



**NSBA**  
**NATIONAL BLACK CAUCUS**  
*of*  
**SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS**

# BUGLE

FALL 2008

## Chair's Message

Greetings! Hopefully, you enjoyed a pleasant school opening and are well on your way to another successful school year. I have a lot of good news to share with you about the National Black Caucus of School Board Members (NBC). I am pleased to inform you that your board of directors and I have been busily sculpting the year ahead and have an ambitious agenda. With this agenda, we encourage your support and participation.

### NBC Retreat

The NBC board held its annual retreat on August 22 – 23, 2008, at NSBA's headquarters. We addressed several Caucus business items, as well as focused on upcoming events and how best to communicate our efforts with the membership. We made significant headway regarding our committees, but we still need your help with recruitment and committee participation. We have over two-hundred Caucus members, but less than thirty people signed up to participate on committees. If you are interested in serving on a Caucus

committee, please complete the Caucus Committee Application that can be found on our website at <http://www.nsba.org/caucuses>. Any questions can be directed to [Black\\_Caucus@nsba.org](mailto:Black_Caucus@nsba.org).

### NBC Board of Directors

At Annual Conference, the NBC board appointed Dr. Irene Pinkard, former Pacific Region Director, as the acting Chair-Elect, because Kevin Hoffman, former Chair-Elect, resigned from his post as Vice President of the Houston Independent School District Board of Education. Irene has stepped in as a valuable contributor to the Caucus. Subsequent to that appointment, we selected Paul Chatman, California School Boards Association and Ventura County Association of School Boards President, to fill the one-year unexpired term of Dr. Pinkard for the Pacific Region. The board is delighted to have him join us. Additional information about Paul can be found inside this edition of the *Bugle*. Both positions will be avail-

able for nominations through the NBC Nominating Committee and will be voted on by the Caucus members present at the NBC Business Meeting on April 6, 2009, in San Diego, California.



*Dr. Brian K. Perkins*

### Childhood Obesity

Next, I am pleased to communicate my participation as a co-chair of the Leadership for Healthy Communities grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. A pressing concern of mine (and of many other school and local leaders across the country) is the alarming increase in childhood obesity, particularly among vulnerable populations and ethnic minorities. Not only does obesity threaten the health of our children, but mounting evidence suggests that obesity and its related health complications affect a child's ability to learn. With nearly a third of our nation's children now over-

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## Building Bridges between Mayors and Public School Board Members

By Honorable Johnny Ford

First, I wish to congratulate Dr. Brian Perkins for his marvelous leadership as chair of the National Black Caucus of School Board Members and for his participation in 2007 and 2008 as a vice Chair for Public Education Policy in the National Policy Alliance.\* He has represented you well and he has made sure that the voices of school board members have been represented at the national and international level through the work of the National Policy Alliance.

On behalf of all of the organizations that I represent, I want all of you who serve African American children and set educational policy for our children to know that "we've got your back." I call on the National Conference of Black Mayors/the World Conference of Mayors, Black elected officials, and the two million government employees at the local, state, national and international level to support the National Black Caucus of School Board Members in the following ways:

1. I call upon all mayors to have an "open door policy" with the school board members in their cities, the United States, and around the globe.
2. I call upon all mayors to support legislation that increases funding support for public education in the cities of the United States and around the globe.
3. I call upon all mayors to "listen" to school board members when decisions are to be made relative to the appointment of school superintendents in cities in this country and around the globe.
4. I call upon all mayors to share municipal facilities and resources with school systems in this country and around the world.
5. Lastly, mayors and school boards should have regular and ongoing meetings with the superintendent to discuss mutual ways to improve the schools for their children.



Johnny Ford †

We wish to build an even stronger relationship between city hall and school boards across the country because the children that you serve are our children too.

Thank you National Black Caucus of School Board Members for your efforts to continue to build a bridge between city hall and our local schools.

\* The National Policy Alliance (NPA) is made up of the nine National Black Public Policy Organizations and the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. They are as follows: The Congressional Black Caucus, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators, the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials, the National Association of Black County Officials, National Organization of Black County Officials, the National Bar Association's Judicial Council, the National Black Caucus of School Board Members, Blacks in Government, the National Conference of Black Mayors/the World Conference of Mayors. The NPA is co-chaired by the Honorable Johnny Ford and the Honorable Webster Guillory. Dr. Brian Perkins serves as Vice Chair of the NPA for Public Education Policy

† The Honorable Johnny Ford is Mayor of Tuskegee, Alabama, Founder of the World Conference of Mayors and the National Conference of Black Mayors, and Co-Chair of the National Policy Alliance.

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### PUBLISHING INFORMATION

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### Ideas for Upcoming Issues?

