



# FOR YOUR *information*

A MONTHLY UPDATE ON  
STATE BOARD PROCEEDINGS,  
ASSOCIATION NEWS &  
K-12 TOPICS

May 15, 2026

## SBOE Celebrates Historic Gains in Graduation Rates and College Readiness



Alabama students, educators and school systems earned well-deserved recognition at this month's State Board of Education meeting, where the board celebrated the state's 2026-2027 Teacher of the Year and honored top-performing districts across the state. State Superintendent Eric Mackey also delivered a wave of good news on student achievement, from a rising

graduation rate and surging College and Career Readiness numbers to national recognition for Alabama's remarkable academic recovery since the pandemic.

[Read Full Story](#)

## Unfiltered: Outgoing Education Leaders Reflect on the Last Quadrennium



**Sally Smith, J.D.**  
Executive Director



**Ryan Hollingsworth**  
Executive Director



**Vic Wilson Ed.D., Ed.S.**  
Former Executive Director



Among this year's [AASB Summer Conference](#) highlights is an exclusive opening-day panel discussion featuring three outgoing executive directors from leading Alabama education organizations: **Sally Smith** (AASB), **Ryan Hollingsworth** (School Superintendents of Alabama), and **Dr. Vic Wilson** (former Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools). Together, they'll take an honest, unfiltered look back at the last four years in education and share their parting reflections on where the field has been and where it's headed.

This panel is another reason to join more than 600 school board members and education leaders who have already registered for Summer Conference, our biggest event of the year, set for **June 19–21** in Gulf Shores, Ala. If you haven't registered yet, now is the time! With 7 training hours and a packed agenda, it's an investment in your board's leadership you won't regret. (7 training hours | \$349)

Planning to attend? Consider arriving early on **June 19** for the School Safety Summit, a pre-conference session packed with best practices and strategies to help keep your schools safe. (3.5 training hours | \$159)

**CONTACT YOUR BOARD SECRETARY OR AASB TO REGISTER.**

## Register Now: New Board Member Orientations



Registration for AASB's New Board Member Orientations is now open. This training is packed with invaluable insights designed to empower both new and veteran board members to master their roles, embrace their responsibilities and build the connections that ignite effective governance.

### **Roles & Responsibilities | Friday, July 17 | 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

Part I of AASB's school board member orientation covers the role of the board and the superintendent, the Open Meetings Act, the ethics law, and much more.

### **Effective Boards & Relationships | Saturday, July 18 | 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

Part II takes an in-depth look at effective school board leadership, stakeholder engagement, working with your superintendent and board attorney, and the art of advocacy.

**Cost: FREE**

*This new benefit reflects our commitment to supporting board members from day one of their service.*

**DID YOU KNOW?**

- **Incoming Board Members:** Even if they have not yet taken office, incoming board members already are eligible to participate in board member training.

***The School Board Governance Improvement Act requires all new board members to complete an Orientation on required topics within one year from July 1 after taking office.***

**CONTACT YOUR BOARD SECRETARY OR AASB TO SIGN UP!**



## Alabama 2026-27 Teacher of the Year Announced

**Elizabeth Eubanks Von Hofe** of Spanish Fort Elementary School (Baldwin County Public Schools) has been named the 2026-2027 Alabama Teacher of the Year.

Von Hofe dedicated over a decade to serving as a successful licensed administrator in the nursing home sector before she realized her passion for influencing students through education and mentorship.

[Read More](#)

## Upcoming COSSBA Events



**Webinar: Recruiting & Retaining Highly Effective Teachers**  
**May 20, 2026, 11 a.m - noon (CDT)**

Make plans to sign up for the next installment in COSSBA's Unified Board Alliance Webinar Series. This topic will help you discover how your system can move beyond traditional approaches and develop sustainable systems that not only attract exceptional educators but



**Federal Advocacy Conference**  
**Washington, D.C.**  
**Sept. 21-23, 2026**

Are you ready to champion public education and make your voice heard at the national level? Join leaders from across the country in the nation's capital to advocate for stronger schools and empowered communities during COSSBA's annual Federal Advocacy

also empower them to make a lasting impact -- while increasing student achievement.

