

FROM THE EDITOR

Focus on Leadership



School board members must be great at multitasking. In addition to your jobs, families, and other outside interests, you also spend a great deal of time ensuring the schools in your community are doing everything they can for children.

That's why it was so heartening to see more than 700 school board members and state association staff from across the country at NSBA's Leadership and Federal Relations Network conferences in Washington, D.C. For several days in late January, attendees focused on the wide variety of challenges districts across the country are facing, ranging from school reform efforts to sequestration to the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. These events are covered in a special "School Board News" insert included in this month's issue and will be discussed again when NSBA holds its annual conference in April in San Diego. The coverage, also available at our online School Board News Today (<http://schoolboardnews.nsba.org>), serves as a stark reminder of how much work is ahead.

A great deal of work in the coming months will be on the implementation of the Common Core State Standards, the focus of this issue's cover story. Senior Editor Lawrence Hardy takes a

look at how districts are dealing with the testing and assessment that will come when the Common Core is implemented starting in 2014-15. As Larry notes, the primary goal of Common Core is to push a more thoughtful approach to teaching and learning, but how that will be done is both complex and frustrating for many districts.

Because of their broad reach in most states—more than 40 have signed on—the Common Core State Standards have received a great deal of coverage in *ASBJ* in recent months. So much, in fact, that we are publishing an anthology of those stories—plus additional resources—for you to purchase online or in print. You can see and get this valuable resource in March by going to *ASBJ.com* or to the NSBA online bookstore.

Without question, these are challenging times for school boards. But as you will see by reading this month's issue, NSBA and its state associations are doing yeoman's work to help you do your jobs. Hopefully, that will make your multitasking just a bit easier.

Until next month...

Glenn Cook,
Publisher and Executive Editor