We want to hear from you! The Caucus would like to know what hot topic our members would like covered in the newsletter. Please contact [Black\\_Caucus@nsba.org](mailto:Black_Caucus@nsba.org).

## HIV/AIDS Continues to Threaten Minority Populations

By Kate Eig, NSBA School Health Programs



Kate Eig

Despite increased efforts to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS in recent years, the disease continues to disproportionately affect certain populations. From 2000 through 2004, the estimated number of AIDS cases increased among all racial and ethnic groups.

In 2004, Blacks had the highest HIV/AIDS infection rate, with 69.3 cases per 100,000 people—8.5 times the rate for whites—accounting for 50% of all HIV/AIDS cases diagnosed that year. Hispanics had the second highest rate, with 26.6 cases per 100,000 people, followed by Native Americans, whites, and Asians with 10.2, 8.2, and 6.5 cases, respectively. A small decrease in rates was observed in Blacks and Hispanics between 2001 and 2004, while rates in Native Americans increased 12.3% in this same time period. Prevalence rates of fully developed AIDS cases follow similar trends.<sup>i</sup>

The significant disparity in HIV and AIDS cases between these different populations is cause for special concern. Many factors contribute to the increased rates of HIV/AIDS among Blacks and Hispanics, including, but not limited to, poverty, limited access to health care, and low educational attainment. Secondary factors that often play a role include social networks, social stigma, racism, and discrimination.<sup>ii</sup>

World AIDS Day, celebrated the first of December each year, is a time to raise awareness of the alarming AIDS and HIV statistics, so people can band together to combat this disease. World AIDS Day in 2007 focused nationally on increasing leadership to advance the response to HIV across all levels and sectors of society.

Schools can play an important leadership role by educating students about behaviors that put them at risk for HIV infection. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reports that in 2005, an estimated 5,172 young people ages 13 to 24 were diagnosed with HIV or AIDS, representing approximately 14% of the persons diagnosed that year.<sup>iii</sup> The current data regarding disparities between different populations magnify the considerable need to promote prevention messages in minority populations. Additionally, young people living with HIV/AIDS, whether they are infected themselves or affected by having an HIV positive family member, face discrimination based on stigma, ignorance, and fear of the disease, which often presents in the school setting.

School officials have an opportunity as well as a responsibility to address HIV/AIDS through education and services. To assist in these efforts, NSBA published *Living with HIV/AIDS: Students Tell Their Stories of Stigma, Courage, and Resilience* in 2006. This book shares the stories of ten students and their families—stories about the experiences, challenges, and opportunities HIV-affected young people and their families have encountered growing up and in school. Suggested throughout the book are important changes to policies and practices that demonstrate sensitivity and support for these students, which will enable them to be successful in school and in life. A “Lessons Learned” section provides the following guidelines for school leaders:

1. Review and update your school district’s HIV/AIDS policy.
2. Respect students’ privacy.
3. Educate teachers and staff.

4. Provide early and continuing HIV/AIDS education to students.
5. Educate parents.
6. Provide counseling support.
7. Maximize students’ access to school services and activities.
8. Make school a safe and supportive place.
9. Protect students from harassment.<sup>iv</sup>

The time is right to review state and district HIV-related school policies and practices. NSBA and other organizations and agencies can provide assistance as needed.

*Living with HIV/AIDS: Students Tell Their Stories of Stigma, Courage, and Resilience* can be downloaded in PDF format on the NSBA School Health Programs Website ([www.nsba.org/schoolhealth](http://www.nsba.org/schoolhealth)) or purchased for US \$1.00 per copy to cover processing from NSBA’s bookstore.

For more information on HIV/AIDS or other school health topics, please visit NSBA’s School Health Programs at [www.nsba.org/schoolhealth](http://www.nsba.org/schoolhealth) and Office of Minority Health at [www.omhrc.gov](http://www.omhrc.gov).

### Definitions:

HIV stands for human immunodeficiency virus—the virus that causes AIDS. HIV is different from most other viruses because it attacks the immune system.

