



## FALL CONFERENCE AGENDA FINALIZED

Attendees at the W.Va. School Boards Association's 2003 Fall Conference, Sept. 12/13, Charleston Marriott Hotel, can expect high quality training in areas such as the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), board meeting security arrangements, and effectively using information for sound decisionmaking, and a selection of workshops focusing on upcoming legislative issues, healthy schools, and the leadership role of school boards.

### No Child Left Behind

"This is where the rubber meets the road," says WVSBA Executive Director Howard M. O'Cull, Ed.D., regarding the conference's first general session, scheduled for Friday, September 12, beginning at 1:00 p.m. The conference's No Child Left Behind segment is designed for county board members

specifically, as required by a 2003 legislative statute. The session focuses on school board accountability in regard to NCLB as well as the importance of effective board/superintendent relations as a contributing factor for advancing student achievement in West Virginia.

Dr. Richard Goodman, an official with the New England School Development Council, will open the session by reviewing the responsibilities of school boards and superintendents in terms of student academic performance and achievement. Four state Department of Education officials then will "apply" the content of Dr. Goodman's presentation to the state's NCLB approved plan and its requirements for

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## MEMBERS EXPRESS INTEREST IN ACADEMY

About 150 county board members and superintendents throughout the state have expressed interest in the W.Va. School Boards Association's School Governance Academy, a refined training and development initiative to be launched in 2004, according to Jason Keeling, WVSBA Executive Assistant, who heads the initiative.

According to Keeling, the WVSBA staff surveyed county board members and superintendents to determine the SGA areas of greatest interest to them. He said WVSBA has received about a 40 percent response rate, with the deadline for county board members and superintendents to respond being September 1.

In responding, survey participants indicated their top three emphasis area preferences. Overall preferences were as follows: 1) decision making and leadership; 2) school finance; 3) standards and accountability; 4) school law; 5) policy; 6) personnel relations; 7) board/superintendent relations; and 8) community building.

Participants will have their work cut out for them, ac-

cording to Keeling, who says the program is designed for two purposes: To develop a cadre of county board members and superintendents who can serve as advisers and consultants to other boards, after having received expertise in various SGA areas such as school finance, and to develop an enhanced training initiative. In addition to WVSBA's "traditional" meetings and conferences, the SGA will include training provided online through an arrangement with Duquesne University (Pittsburgh) and well as self-studies designed by "presenters" such as WVSBA counsel Howard E. Seuffer Jr., Esq., Bowles Rice McDavid Graff & Love PLLC, association counsel.

In developing the cadre of board member advisers, Keeling said the "survey data gives the WVSBA staff an idea of the areas which members feel merit their attention, and in which WVSBA must now develop programming—whether conference or meeting-related, Internet-based, or self study. That's why members' responses are so critical." In making that statement, he emphasized that members will select separate areas in which to concentrate their studies.

Additionally, Keeling said, "Participants will continue to attend WVSBA meetings and conferences," which he described as the "bedrock" of the Association's training initiatives.

Keeling contends the program is critical because "there are so many components within the educational system. One person alone can't truly grasp all the facts, but by developing separate areas of expertise and working together, the effectiveness of local educational governance is enhanced," he said.

The WVSBA Executive Board will discuss the program at its September 12 meeting in Charleston.

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"Teachers open the door, but you  
must enter by yourself."

— Chinese Proverb

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local school districts. They also will discuss county board accountability for “first-year” schools that require additional work due to NCLB standards. Their sessions will be presented in 15-minute segments.

Prior to the program, participants will be expected to peruse some readings that will be made available via board executive secretaries. These readings will be made available during the week of September 1.

## Meeting Security

In the wake of violence at a July 17 Kanawha County Board of Education meeting, in which the system’s director of service personnel was doused with gasoline and a school teacher wounded by gunfire, the second general session will focus on school board meeting security. Howard E. Seufer Jr., Esq., WVSBA counsel, has been invited to open the session, focusing on the rights of the public to attend meetings, and the methods school boards may use to help ensure safety.

Several panelists, including Kanawha County Board of Education President William J. Raglin, will participate in a panel discussion regarding security. Other panelists include Andrew Schneider of the state American Civil Liberties Union chapter, Patti Hamilton, executive director of the West Virginia Association of Counties, and W. Grant Norman of Analytic Services Inc., a security firm located in Fairmont.

