

FROM THE EDITOR

Two R's: Redistricting and Reauthorization

Do you want to guarantee a crowd at your next school board meeting? All you have to do is one of three things:

- Try to move the date for starting school back farther into August.
- Discuss moving a popular principal from one school to another.
- Consider a boundary change that affects two or more schools.

Each of these issues comes with a 100 percent crowd-gathering guarantee, no matter whether you are sitting behind the microphone or with your back to the audience as you make the presentation. And chances are the crowd is not happy.

Nothing charges emotion more than forcing parents to move their child from one school to another, leaving them to feel as if they have no say in the matter. And increasingly parents are desperate to get their children into the “right” school, even if it means using illegal means to do so.

Senior Editor Naomi Dillon looks at this mind-boggling phenomenon in “Crossing the Line,” which appears on Page 12. And as part of our “No Boundaries” package, we also have a first-person account on boundary changes from Jason Silverman, a school board member in Rock Hill, S.C.

If you’ve been through either of these problems, these stories will seem achingly familiar. But both provide solid lessons for school leaders who face these tough decisions, even when

confronted by an unruly crowd.

On another front, Senior Editor Del Stover examines the issues surrounding the pending reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act, a process that promises to be more interesting now that a Democratic majority has taken over in Congress for the first time since 1994. Del’s story, which starts on Page 20, takes a fascinating look at the politics and the process behind the federal government’s signature education law.

Also this month, *ASBJ* presents its annual roundup of notable education books starting on Page 24. Rebecca C. Jones, a longtime senior editor with the magazine who now works as a freelance writer in Annapolis, Md., provides her insight into the best books of 2006.

For the first time, we also present a list of essential books for the board member and administrator. Managing Editor Kathleen Vail polled board members, administrators, and education writers in developing a list of must-reads for anyone with a vested interest in public schools. We also solicited comments from the *ASBJ* Reader Panel, which you can join by visiting www.asbj.com/readerpanel.

Let us know what you think.
Until next month...

Glenn Cook
Editor-in-Chief