AIDS stands for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. It is the final stage of HIV infection. Having AIDS means that the virus has weakened the immune system to the point at which the body has a difficult time fighting infections. When someone has one or more of these infections and a low number of T cells, he or she has AIDS.<sup>v</sup>

i “Health Disparities in HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, and Tuberculosis in the United States: Issues, Burden, and Response,” National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention, CDC, November 2007.

ii Ibid.

iii “Youth and HIV/AIDS,” U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National HIV Testing Mobilization Campaign, August 2007.

iv Jones, Rebecca. *Living with HIV/AIDS: Students Tell Their Stories of Stigma, Courage, and Resilience*. National School Boards Association, 2006.

v “HIV/AIDS Basic Information,” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

## Introducing Paul H. Chatman

At this time, we would like to introduce the National Black Caucus of School



Board Members to their newly appointed Pacific Region Director, Paul H. Chatman. Paul Chatman, a board member of the Ocean View School District in Ventura County, is the 2007-08 president of the California School Boards Association. Chatman has served on the board of trustees for the Ocean View School District since 1989, with ten years as president. He has been a member of Ventura County Association of School Boards since 1989 and was chairman in 1996. In 1994, Chatman received the California Senate Resolution for Distinguished Community Service; and in 1996, he received the California Teachers Association, Summit Award for Outstanding Statesman and the Gold Award, Outstanding Public Official. Chatman serves on a number of community organizations, such as Rotary Club of Oxnard Sunrise, Oxnard Police Chief Advisory Committee. He lives in Oxnard, CA, and has two grown children, Dennis and Keli, and a granddaughter, Keliyah.

## Chair's Message CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

weight and obese, it is time for school leaders to sit up and take notice. As an effort to address this epidemic, I, along with Carmen Piñeyro, NSBA Hispanic Caucus Secretary have recently taken on a role as co-chair for NSBA's Leadership for Healthy Communities (LHC) project. This initiative seeks to address childhood obesity through school board leadership and policymaking. Through this project, NSBA provides resources and technical assistance for developing policies, promoting school district-community partnerships that support healthy eating and physical activity. As LHC co-chair I hope to raise the visibility of school board leadership around this issue, encourage school board members across the country to advocate for student wellness in their own districts. In this edition of the *Bugle*, we have included two articles on how school board members may begin to develop effective policies and programs to address childhood obesity. Please refer to "The Time is Now for School Leaders to Address Childhood Obesity," by Emily Kujawa, NSBA School Health Programs, and "Opportunities and Strategies for Addressing Childhood Obesity through After-School Programs," by Aaron Dorsey, NSBA Extended-Day Learning Opportunities Program.

### Collaborations

As NBC chair, the Ohio Black Caucus has extended an invitation to present during the Ohio School Boards Association Capital Conference. The conference will be held November 9-12, 2008, in Columbus, OH. I have been asked to present on the topic of black student perceptions of school climate based on my most recent research publications. Approximately 120-150 members of Ohio school boards are expected to attend. I

have also been invited by the New York State School Boards Association to present during their annual convention in New York City on October 16-19, 2008. I will present some of my cross-study findings held by students, teachers, administrators, and parents about urban school climate. Finally, I presented at the NSBA Northeast Region meeting in Saint Thomas, Virgin Islands, on October 4, 2008. I look forward to seeing Caucus members in attendance at these events and hearing your thoughts about the Caucus' progress.

### National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE)

The Caucus board will hold its next meeting on Friday, November 21, 2008, during the National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE) annual conference. The conference will be held on November 18-23, 2008, in Atlanta, Georgia. Specific information regarding the NBC's Board of Directors meeting will be forthcoming. We look forward to seeing you in Atlanta!

Finally, the NBC Board of Directors is currently exploring the possibility of hosting several events in the upcoming year. We will send out additional information in subsequent e-mails and newsletters as details are finalized. As you can see, we are rebuilding and creating an infrastructure that will take our organization well into the future. Thanks, again, for your encouragement and support over the past year.

Enjoy the *Bugle*!

Dr. Brian K. Perkins

# The Time is Now for School Leaders to Address Childhood Obesity

By Emily Kujawa, NSBA School Health Programs



Emily Kujawa

Childhood obesity is a serious public health epidemic. During the past four decades, obesity rates have soared for all age groups. The role of schools in fighting the epidemic is frequently raised during discussions around this issue, and schools are often blamed for making the problem worse. So what are school board members to do? Getting the facts and asking questions are important first steps.

**FACT:** Almost 32% of children and adolescents are overweight or obese—that's more than 23 million youth.<sup>1</sup>

**The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention define "obese" for children as having a BMI at or above the 95th percentile for age, and "overweight" as a BMI at or above the 85th percentile but less than the 95th percentile for age.)**

**FACT:** Overweight children face both immediate and future risk of chronic disease and other problems such as bullying, greater emotional distress, and lower overall quality of life.

**FACT:** Obesity disproportionately affects minority populations. For example, from 2003-2006, 34.9% of black children and 38.0% of Mexican-American children were overweight or obese compared to 30.7% of white children.<sup>1</sup>

This disparity is influenced by a variety of factors including:

- Access to Healthy Food – Healthy foods like fresh fruits and vegetables tend to cost more and are less readily available in low-income neighborhoods. These neighborhoods also have far more fast-food restaurants, corner stores and other establishments that sell foods and beverages

high in fat, sugar, or sodium and low in nutrients.