“We don’t want to sensationalize the Kanawha County events of July, but this topic is important. There have been other incidents recently, though obviously not of this mag-

nitude, relating to board security, specifically where to ‘draw the line’ between free speech and proper meeting security and management,” said O’Cull.

## Information and Decisionmaking

Monongalia County Board of Education member Dr. Barbara Parsons will conduct the Saturday morning general session, offering insight on the ways boards can make informed decisions through the use of information and effective communications.

“I’ve said it several times, the best snapshot of how an organization operates, and its effectiveness, can be traced to the use and processing of information—whether it be a small agency, a school board, or the state Board of Education. Dr. Parsons will really hone in on how boards can effectively communicate and use information,” said O’Cull.

Upcoming legislative issues and their potential affect on local policies, presented by W.Va. House and Senate Education Committee staff, will be one of the workshops. Additional workshops will focus on school health and the leadership role of county school boards. O’Cull and WVSBA Executive Assistant Jason Keeling will conduct the leadership workshop.

Other program segments include the Delegate Assembly, a pre-conference program relating to the School Building Authority of West Virginia and the WVSBA Executive Board meeting.

In that the NCLB workshop is required by statute, members who cannot attend should contact WVSBA.

Raglin is WVSBA president. As of today, 199 persons have pre-registered for the conference.

**WVSBA Monthly** provides county boards of education members, superintendents, and state policymakers with information regarding WVSBA programs and activities. This publication does not necessarily reflect the official views, opinions or policies of the WVSBA, unless specifically stated.

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## TRAINING DOCUMENT DUE

County board members are advised that September 15 is the date by which completed “Venue[s] of Approved Training Program[s] Options” are to be received by W.Va. School Boards Association Conference Registrar Shirley Davidson.

The “training venues” document is required by a state Board of Education policy which spells out regulations for school board member training. Its purpose, according to Davidson, is to allow the association staff to better plan meetings, especially in terms of projected attendance and meeting-related details such as space needs, meal counts and supplies.

If you have yet to return your “venues document,” which was mailed in early August, please contact Davidson at [sdavidson@wvsba.org](mailto:sdavidson@wvsba.org).

In other training-related developments, the WVSBA/W.Va. Department of Education Training Standards procedures are under review now by a three-member state Board of Education committee. The group will meet Monday, August 25, in Morgantown. Completed regulations are to be readied for board approval by the October SBE meeting.

If you would like to serve on the training committee, please indicate your interest to Howard M. O’Cull, Ed.D., WVSBA executive director. Only written expressions of interest will be considered, according to O’Cull. Write him in care of WVSBA, P.O. Box 1008, Charleston, WV 25324.

# WVSBA MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY TO BE FORWARDED

By Shirley Davidson

The W.Va. School Boards Association began the project of updating its FY04 Membership Directory in June by sending an information request form to county board of education members, county superintendents, county board executive secretaries and Regional Education Service Agency staff. We received an excellent response to our request and would like to “thank” everyone for taking time from their schedules to respond. We hope the directory will assist all board members, superintendents and executive secretaries.

The WVSBA staff plans to forward the directory to county board central offices the first week in September. The directory contains information on county board members, superintendents, executive secretaries and other related

state/education agencies. As specified by WVSBA policy, the directory is considered confidential association-related information and is distributed to county board members, superintendents, and executive secretaries.

A limited number of copies are made available to the office of the State Superintendent of Schools. Copies are not forwarded to vendors, political figures, political parties or others. In cases where a listing of Association member names are requested, WVSBA policy requires the forwarding of only mailing labels, which is not considered “directory information.”

—Davidson is WVSBA Administrative Assistant. She serves as meetings/conferences registrar, and is responsible for maintaining county board members’ training records, among other duties. She may be reached at [sdavidson@wvsba.org](mailto:sdavidson@wvsba.org) to answer directory related questions.

## POLICY PROGRAM READIED FOR COUNTY BOARDS

By Charles B. “Sam” Kalbaugh

NEOLA Inc., provides school boards with a complete service for developing and/or updating district management documents, beginning with bylaws and policies. NEOLA, headquartered in Coshocton, Ohio, is working with more than 700 school boards in Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Illinois, Florida, and now West Virginia.

NEOLA retains law firms in each state to provide legal review of its generic policies and to consult on its biannual updates. In West Virginia, NEOLA will be working with Bowles Rice McDavid Graff & Love PLLC. NEOLA’s staff of retired school administrators does much of the direct work with its client school districts, thereby ensuring that each client’s policies reflect two key features not available from other policy services – legal review by a prestigious school law firm and consultations with experienced school administrators. I will be working with West Virginia districts. You may contact me (330) 283-7243 or [skalbaugh@neola.com](mailto:skalbaugh@neola.com).

