

NSBA Staff and Presidents' Retreat Facilitators



Billy Arcement---The Leadership Strategist, is a past two-term state president of the Louisiana School Boards Association and past 12 years member of his local board. For the past 20 years he has been facilitating school board retreats, speaking at conference break-out sessions, and writing on school board service.

Billy speaks to corporate and education leaders across America helping them turn knowledge into results. He authored the book, *Searching for Success*, now published in eight foreign countries, and co-authored the recently released book, *Journeying on Holy Ground---Christian Strategies to Reach Your Personal, Professional, and Spiritual Destiny*. He has also written numerous nationally published articles on leadership, management and success strategies and, within the last 18 months, *The American School Board Journal* has published two featured articles.

He energizes and enlightens his audiences with inspiration, insights and a bit of Cajun Humor. The combination of a powerful message and laughter is clearly a combination every audience appreciates.



John Beck is a native and resident of Assumption Parish, in Louisiana. He has a B.A. Degree from Nicholls State, and a Masters Degree from L.S.U. John is a former educator, and is serving in his 6 consecutive term on the local school Board. He has served on the Board of Directors, and is Past President of the Louisiana School Boards Association. John has served on the FRN(Federal Relations Network) for 17 years. He was appointed by Governor Mike Foster to serve on the Commission of Secondary Education Redesign. He has served on the Community College Foundation Board, Chamber of Commences, and the State Task-Force for Public School funding. John is a Vice-President of the National Sales Division for Profiles International. He is a published poet, humorist, and has been called upon for speaking and training engagements.



As executive director of the **National School Boards Association, Anne L. Bryant** heads a federation of state and territorial organizations dedicated to advancing education through citizen governance of public schools. She directs a one hundred and fifty-one person staff in Alexandria, Virginia, implementing policies to help the state associations and local school boards provide leadership for today's children in order to develop tomorrow's leaders. She has written widely on K-12 education, volunteer-staff leadership issues, and the role of the federal government in education. Bryant testifies before Congress, carrying the message that the education of our public school students is the nation's top priority.

Bryant is a Trustee of Simmons College and is a past chair of the Board. She holds an Ed.D. degree from the University of Massachusetts and a B.A. from Simmons College. Bryant has received numerous awards and recognitions including being named a fellow by the American Society of Association of Executives (ASAE), the Key Award, ASAE's highest recognition, and the University of Massachusetts Alumnae Achievement Award.



Rochelle Cancienne-Touchard is the Director of Public Information for **St. Charles Parish Public Schools** in Luling, La. She has a bachelor of arts in Mass Communication with a focus in broadcasting. Rochelle also served 12 years in the Army National Guard where she provided public affairs support to units across the states of Louisiana and Mississippi.

In her position, Rochelle serves as the district's spokesperson, provides media training to board members and staff and oversees production and programming of the system's local cable access channel. In addition to developing and implementing district wide marketing strategies and product development, she also serves as the district's liaison between the community, business and industry, local and state officials in addition to serving on several agency boards.

Together with her staff, Rochelle works to continually provide one clear voice to effectively implement two-way communications for the district and all segments of the community, in order to improve student achievement by establishing a culture of proactive, customer focused quality service.



Mary Edwards is a noted speaker and brings a unique skill to this arena. With over thirty years of classroom and administrative experience in schools and executive level positions in government offices, Mary has a keen understanding of each aspect of creating system and propelling an organization forward. Ms. Edwards has worked with superintendents, school administrators and school boards to unify school districts, promote excellence and improve positive public relations.

She is highly acclaimed for her ability to develop school improvement blueprints for success. School districts throughout the nation have benefited from her unique talent in identifying and executing key success indicators to ensure district and school growth.