- Opportunities for Physical Activity—Neighborhoods with high minority populations tend to have few safe parks, playgrounds, and well-maintained sidewalks, which reduce children's ability to walk or bike to school and to spend time playing outdoors safely.
- Screen Time and Exposure to Advertising—Minority children are exposed to more food advertising than their white counterparts

due in part to more time spent watching television. Increased screen time also means that minority children may spend less time being physically active than white children.

- Cultural Factors—There are also differences across racial and ethnic groups on perceptions of ideal body size and social norms regarding weight, which may influence behaviors related to food and physical activity.

Schools can play a critical role in addressing childhood obesity by implementing policies and practices that promote good nutrition and physical activity. While school districts with federally-funded school meals were required to adopt wellness policies by July 1, 2006, there is no enforcement provision except where state agencies monitor policy implementation. So how can you—as a school board member—develop local policies that will have a real impact in

your district? Some good questions to ask before getting started include:

- 1) What information do we already have about the childhood obesity rates in our district, such as body mass index (BMI) data? What do we still need to find out, and how do we collect additional information?
- 2) What opportunities for physical activity are offered to students, and how can these be expanded or improved?
- 3) What must we do to help school food services and vendors improve the nutritional quality of school meals and other foods available at schools?
- 4) Who can we partner with in the community to create school environments that promote good nutrition and physical activity for our students?

NSBA's School Health Programs can help school board members by providing useful information and resources. With a new grant from Leadership for Healthy Communities (LHC), a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, NSBA provides resources and technical assistance for developing policies and promoting school district-community partnerships that support healthy eating and physical activity.

For more information on childhood obesity or other school health topics, visit NSBA's School Health Programs Web site at [www.nsba.org/school-health](http://www.nsba.org/school-health). Please also feel free to contact Emily Kujawa, Project Coordinator, at 703-838-6743 or [ekujawa@nsba.org](mailto:ekujawa@nsba.org) for information on NSBA's LHC project or for the complete list of references for this article.

<sup>1</sup> Ogden CL, Carroll MD, and Flegal KM. High Body Mass Index for Age Among US Children and Adolescents, 2003-2006. *JAMA*. 2008;299(20):2401-2405.

## Opportunities and Strategies for Addressing Childhood Obesity Through After-School Programs

By Aaron Dorsey, NSBA Extended-Day Learning Opportunities and Emily Kujawa, NSBA School Health Programs



Aaron Dorsey



Emily Kujawa

Obesity is one of the nation's most serious health problems affecting children and adults of all races and socio-economic backgrounds. Childhood obesity is a growing epidemic. Since the 1970s, the prevalence of obesity has more than doubled for children ages 6-11 years, and among adolescents ages 12-19 years it has more than tripled. Currently, nearly one third (31.9%) of children ages 2-19 are overweight or obese. Obesity disproportionately affects minority populations. For example, from 2003-2006, 34.9% of African American children and 38.0% of Hispanic children were overweight or obese compared to 30.7% of white children. It is predicted that by 2010 more than 46% of school-age children in the United States will be over-

weight and one in seven will be obese.

The health risks associated with childhood obesity have both immediate and long-term consequences. Many adolescents already exhibit multiple risk factors for heart disease. Incidence of type 2 diabetes has increased tenfold and accounts for over 30% of all new cases of diabetes among adolescents. Overweight children have a 70% chance of being overweight adults—facing a greater risk of heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and several types of cancer. Health experts warn that this generation of children may be the first to have a shorter life expectancy than their parents.

Obesity can also impair school performance in many ways, including health-related absenteeism. Social problems associated with obesity—such as being teased or bullied—as well as loneliness and low esteem can also affect school performance.

Schools can play an important part in the effort to prevent and reduce childhood obesity, especially in the after-school setting. Since children spend a large part of their lives in school, schools have the opportunity to both influence the nutrition children receive on a regular basis and to help establish healthy eating habits. In addition, schools can help children get regular exercise.

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## A Report on Education is a Civil Right

By Lisa Swan, NSBA Caucus Assistant

At the 35th Annual Conference of National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE) in 2007, an official declaration was made for African American students across the nation. "Education is a Civil Right" calls for a formal Black Education Civil Rights Agenda to be created, recognized, supported, and implemented. The rationale behind "Education is a Civil Right" asserts that the education of African American students is one of the "most glaring inequities in our nation today" and should be central to African American's struggle for social and economic justice. The plan outlines four primary focus areas and includes extensive action items covering a range of subjects from teacher training, legislative agendas, local

school policies, community involvement, to curriculum reform.

