commodities through the Macomb, Oakland, and Wayne RESA Cooperative, known as MOR. Chuck’s work has provided participating districts the opportunity to fully use commodity allocations in a way that most efficiently impacts their food service program and has revolutionized the processing, delivery and impact of the commodity program.

Chuck receives $1,500 toward professional development to attend the ASBO Annual Meeting in September and will be nominated for ASBO’s Eagle Award.