Currently, Mrs. Edwards holds the position of Chief Education Officer for Character Learning Systems and is a lead consultant for several school systems. Grounded with expertise in the theory and practice of educational accountability and skilled in the art of creative problem solving, Ms. Edwards applies knowledge, innovation and effective communication to create concepts and identify strategies to maximize student achievement and success. Before joining CLS, Ms. Edwards held the position of Assistant Superintendent in an exemplary school system in South Louisiana.



Frederick M. Hess, AEI's director of education policy studies, is an educator, political scientist, and author. At AEI, Mr. Hess studies a range of K-12 and higher education issues. He has authored influential books such as *Common Sense School Reform*, *Revolution at the Margins*, and *Spinning Wheels*. A former public high school social studies teacher, he has also taught education and policy at universities including Georgetown, Harvard, Rice, the University of Virginia, and the University of Pennsylvania. He is executive editor of *Education Next* and a faculty associate with Harvard's Program on Education Policy and Governance, and he serves on the board of directors for the National Association of Charter School Authorizers and on the review board for the Broad Prize in Urban Education. He has served as Executive Editor, *Education Next* since 2001, and taught high school for two years in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.



Christina Gordon is director of communications for the **National School Boards Association**, where she is responsible for managing the communications efforts of the association. She works directly with senior leadership and internal departments to ensure that NSBA’s message is prominent in the national media. She writes press releases, speeches, articles, letters to the editor, and opinion editorials for placement in the press. In addition to managing the media relations of NSBA, Gordon serves as editor-in-chief and writer for the award-winning BoardBuzz blog.

Prior to NSBA, Gordon was marketing manager in Arlington County, Va., where she worked to promote public transportation through public events, electronic and print communications, and media campaigns. While in Arlington, she also developed the “Rides in the City” Web site and campaign to increase public interest in transportation. From 2000 to 2002, Gordon was a seventh-grade English teacher at Francis Scott Key Middle School in Montgomery County, Md.

Gordon is a member of the Public Relations Society of America and ASAE. She holds a B.A. in English literature from Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio, where she also hosted a weekly program on campus radio. As a product of the Montgomery County Public Schools and the daughter of a former school board member, Gordon considers education to be the “family business” and believes deeply in the value of public education and the importance of school board governance.



Major Brad Letner is the Operations Officer for the **U.S. Army 6th Recruiting Brigade**. The 6th Brigade is responsible for Army Recruiting across the 12 Western states plus the Pacific Rim. Prior to this position, he served on the Crisis Action Team, Army Operations Center, at the Pentagon. Major Letner served as a local school board member, secretary and president prior to being reactivated for service in Kabul, Afghanistan in 2005. He is a recent graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. Above all, he is married to Teresa, a 5th grade teacher. They have three beautiful daughters in high school.



Bonnie Louque is founder and president of **Character Learning Systems**. Bonnie has worked in the educational area for over 20 years and holds many distinctions in her

field, including the honor of being twice-named State of Louisiana Elementary Teacher of the Year. As a former teacher, district administrator, school board member, and a marketing director in a Fortune 500 company, Mrs. Louque has attained a distinctive vantage point from which she has formulated a unique solution for character building that unites a school district, local leadership, families, and an area's business community.



Nolton J. Senegal, Sr., Esq. an attorney and educator, was elected executive director of the **Louisiana School Boards Association** in 2007. Senegal brings to his position broad and deep experience in public education. He earned a M.Ed. degree in administration and supervision, and a B.S. in business education and social studies from Southern University and A & M College. He served as president during a twelve and a half year stint on the Acadia Parish School Board, and served two terms as president of LSBA. He has served as a board examiner at the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, and was, himself, nominated for the Louisiana Teacher of the Year Award.



Laura Templeton is currently the **National School Boards Association** Development Manager for the Southwest Region. Laura received her Master's Degree in Education from Indiana University-Purdue University and undergraduate degree from The University of Texas at Austin. She taught at the primary, secondary, and university levels, and coordinated the Overseas Students Teaching Program at Indiana University at Bloomington. Laura also supervised student teachers in England, Ireland, and Scotland and taught in Belize, Central America. Laura worked in the education publishing field over twenty years as a representative and consultant.