The plan suggests four focus areas that would target the academic success and outcome of African American children and their families:

1. Implement education policies and practices (including personnel assignments, training, and evaluation) that advance and promote educational excellence for all African American students.
2. Improve high school graduation rates for all African American students.
3. Improve the educational progress and status of African American

male and female students by recognizing and understanding gender-specific needs. A special focus must address the causes of, and solutions to the underachievement of African American male students.

4. Provide support for parents and extended families of underachieving African American students.

On March 27, 2008, the NSBA Board of Directors voted to endorse the initiative, "Education is a Civil Right." For more details on the report, please see NABSE's Website at: <http://www.nabse.org>.



Lisa Swan

## Addressing Childhood Obesity

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After-school programs provide an important opportunity to contribute to the improved health and physical activity of children. These programs offer supportive and safe environments in which children can feel comfortable in trying new physical activities and building new skills. They can also provide meals and snacks that can serve as nutritious examples of healthy eating. Physical activity and nutrition awareness activities can be as varied as the programs that provide them. Such activities can be integrated into a traditional homework and tutoring format, or they can be a part of a broader approach in which classroom learning and after-school activities are part of a coordinated approach to addressing specific health concerns. The U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Secretary of Education, in their 2000 report *Promoting Better Health for Young People Through Physical Activity and Sports*, identified after-school programs as a means to provide opportunities for youth to be physically active and called for support to enable after-school programs to do so.

Current research demonstrates a link between after-school participation and a decrease in obesity. A report from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (Administration for Children & Families), *Promoting*

*Physical Activity and Healthy Nutrition in Afterschool Settings: Strategies for Program Leaders and Policymakers*, outlines the contributions after-school programs can make to addressing childhood obesity. The report highlights successful after-school programs that incorporate nutrition and physical activity into their programming. For example, the Edible Schoolyard at Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School in Berkeley, California, has established a school garden and cooking classes that have increased students' interest in and understanding of healthy food preparation.

Additional reports and studies have shown that children participating in after-school programs are less likely to be obese, show increased physical activity, and demonstrate improved academic achievement.

To help assist schools and program leaders in addressing this issue, organizations such as Action for Healthy Kids and the Alliance for a Healthier Generation have developed resources and tools for developing quality after-school programs that involve physical activity and nutrition awareness.

While after-school programs can not single-handedly reverse health and cultural trends, they are an ideal venue for contributing to the

improved health and physical activity of children.

Since 2001, the National School Boards Association has continued to promote the importance of these programs by building the capacity of school boards and raising awareness of their academic, social, and health benefits for all students. Through the Extended-Day Learning Opportunities (or "EDLO") program, NSBA is helping state school boards associations and local school boards around the country provide leadership and establish collaborations to support after-school and summer programs that promote student success and community engagement.

For additional information on resources to support student wellness, please visit the following:

Action for Healthy Kids:  
[www.actionforhealthykids.org](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org)

Alliance for a Healthier Generation:  
[www.healthiergeneration.org](http://www.healthiergeneration.org)

U. S. Department of Health & Human Services (Administration for Children & Families):  
[www.nccic.org/afterschool](http://www.nccic.org/afterschool)

### Got a New E-mail?

**The board strives to continue to improve communication with our membership. E-mail has become one of the primary means for the Caucus to quickly distribute information to its members. Over the next year we plan on expanding our e-mail communication with frequent updates detailing news articles and information about upcoming programs or events. If you have recently changed or are unsure if we have your e-mail address on file, please contact us at [Black\\_Caucus@nsba.org](mailto:Black_Caucus@nsba.org).**

## The Educational Imperative in the 2008 Election

By Dr. Brian K. Perkins



Dr. Brian K. Perkins

It has been nearly two years since Bill Gates, Eli Broad, and others pledged 100 million dollars to make education the number one issue in the 2008 presidential campaign. Their goal was to spark "serious nationwide debate on education reform" where every presidential candidate would address some educational priorities ([www.edin08.com](http://www.edin08.com)); however, an economy near recession and the war in Iraq has derailed the discourse and education barely makes the top ten concerns among voters this year.

A quick review of Senator McCain's campaign website makes it clear that his policy agenda emphasizes defense and a host of other domestic policy issues, not including education. McCain believes that competition will result in innovative programs and experiences for children. Obama's website reveals substantially more attention to education; however, his attention to local and sometimes even building level decisions strike a peculiar chord, from a national policy perspective, as not only unusual but unnecessary.

**Communities need a myriad of choices and the technical assistance to implement the most relevant strategies to their educational needs. What we need from our President is a commitment to provide the infrastructure that supports quality education in a variety of contexts.**

Practitioners and researchers have identified many strategies and programs that transform failing education systems. I have come to the conclusion that successful educational reform depends on three things: context, context, and context. The one-size-fits-all approach is not helpful particularly in policy and curriculum discussions. Communities need a myriad of choices and the technical assistance to implement the most relevant strategies to their educational needs. What we need from our President is a commitment to provide the infrastructure that supports quality education in a variety of contexts. Below I submit three focus areas

that I believe can radically begin the transformation of our education system.

