



WVSBA TO LAUNCH SCHOOL GOVERNANCE ACADEMY

W. Va. School Boards Association Executive Director Howard M. O’Cull, Ed.D., reports that the Association’s governing board, meeting in May, has given final approval to what will be known as the School Governance Academy.

O’Cull announced that Jason Keeling, WVSBA executive assistant, will lead the program, which focuses on developing a series of more refined training and development venues for county board members, two segments of which will include Internet-based training and self-study, along with the traditional conferences and meetings-related programming.

County board members, during a four-year board term, would be able to complete the program and would specify, when enrolling in the program, a certain “area of emphasis” in which they would like to concentrate such as school finance, school law, policy, community relations or other programmatic areas.

When completing nine specific modules (varying between conference presentations, Internet-based training and self-study), a board member would earn a “mastery level” in the “area of emphasis” selected when enrolling in the program.

O’Cull said the program’s intent was two-fold: “We want to increase the professionalism of our training and development programs, and we also want to develop a cadre of

county board members who can work with other boards—a ‘peers working with peers’ approach. It’s our intent to use these ‘peers’ to assist W. Va. county boards in reframing and rethinking problems or to secure an innovative approach to decisionmaking. This will be accomplished in that Internet or Web-based and self-study training modules will emphasize ‘outside the box’ thinking as well as a multi-disciplinary approach to problems,” said the executive director.

According to O’Cull, the program also will feature a collaborative venture, in terms of ‘electronic learning,’ that will be undertaken with Duquesne University, Pittsburgh. “This segment is in the rough now, but we’re proceeding,” he said, adding that several persons have been contacted in regard to developing self-study materials, including Association counsel Howard E. Seufer Jr., Bowles Rice McDavid Graff & Love, Becky Cain of the Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation, and Joe Panetta of the W. Va. Department of Education. Each self-study module will take about three- to five-hours to complete, and will include an ‘assessment piece’ such as a written essay or a test.

“I realize that the program isn’t something all members will be interested in, but, over the years, several members have expressed their desire to engage in this type initiative,

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MEMBERS: PLAN FOR 2003 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Association’s Conference ‘03 will be held September 12/13 in Charleston (Marriott Hotel).

The program will feature the required training (**Senate Bill 522**) relating to the federal No Child Left Behind Act, as well as several other training segments. The program also features the 2003 Delegate Assembly, at which the

Association’s Committee on Legislation will report.

“The Fall Conference is one of our best-attended training programs, and we try each year to make the program better,” said in-coming President William J. Raglin (Kanawha).

Raglin, in answer to a question, said the NCLB training would be “interesting, interactive and timely.” “Some of the members have said they’ve heard enough about No Child Left Behind, but many of these members have attended programs geared not to board members but, rather, to others in the education field. The WVSBA program, by law, must be developed by county boards, through their association, and is for county boards,” said the veteran Kanawha County board member.

A program flyer will be sent to members by mid-July, according to WVSBA Executive Director Howard M. O’Cull, Ed.D.

For more information on the program, please contact WVSBA at 304.346.0571.

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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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PRESIDENTS RETREAT

The annual W. Va. School Boards Association Presidents Retreat will be held November 7/8 at the Radisson Hotel, Morgantown.

Held for the past several years, the program is geared toward county board presidents, vice presidents and/or other board designees.

Past programs have dealt with several education issues such as standards and accountability, the role and function of the board president, board/superintendent relations and other issues.

Presenters have included the state Superintendent of Schools as well as peer presentations by other board presidents. Last year's program centered on a review of county board presidents' leadership styles and "emotional intelligence" or EQ.

Contact WVSBA Executive Director Howard O'Cull for this year's program details. His e-mail is hocull@wvsba.org

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which the WVSBA Executive Board has endorsed," said O'Cull. He adds that the Association has had some experience with "peer training," dating to 1990, and he announced that a member has been asked to provide a major WVSBA Fall Conference workshop relating to school board communications and expectations. "I want the organization to move in this direction, to be able to develop school boards as a whole in parallel with other collaborative agreements now being undertaken as a result of the No Child Left Behind Act," said O'Cull.

"As far as we know it's unlike any program of its kind in the nation," Keeling said regarding the major Association initiative. "The Executive Board gave us the responsibility of raising the bar in terms of board member development, the School Governance Academy was our answer."

By mid-July, Keeling will contact all county board members about enrolling in the program. He also said that it's open to county superintendents and to state Board of Education members.

According to O'Cull, this is the fourth major training initiative launched by WVSBA, with the Association, under the direction of former executive director Gordon L. Palmer, first calling for school board member training in 1980. The first formal training program, dubbed the W. Va. School Management Initiative, was established by former executive director Fred A. Hoke in the mid-1980s. Under his tenure, O'Cull created the W. Va. Boardmanship Academy, which later was replaced by mandatory school board member training under terms of state legislation enacted in 1990.