NEOLA’s method for organizing school board policy is a ‘10 code’ (0000-9000) system with a customized, topical index for each policy manual. This practical organization, based on years of refinement, eliminates the “hard-to-find,” “confusing-to-us” problems common to other systems.

NEOLA makes it possible for a school district to develop and maintain the other documents that comprise an effective management communication system including: administrative guidelines and associated forms, organized with the same ‘10-code’ system as the policy manual and cross-referenced and indexed to board policies; parent-student handbooks, correlated to board policy and administrative guidelines; and differentiated staff handbooks.

An electronic version of the district’s management documents is available with access by means of the Internet. The search feature of this electronic version allows for instant retrieval of district materials on a topic.

We are pleased that WVSBA will be working cooperatively with NEOLA, beginning early this fall.

Superintendents interested in scheduling NEOLA’s services—particularly those county boards having participated in the BRMGL policy review a few years ago—should contact me or WVSBA Executive Director Howard M. O’Cull, Ed.D., at [hocull@wvsba.org](mailto:hocull@wvsba.org).

NEOLA is an acronym for the Northeast Ohio Learning Association. For more information on NEOLA visit [www.neola.com](http://www.neola.com).

—Kalbaugh, former superintendent in Mineral and Morgan counties, is a past president of the state Association of School Administrators.

## PRESIDENTS ASKED FOR RETREAT SUGGESTIONS

County school board presidents, vice presidents and/or board designees should begin planning for the upcoming W.Va. School Boards Association’s Presidents Retreat, scheduled for Nov. 7/8 at the new Radisson Hotel, Morgantown.

“We’re trying to design a very inclusive program,” according to Howard M. O’Cull, Ed.D, WVSBA executive director. He urges all board officers to contact WVSBA with program suggestions and information—a point also made by Association President William J. Raglin (Kanawha).

“We’ve conducted this program for the past several years, and it needs some energizing in order to maximize its

effectiveness,” said Raglin, who has served two terms as president of the state’s largest school district.

One program element will include a “potpourri” of topics board presidents themselves will bring to the table, said Raglin. “The staff calls these ‘cracker barrel’ sessions, but no matter the nomenclature, the retreat is effective only if board presidents fully participate,” according to Raglin.

Retreat expenses are covered by the W. Va. School Board Effectiveness Project, an initiative of the W.Va. Legislature in effect since 1989, according to the WVSBA staff.

For more information, please contact any member of the association staff at 304.346.0571.

## BRIEFLY

- The W. Va. School Boards Association, in cooperation with the state Department of Education, is planning the second and third “Project Leadership” sessions, slated for October and December. To date, about 60 of the original 104 PL participants have indicated they will attend the sessions, with the October session being held in Bridgeport, and the December session in Charleston. PL participants have until Sept. 1 to alert WVSBA as to future session participation.
- A policy relating to county superintendents’ evaluation (the process for such evaluations) was presented to the state Board of Education at their August 13 meeting by SBE member Priscilla Haden (Kanawha). The policy, developed by a 16-member committee, may be ready for adoption by the October or November SBE meeting. W. Va. Association of School Administrators Executive Director Martha Dean, Ed.D., chaired the committee having developed the proposed policy. Other members included WVSBA counsel Howard E. Seufer Jr., Esq., Bowles Rice McDavid Graff & Love, and association executive director Howard M. O’Cull, Ed.D. WVSBA Executive Assistant Jason Keeling staffed a subcommittee responsible for selecting the model county board self-assessment instrument, which all boards are to use, beginning next July. The Association has received the rights to use the copyrighted instrument for three years—or until a specific state policy can be developed. Keeling announced that WVSBA is seeking funds to develop an instrument, and stressed that the board self-assessment instrument will allow considerable data regarding board effectiveness.
- Association Executive Director Howard M. O’Cull, Ed.D., has announced that county board members interested in discussing matters regarding the School Building Authority of West Virginia may wish to attend a pre-Fall Conference gathering slated for 10:00 a.m. on September 12 at the Charleston Marriott Hotel. Several WVSBA executive board members have said they will attend. The session, an outgrowth of a July meeting with the SBA, coordinated by Dr. Lori Stillely (Jefferson), is open to the membership.

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