Joseph S. Villani is the deputy executive director of the **National School Boards Association**. He is responsible for the Executive Operations and Federation Services of the Association, for the National School Boards Foundation, and for directing the overall work of all other operations at NSBA. He coordinated the development of the "Key Work of School Boards" initiative, a strategic planning/continuous improvement framework to focus school boards on student achievement through community engagement. He has co-authored *Key Work of School Boards Guidebook* (2000) and *Leading Change: the Case for Continuous Improvement* (2005) both published by NSBA.

He has made numerous presentations to educational audiences on the Key Work, and he has done in-depth strategic planning with several state School Boards Associations and with local Boards of Education. He also worked with the American Association for the Advancement of Science to create Board development resources for state associations to use with local Boards to promote and support implementing high-quality STEM (Science-Technology-Engineering-Mathematics) programs in public schools.

Before joining NSBA in 1997, Joe served for 26 years in Montgomery County (MD) Public Schools as a teacher, principal, area director, and associate superintendent. Joe completed his undergraduate work at St. Vincent College. He earned a Master's degree from the University of Pittsburgh and a Ph.D. in Human Development from the University of Maryland. He is married with three children.



Kanisha R. Williams-Jones is the director of educational services for the **National School Boards Association**. As part of NSBA's Federation Member Services and Outreach team, she acts as NSBA's liaison to state school board association board development/training staff, develops and manages the Presidents' Retreat program, manages leadership publications centered on governance and the Key Work of School Boards, and oversees the creation of educational programming at the NSBA Annual Conference.

Prior to joining the NSBA staff in 1999, Kanisha managed events and educational programming for a number of non-profit organizations based in the Washington, DC area. She earned a bachelor's degree in Government/Political Science from the College of William and Mary and serves on the board of directors for the Hulon Willis Association, a constituent group of the William and Mary Alumni Association. Kanisha and her husband Rob reside in Maryland and are the proud parents of two boys.



Lisa Yates, ACS Principal, has been a professional facilitator for more than 13 years and has trained as a quality improvement facilitator. She is experienced at high-energy planning sessions and creates a safe and confidential environment that encourages candid and open group participation. Lisa has worked in both the public and private sectors to assist boards and organizational teams in developing strategic planning processes, plans and frameworks to guide an organization to its desired vision. She has facilitated board and staff retreats, strategic planning meetings, operational planning sessions, work-plan and vision development meetings.

Through her work with ACS, Lisa leads clients in assessing their organizational capacity through qualitative and quantitative research; evaluating the impact of emerging trends; identifying

strategies that capitalize on the organization's strengths and opportunities; and determining desirable and measurable outcomes. In essence, Lisa works systematically with an organization to develop a roadmap for improving the organization's positioning.

Jo Ann Yee is the Senior Director for Strategy Development, Achievement, Diversity and Urban Affairs for the **California School Boards Association** (CSBA). She is responsible for the long-range planning to ensure that CSBA addresses issues related to student achievement, diversity and urban districts. As a trained facilitator, she is also involved in various organizational and professional development efforts at CSBA.

Whether we are working on educational issues, examining state and local politics, or addressing group dynamics, Ms. Yee brings extensive experience and also a uniquely urban perspective to CSBA. Prior to joining CSBA, Ms. Yee served for six years as the Executive Director and lobbyist for the Association of California Urban School Districts. She was a member of the Board of Education in the Sacramento City Unified School District for five years, serving as president from 1992-1993. Ms. Yee was a classroom teacher and trainer of teachers, and spent many years as a community activist and organizer on educational issues affecting neighborhood schools and the Asian Pacific Islander community.

Ms. Yee received her B.A. from the University of California, Irvine and M.A. in Education Administration and Policy from California State University, Sacramento.