WVSBA is one of 14 states that require school board member training, and has been cited for the thoroughness of its training and development initiatives, including being a focus of a George Lucas Education Foundation news story in 2000.

Keeling joined the WVSBA staff in 2001. He is a graduate of W. Va. Wesleyan College, Buckhannon.

CURRENT TRAINING RELATED MATTERS DISCUSSED

The following are several matters relating to county board member training, as required by W. Va. Code §18-5-1a:

1. County board members whose terms expire June 30, 2004 (no matter if seeking reelection or not) must complete their seven (7) clock hours training by December 31, 2003.

2. WVSBA Conference '04, to be held September 12/13, will include the mandatory training relating to the federal No Child Left Behind Act. The Association staff is working with several parties to develop this training initiative.

3. During the first week of July, county board members will receive a list of "training venues" for FY04, and will be asked to indicate which program or programs in which they will be participating.

4. The W. Va. Board of Education will be revisiting school board member training standards this fall. Existing standards are being revised.

5. FY03 training records will be presented to the state Board of Education in July or August. Members should notify WVSBA of any changes in training hours by the end of this fiscal year. Shirley Davidson, administrative assistant, is in charge of maintaining credit hours information.

Members may direct training records questions to Ms. Davidson at sdavidson@wvsba.org.

RAGLIN TO APPOINT ASSOC. FINANCE COMMITTEE

WVSBA President William J. Parker (Lewis) has announced that incoming president William J. Raglin (Kanawha) will be appointing an Association committee relating to organizational finances.

According to Parker, the committee's appointment is required through passage and action at the FY04 Annual Business Meeting (February, 2003 - Charleston). He said the committee will study a number of issues, including WVSBA's Membership Subscription Fees (dues) structure and other issues relating to Association finances.

This committee will conduct the first major review of WVSBA finances since 1994, said WVSBA Executive Director Howard M. O'Cull.

O'Cull also reiterated that boards paying FY04 membership fees by July 31 will receive a 7.5 percent discount, the discount first being enacted in 1994.

If you would like to serve on the finance committee, please contact O'Cull or Raglin (wjraglin@charter.net).

WVSBA's current MSFs were established in 1994, according to O'Cull.

All 55 county boards of education have joined the Association during the past few years, according to Parker.

DEADLINE NEARING FOR DIRECTORY INFORMATION

W. Va. School Boards Association Administrative Assistant Shirley Davidson is urging county board members to return their "WVSBA Membership Directory" surveys by not later than July 15, 2003.

According to Davidson, the information is used by the Association staff in several ways, from the creation of e-mail list-serves to the development of mailing labels.

"We really need this information. It's how we keep track of members and how we formulate our directory, which is well-respected by members," said Davidson.

WVSBA Executive Assistant Jason Keeling also announced that the organization will be developing online forms during FY04, which will aid in the collection and retrieval of information varying from meeting registration forms to legislative informational requests.

"This staff initiative will be a challenge technically, but in the end I think it will help us retrieve information in a more timely and efficient manner. This will broaden what we can do with our Internet-based services and enhance WVSBA.ORG," said Keeling.

Keeling will be working with the Charleston-based Internet consulting firm, DreamCatcher, in developing this and other Web programs.

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BRIEFLY

- The W. Va. School Boards Association has received a second round of funding for Project Leadership, an induction program for persons who aspire to become county superintendents. WVSBA, however, must match the funds with moneys from other persons or organizations, according to Association Executive Director Howard M. O’Cull, Ed.D., who heads up the project. Due to budgetary reductions, the W. Va. Department of Education may no longer be able to underwrite the program, according to SDE sources.
- W. Va. School Boards Association Executive Director Howard M. O’Cull is one of eight individuals from across the country who has been asked to assist in the development of a national school board member videotape training series, “The School As an Emotional System,” a program that will discuss how schools operate much like “families” or even organizations such as church congregations. The work is based on the Bowen Family System Theory, which relates to the inter-connectedness of the ‘parts’ of organizations and how each is inner related and dependent upon other organizational segments, much as that of a family. One of the other review panel members is the 2003 National Superintendent of the Year.
- WVSBA.ORG, the Association’s Web site, received its strongest record of site visits in late spring, due in part to an article concerning a House Education Committee discussion of bus operators’ extra-duty pay (*The Legislature*, February 28, 2003). According to information provided WVSBA, the state School Service Personnel Association also reprinted the article, written by WVSBA Executive Director Howard M. O’Cull, Ed.D., forwarding it to WVSSPA members. According to Executive Assistant Jason Keeling, who maintains the site, the most popular WVSBA.ORG features include the publications, news, legalities, resources, and affiliates pages.

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