

October 27, 2021

Dear Honorable Legislators:



Like you and your constituents, we support our students and greatly value the voices of active and involved parents. We encourage all our parents and school district patrons to continue to fight for a better and brighter future for all Idaho students.

When we learned of the National School Boards Association's (NSBA) letter to President Biden, which was directly contrary to our shared position, we were one of the first states to respond.

Here are two immediate actions ISBA has taken:

- 1.) On October 13th, we released a formal statement pointing out our dissent with the NSBA letter that went to President Biden and noting we were not involved in drafting that letter. You can revisit our formal response here: [ISBA Statement on NSBA Letter to President Biden](#)
- 2.) We requested the following changes from NSBA:
 - A formal review of procedures on transparency and direct involvement from state associations when sending correspondence that appears to have the endorsement of every state association.
 - A clear vision statement from NSBA that highlights the value of local controls and protects the authority of locally elected and appointed school board members.
 - Confirmation that acknowledges that NSBA services are for school board members, members whose primary stakeholders are the parents and patrons in their communities.
 - A public apology and correction of the original letter, dated September 29th.

Because of our efforts, and other state school boards associations, NSBA has now issued a public apology, stating "there was no justification for some of the language included in the letter. We should have had a better process in place to allow for consultation on a communication of this significance."

Regarding membership with NSBA, the ISBA previously paid membership dues for the year. Those dues are nonrefundable. We will continue to very carefully monitor the actions and conduct of NSBA. If not sooner, when the ISBA Executive Board meets for its spring Board meeting to establish the ISBA budget, this will be a significant decision with much discussion. We intend to review the past actions of NSBA, what they have done to resolve the actions, and what they are doing currently and in the future. All of that will be taken into consideration as the decision regarding NSBA membership is made.

Further, NSBA is currently undergoing a search for a new Executive Director. It is our understanding that the NSBA Board of Directors is expediting that search as they understand leadership of this national organization needs to change and change for the better.

Now, more than ever, Idaho's unique perspective, concerns, and values must be included among the federation of state school boards associations. Our NSBA membership allows us to be alerted to changes in federal law or federal agency rules that have real and direct impact on our K-12 schools in Idaho. Our membership also gives Idaho a unique platform to ensure that the concerns and innovative ideas of our school boards, our students, and our parents are represented and heard at a national level.

We value hard work, as do our members. The "Idaho way" requires us to roll up our sleeves at this unprecedented moment in history and join other states that hold similar values to make NSBA better and to ensure our national association continues to represent states like ours. NSBA offers our association, and thereby our members, among other benefits and services, a clear path for federal representation as congress enacts policies that impact K-12 schools in Idaho.

As always, thank you for encouraging parental involvement in our K-12 public schools in a civil and productive manner.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Jody Hendrickx in blue ink.

Jody Hendrickx
President

Handwritten signature of Jason Knopp in blue ink.

Jason Knopp
President Elect

Handwritten signature of Nancy Gregory in blue ink.

Nancy Gregory
Vice President

Handwritten signature of Wally Hedrick in blue ink.

Wally Hedrick
Imm. Past President

Handwritten signature of Misty Swanson in blue ink.

Misty Swanson
Executive Director

"Empower Local Boards for Student Success"