First, we should provide a quality pre-school experience for each child. Obama offers a detailed commitment to this area while McCain's website is silent. Research supports the benefits of early childhood education. With appropriate attention to diet, cognitive, and social development in the early months and years, students demonstrate significant academic gains throughout their school experience. The definition of a quality pre-school experience also depends upon the context. Equity is paramount in this initiative. That is, if the community is historically underserved and disadvantaged, it will require more resources (human and fiscal).

Second, we should work to reduce class sizes in our schools. There is compelling evidence that reducing class size, especially in the early grades, has a significant positive effect on academic achievement. Again, McCain's website does not address any specific initiatives,

but Obama discusses in some detail about ways to achieve this. Reducing class size is particularly challenging because it has several components that will need to be addressed. In some places, it will involve substantial construction projects to accommodate the number of new classrooms. Funding for new school buildings will need to be expanded. Reducing class size will also require additional new teachers. In what is already a teacher shortage, we will need to restructure teacher preparation to include the best and brightest from a variety of fields, particularly second career individuals in the fields of math and science. This will likely

involve funding for alternative teacher preparation programs and incentives to make teacher salaries more competitive.

Finally, we need to restructure the No Child Left Behind Act. Obama has some general plans for a restructure of NCLB, but does not go far enough. Again, McCain encourages competition and "choice." NCLB raised student achievement to the national stage, but did not place equal emphasis on providing the resources to address achievement issues. What has resulted is a proliferation of charter schools, which is not the answer for our entire educational system. I value school choice. I believe that charter schools can play a role in providing quality education to our nation's children. The school choice I value is one where the choices are among high achieving schools. The role that charter schools can play is not one of simple competition rather one of diversity. They can provide a specific program of study or concentration that may not offered in traditional school settings. This is the definition of choice we need. NCLB has a range of consequences and solutions with funding attached should schools fail. We need a developmental approach where schools are provided with funding upfront to successfully implement programs and initiatives that have a proven track record.

The full-funding of IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act) and NCLB would support the fiscal requirements outlined in the aforementioned priorities. IDEA was implemented as a requirement to states with a promise of 40% funding. Today, many states receive as little as 9% funding towards the requirements of IDEA. NCLB has many mandated components that expand spending at the state level. Its promise of no unfunded mandate has

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## NBC Black Student Achievement Committee Report

Members of the National Black Caucus Black Student Achievement Committee met in Orlando, FL, at the NSBA Annual Conference. After a discussion of the educational needs of African American youth, it was decided to establish strategies in the areas of major impact for our youth. The strategic impact areas identified are:

- Identification and distribution of successful 'Best Practices' for replication
- Parental Education and Involvement
- Community Engagement Activities
- Identify Barriers through Research and Experience
- Youth Involvement and Engagement
- Development of Programs to "Grow African American Teachers & Administrators"
- Identify Network Resources for Black Student Achievement
- Affect of Staff on Black Student Achievement

Each member of the committee has been researching their assigned area and will be reporting back to the committee on the results of their research. It has been discovered that there is a plethora of material and research on the achievement gap and the causes, but a lack of information on successful programs with positive results.

### Parental Education and Involvement

Under parental education and involvement, concerns persist

regarding the ability of parents to assist their child(ren) in course selections throughout most districts. Questions to be answered and solved through parent education activities are: How many parents have been adequately informed in regards to the type of classes that their sons/daughters should be taking to ensure successful college preparation? How many parents fully understand the impact of their sons/daughters failure to enroll in the advanced middle school math, science, and foreign language? How many parents clearly understand the criteria for gifted and talented identification or honors and AP course enrollment at the high school level? These are only a few of the questions that need to be addressed under the parental education and involvement strategic area.

Research literature, under separate cover, has been discovered that identifies barriers to Black Student Achievement. There is a need for further investigation of this literature to provide summaries for NBC members. The summaries will provide an assessment of the literature to allow the member to determine the literature that provides suitable information for their particular situation.