Conference. Early bird rate \$695 until July 20, 2026.

[Register Now](#)

[Register Now](#)



## Can a Board Member Change Their Vote After Receiving New Information?

**Q**

**Dear AASB:** A board member who voted in favor of hiring a new employee has since received information that has caused them to oppose the hire. While the outcome of the vote would not be affected, the member wishes to change their vote. Is this permissible?

**A**

Unfortunately, once your vote is casted and recorded by the secretary, that is part of the record. Changing your vote afterwards is not permitted because the only time you have authority to act on this is at the board table when the item is formally brought up before the board for a vote and decision. This is a good reminder of why it is important to be fully informed and attentive during a board meeting before casting any vote. It is equally important to make sure your vote is recorded correctly by the secretary in the moment. If you believe your vote was captured incorrectly, speak up right away, before the meeting moves on.



## Need Training Hours by June 30?

Short of your state-mandated individual training hours for the 2025-26 training year? AASB's online learning portal, School Board U, offers a convenient way to earn hours from the comfort of home!

School Board U features all eight of AASB's core courses in the School Board Member Academy, including new board member orientation courses. Recorded webinars as well as informational and elective courses also are available, and several courses are free.



## Limited-Time Opportunity: Free Poverty-Informed Training for Your Staff

School systems across Alabama are seeing shifts in student needs and community demographics, and those changes show up in classrooms every day. The question isn't if we respond, but how well we equip our staff to do it.

AASB is expanding access to its highly regarded poverty-informed training to support school teams in understanding and responding to the realities many students face. This training is practical, interactive and designed specifically for staff, giving them tools and resources they can use immediately to better support student learning and engagement.

Right now, AASB has a **limited number of FREE training slots available between now and October** (systems cover travel expenses only):

- 1 Poverty Simulation (2.5 hours high-impact, immersive experience)
- 3 Poverty-Informed Training sessions (90–120 minutes, staff-focused professional development)

AASB will work directly with your system to schedule a time that fits your calendar.

Availability is **first come, first served**, and if your system schedules more than one session, the first presentation remains free.

If your goal is to spend more time on learning and less time addressing barriers, this is a smart, no-cost step in the right direction.

**To secure a spot or learn more, contact:**

AASB Director of Leadership Development Janice Stockman at [jstockman@alabamaschoolboards.org](mailto:jstockman@alabamaschoolboards.org)

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## Spotlight: Growing the Next Generation of Leaders

Birmingham City Schools (BCS) and Jones Valley Teaching Farm (JVTF) have shared a common purpose of ensuring every student has access to meaningful, hands-on learning for more than a decade. What started as outdoor teaching farms in the Woodlawn community has expanded to benefit thousands of Birmingham students through Good School Food, a food-based learning framework for Pre-K to 12th grade, that includes in-school lessons, after-school programs and at-home activities.

[Read More](#)



**WE'RE HIRING!**

Membership Coordinator

**APPLICATION DEADLINE:**  
Open until filled

**APPLY: [bit.ly/AASB-MembershipCoord](https://bit.ly/AASB-MembershipCoord)**

The advertisement features a hand holding a magnifying glass over the AASB logo. A QR code is located in the bottom right corner of the ad.

## Vacancy: AASB Membership Coordinator

AASB is hiring a **Membership Coordinator** to join our dynamic, fast-paced, team-oriented environment. We're looking for a detail-oriented, analytically minded self-starter to manage our membership data, coordinate event registrations and provide exceptional service to association members.

[Learn more/Apply.](#)

## Additional Vacancies

- [CSFO of Piedmont City Schools](#)
- [CSFO of Muscle Shoals City Schools](#)





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