



## New Hampshire School Boards Association

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### **NHSBA DELEGATE ASSEMBLY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT Barrett M. Christina, Executive Director October 14, 2023**

The core mission of the New Hampshire School Boards Association is to promote excellence in public education through school board leadership for all New Hampshire children. We strive to meet this mission by providing school board members with professional services designed to meet their needs. This report briefly summarizes our programs and major service areas over the last year.

#### NHSBA MEMBERSHIP:

NHSBA is pleased to report that membership remains stable, with 160 school boards as our members. Most importantly, NHSBA is also pleased to report that there was no dues increase this year. This marks the 14th straight year that NHSBA members have seen no dues increase.

#### NHSBA POLICY AND SCHOOL LAW SERVICES:

NHSBA's policy program is the most comprehensive school board policy service program in the state. Under the direction of NHSBA Staff Attorney Will Phillips, NHSBA issued policy updates that updated, revised, and introduced new NHSBA Sample Policies. Further, NHSBA responded to hundreds of policy-related inquiries and conducted a webinar on best practices for policy development.

Unfortunately, as membership knows, our policy-database vendor suffered a catastrophic cyber-attack. However, NHSBA is pleased to announce that we have worked with a new vendor to build a very comprehensive policy database with multiple new features. NHSBA thanks its members for their patience as we worked through this challenge.

NHSBA is also pleased to have completed policy reviews for Keene and SAU 20. Attorney Phillips continues to work diligently on a handful of other policy reviews.

In addition to managing NHSBA's policy services, Attorney Phillips handles all NHSBA legal services. These services include fielding and replying to legal inquiries, assisting boards with best practices, training, technical assistance advisories and NHSBA's webinar series.

#### SCHOOL BOARD TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES:

NHSBA continues to improve and expand our services in this critical area. We continue to offer individualized, on-site board workshops to our member boards as a general membership service with no additional cost to the district.

NHSBA is pleased to have provided individual training to the following school boards: Derry Cooperative, Laconia, Timberlane Regional, SAU 21, Milford, SAU 9, Governor Wentworth Regional, Shaker Regional, Lebanon, Milton, Manchester, Jackson, SAU 6, Bedford, Brookline, Inter-Lakes, White Mountains Regional, and Gilmanton, among others.

In addition to these on-site trainings, hosted multiple webinars on a variety of topics. Some of NHSBA's webinars were our annual Roles and Responsibilities/Orientation; Legislative Preview and Legislative Recap; the Right to Know law; Superintendent Evaluations; the Academy for Good Governance (in collaboration with the New Hampshire Municipal Association); School District Budgeting; Public Relations and Crisis Management; Overview of Special Education Law; Best Policy Practices; and an Overview of Adequacy Aid (in collaboration with the New Hampshire Department of Education).

#### GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS:

2023 was another busy area for NHSBA on this front in addition to our usual legislative advocacy efforts. Led by Becky Wilson, NHSBA Director of Governmental Relations, NHSBA was an instrumental factor in collaborating with the legislature and numerous other stakeholders. NHSBA began the legislative session tracking more than 200 bills. The session ended with 42 bills passed into law that NHSBA was tracking. NHSBA supported some of these bills and opposed others. A full account can be found in the 2023 NHSBA Legislative Summary, which can be accessed on our website.

The NHSBA Board of Directors hosted Congressional representatives during the March 2023 NHSBA Board meeting. At this meeting, NHSBA was afforded the opportunity to express to the Congressional representatives school board concerns with respect to federal programs and federal laws. Much of the discussion centered around special education, food and nutrition requirements, health care costs, and flexibility with respect to other federal grant money.

Further, a handful of school boards have established local "legislative committees" to track and testify on pertinent bills. Ms. Wilson was pleased to coordinate with these school boards and provide NHSBA's assistance.

## SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH SERVICES:

One of the most critical duties of any school board is to attract and retain the very best superintendent. With increased retirements of our current superintendent workforce, and with the availability of qualified candidates at significant lows, our Superintendent Search Program is more important than ever.

During the 2022/23 school year, NHSBA successfully completed superintendent searches for SAU 60 (Fall Mountain Regional) and SAU 88 (Lebanon). NHSBA is currently assisting SAU 92 (Hinsdale), SAU 23 and SAU 93 (Monadnock Regional) in their respective superintendent searches.

Last, NHSBA is pleased to report that we are working in a collaborative and productive manner with a variety of stakeholder groups in a collective effort to serve NHSBA's Mission Statement of promoting "excellence in public education for all New Hampshire children."

Respectfully submitted,  
Barrett M. Christina  
Executive Director