Community youth programs identified, Youth UpRising, Alameda County in East Oakland, CA; Village Project, Ventura County, Oxnard, CA; Village Nation, Cleveland High School, Los Angeles County; and Youth Development and Capacity Building (YDACB), Dacula, and Atlanta, GA and Washington, D.C.; The Paul Robeson Scholar Athlete Summit in Jacksonville, Duval County, Florida that leverages athletic involvement to increase academic excellence; and Sunflower (Miss.) Freedom Project to name a

few have potential for providing community, parents, churches, and school partnerships to help African American students to close the achievement gap. The following list provides a cursory view of some summer programs being offered collaboratively by community agencies and schools:

- Summer Institute of Robotics
- Summer Institute in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Research
- Stems Up Technology Camp
- Summer Blast Technology Camps

As the Black Student Achievement Committee continues researching and investigating options for assisting African American youth, we will inform the membership and provide information for their perusal. It is the goal of the committee to garner information for each strategic target and then feature one target each quarter or every other month in a NBC Black Student Achievement Bulletin or through the NBC *Bugle* to the membership.

The committee welcomes any information members may have that we can share.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dr. Irene G. Pinkard, Co-Chair,  
NBC Chair-Elect



*Dr. Irene Pinkard*

## NBC Federal Relations Committee Report

The following is the position statement for the Federal Relations Committee. This is a dynamic statement subject to revision as we continue our work.

The Federal Relations Committee of the National Black Caucus of School Board Members has accepted the charge to establish a coalition with several organizations that recognizes the urgency to coalesce and demand the implementation of effective strategies that produce dramatic improvements in the achievement level of *all* African American students. This success will translate into reducing the drop-out rate and the disproportionate number of students referred to as Special Education.

The organizations with which we are forming relationships have a vested interest (as does the nation as a whole) in the successful education of African American students in our public schools and will work to produce outcomes that ensure (not only improve) graduation rates, but produce students equipped to pursue higher education.

We have initiated contact with the National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE) in an effort to work

to effectuate their strategic education initiative: "Education is a Civil Right."

We are working with our congressional representatives across the central region to build support for more specific initiatives directed at the success of African American students.

Working primarily with our chair, Dr. Brian Perkins, we are pursuing avenues with NSBA, which specifically address the mis-education of African American students and those factors which impact and facilitate unacceptable achievement rates and high school graduation rates.

We are pursuing efforts to work with the Congressional Black Caucus in an effort to use their considerable influence to have a greater impact on the urgency of addressing effective teaching and learning of African American students.

ESEA Reauthorization Recommendations:

- Provide incentives to Master Teachers to teach in our cities most challenged schools.
- Provide incentives for teachers who have proven language arts/reading



Mary Blackmon



Katie Booker

skills to teach in our early elementary grades.

- Provide incentives for college graduates to commit to a set number of years to teach in schools with the greatest academic needs.
- Provide ongoing professional development, team teaching, and mentoring for new teachers.
- Hold schools/districts accountable for implementing evaluation tools that ensure improved results each year.
- Give recognition to schools that have made significant academic progress and require benchmarks for continued improvement

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Blackmon, Co-Chair,  
NBC Central Region Director

Katie Booker, Co-Chair,  
NBC Secretary-Treasurer

## NBC Membership Committee Report

The National Black Caucus of School Board Members (NBC) Membership Committee has accepted the charge of maintaining and increasing the Caucus membership. The Committee held two conference calls prior to Annual Conference, where we agreed to launch an informational campaign designed to inform board members about the Caucus' services. This letter emphasized the key mission of the Caucus as well as our status as a group open to *all* school board members and educators (regardless of race and ethnicity) interested in meeting and addressing the educational needs of African American students. We sent letters to approximately 150 school board members and board

chairs in the states of Connecticut, Indiana, and Tennessee.

At Annual Conference, the Membership Committee met to discuss the following goals for the 2008-2009 fiscal year:

- Increase membership by 50%.
- Improve relationships with local board members.
- Improve Caucus image.
- Coordinate a membership drive for Annual Conference.
- Work with vendors to develop an incentive program for new members (membership cards, gift bags, t-shirt).

- Conduct follow up conference calls.

In addition to our efforts at Annual Conference, the Membership Committee has set out to recruit new members at NSBA's regional meetings. For example, the NBC Membership Committee held an open session at the Southern Region meeting on July 22, 2008, in New Orleans, LA. If you would like to be a representative of the National Black Caucus at your local meetings, please contact us at [Black\\_Caucus@nsba.org](mailto:Black_Caucus@nsba.org). We will work with you to coordinate promotional materials.



Gwendolyn Williams

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## NBC Policies and Resolutions Committee

Following our meeting of August 23-25, 2007, in Alexandria, VA, the Committee reviewed the existing Policies and Resolutions enacted by NSBA, as well as its Constitution & Bylaws, to prepare to undertake the Committee's assignment of advising the Caucus Board of Directors on proposed policies and resolutions or amendments to the NSBA Policies and Resolutions Committee for the approaching year. The NSBA Policies and Resolutions Committee meets in January of each year. Proposed policies and resolutions or amendments must be submitted to that committee on November 20 of each year. Proposed resolutions when enacted by a majority vote of the NSBA Delegate Assembly are in effect for one year; however, proposed policies or amendments, as well as constitutional changes, require a two-thirds vote and remain in effect until changed.

In preparation for our Annual Meeting in Orlando, FL, during March 28 to April 1, 2008, our committee reviewed the proposed policies and resolutions that were considered by the NSBA Policies and Resolutions Committee and to be voted upon by the Delegate Assembly. Our committee reported to the Board of Directors at its meeting on March 28, 2008 and our

Membership at the Business Meeting on March 31, 2008 that we were in agreement with the five proposed amendments to the NSBA Constitution, items 1-1 through 1-17 of the proposals on policies or amendments and items 2-1 through 2-34 of the proposed resolutions. We were particularly pleased with CUBE's resolution, being item 2-28 of "Racial Equity and Educational Benefits of a Diverse Learning Climate."

It is the belief of the committee that there is no greater goal which affects the future of our nation and the world, than the duty to prepare our 50 million public school students to face this millennium and beyond, equipped with the skills to perform in a very high-tech, economically competitive employment place, which requires that we structure our organizations and enact appropriate policies to achieve our goals and deliver the dream to our children.

Accordingly, the committee is recommending the following course of action:

1. That we obtain input from the Caucus Board of any proposals on policies and resolutions that it would like to be considered for enactment, to be submitted by our

next meeting of August 22-23, 2008.

2. That we obtain input from the Caucus membership of any proposals on policies and resolutions that it would like to be considered for enactment, to be submitted by September 30, 2008.
3. That the committee advise the Caucus Board of the committee's findings and any recommended proposals by October 30, 2008, which may be submitted to the NSBA Policies and Resolutions Committee, in time to meet the November submission date.
4. That the committee report to the Caucus Board of the committee's final submissions during its November 2008, meeting in Atlanta, GA.
5. That the Committee has representation at the FRN and the NSBA Policies and Resolutions Committee meetings to advocate on the proposed items.

Respectfully Submitted,  
George E. Evans, Esq., Co-Chair,  
NBC Northeast Region Director



George E. Evans

## NBC Membership Committee Report

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Lastly, the Membership Committee is dedicated not only to recruiting new members, but fostering better communication between Caucus members. We are working to gather updated e-mail addresses for all members. With a more accurate database, we can send more frequent updates detailing news articles and information about upcoming programs or events. If you have recently changed or are unsure if we have your e-mail address on file, please contact us at [Black\\_Caucus@nsba.org](mailto:Black_Caucus@nsba.org).

Respectfully Submitted,  
Gwendolyn Williams, Co-Chair,  
NBC Southern Region Director

## The Educational Imperative in the 2008 Election

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not been honored by Congress nor supported in the courts. In short, the support required is already in place. If these supports are fully initiated, states will have the resources required to implement the programs and initiatives that we know make a difference.


Thus far, education has played an insignificant role in the discourse on domestic policy issues for the next administration. It is a matter of national security, prosperity, and opportunity in the global community. Both candidates need to place more attention on education and make it a priority for the first one hundred days of 2009. We

need strong leadership in this area in order to insure that our educational system resumes its place among the world's best. Without a world class educational system we cannot expect to maintain a world class economy. It's not only the right thing to do but it is in our best interest to do so. Hopefully, either Mr. Obama or Mr. McCain will recognize our best interests and respond accordingly.




The first version of this article appeared in Focus magazine produced by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, in October of 2008 (Vol. 36/3).

Dr. Brian K. Perkins is Faculty-Columbia University Teachers College in the Department of Organization and Leadership.


## October 2008

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	 13	14	15	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b>	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	31	

## November 2008

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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2	3	 4	5	6	7	8
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16	17	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
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## December 2008

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	 25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## Schedule of Events

- October 3-5, 2008**  
 NSBA Northeast Region Meeting  
*St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands*
  - October 16-19, 2008**  
 New York State School Boards Association Annual Convention  
*New York, New York*
  - October 28-30, 2008**  
 NSBA T+L Conference  
*Seattle, Washington*
  - November 9-12, 2008**  
 Ohio School Boards Association Capital Conference  
*Columbus, Ohio*
  - November 18-23, 2008**  
 NABSE Annual Conference  
*Atlanta, Georgia*
  - December 6-8, 2008**  
 NSBA Pacific Region (Winter) Meeting  
*San Diego, California*
-  **HOLIDAYS**
- November 4, 2008**  
 Election Day
  - November 11, 2008**  
 Veterans Day
  - November 27, 2008**  
 Thanksgiving Day
  - December 25, 2008**  
 Christmas Day