

January 15, 2013

Dear ASHA Member:

As we enter a new year filled with hope and renewed vision, the words of Jim Collins seem appropriate:

*I don't know where we should take this company, but I do know that if I start with the right people, ask them the right questions, and engage them in vigorous debate, we will find a way to make this company great.*

ASHA is a unique organization with a diverse membership. This diversity is its strength. ASHA has a long-standing commitment to coordinated school health and the players that make that work in schools. The ASHA Board of Directors believes that we have the right people to move the organization forward—our members are dedicated to the field and committed to improving health and academic success for every child. We also believe that we have begun a very important dialogue with our members about the future of this organization.

ASHA is changing. The process began in 2011 with the move from Ohio to Bethesda, MD. Becoming a Beltway player is difficult and the ASHA Board of Directors adopted an ambitious Strategic Plan to guide the work of the organization. The Board hired Dr. Stephen Conley as Executive Director and after two years at the helm, Dr. Conley left ASHA to return to his home in southern Virginia.

We have learned much in our two years in Bethesda. ASHA is currently seeking a “**transitional leader**”—an individual with experience as a CEO in the non-profit sector. Transitional leaders help identify organizational strengths and barriers to growth and sustainability and make recommendations to the Board of Directors. Transitional leaders are experts in organizational management and may not have school health content expertise; rather, these individuals draw on their leadership experiences in diverse fields such as law, finance, and business. The ASHA Board is confident that transitional leadership will lay the foundation for a stronger, more focused organization that is member-focused, influential, and fiscally responsible. This will not, in any way, change ASHA’s commitment to coordinated school health.

In addition to this national search, the Board continues to focus on ASHA’s **organizational structure**. Over the last year, ASHA has conducted surveys, held focus groups, and reviewed comments and suggestions. Ty Oehrtman, chair of the Structure and Governance Committee, summarized your ideas in “Here’s What We’ve Heard” which can be accessed at: <http://www.ashaweb.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageID=3513>. We are confident that the work of

the transitional leader and this committee will come together in ways that will benefit you as a member and will help create a more focused, responsive and efficient organization. We hope that you will continue to send us your thoughts about possible changes to ASHA's structure.

Speaking of member services, four ASHA members (Darrel Lang, Cyndy Symons, Marge Cole, and Desiree Voorhies) have agreed to serve on an ad hoc committee on **Membership and Member Services**. Over the next few months, they will analyze member information, examine existing member services, and collect other data. ASHA is committed to being more member-focused and we need to hear from you! If a member of this committee calls or emails, please take the time to respond. We need and value your input!

The **Advocacy Committee** has been hard at work fine-tuning the *ASHA Core Beliefs in Action*, a new document that can be used with legislators, partners, and funders. Currently, the committee is developing a "roll-out" plan which may include a web-based tool kit and webinars. Stay tuned! The committee is also reviewing resolutions to ensure that outdated ones are removed or updated. The advocacy page on the ASHA website has also been updated.

In 2012, ASHA entered into the world of **social media** and we will continue to develop new ways to communicate with our members. The Pulse, formerly the organization's newsletter, was converted to a blog. The Board of Directors opted to suspend production of the blog and the ASHA Facebook page for now. Go to the **ASHA website** [www.ashaweb.org](http://www.ashaweb.org) for updated information on ASHA activities.

ASHA continues to provide its members with **webinars** on timely topics such as asthma, sex education, parent engagement, and bullying. Thanks to our partnership with United Healthcare, two webinars focused on childhood obesity will be held in **spring 2013**. Watch the ASHA website and your inbox for the dates and times.

Julie Greenfield, Ashley Dowling, and Lori Lawrence, ASHA's "home team," are hard at work planning the 2013 conference in **Myrtle Beach**. Mark your calendar now for **October 9-12, 2013** and plan to join us. This is a great location for a bit of "R&R" and southern hospitality. Bring the family and maybe even your golf clubs—a little down time is a good thing! This year's theme, "**Charting a New Course for School Health**," is appropriate for the organization and the field. The call for **conference proposals** is available on the ASHA website at: <http://www.ashaweb.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageID=3508>. We encourage you to submit a proposal and share your experiences, ideas, and strategies. The deadline for submissions is **March 15, 2013**.

I am also pleased to announce that **Dr. Gene R. Carter** will be Thursday's keynote speaker in Myrtle Beach. Dr. Carter is the Executive Director and CEO of ASCD, the global education leadership association dedicated to supporting the success of each learner. A veteran educator with experience as a private and public school teacher, public school administrator, superintendent of schools and university professor, Dr. Carter has lead ASCD since 1992. We

are honored that he has agreed to share his time with ASHA's members. For more information on Dr. Carter and ASCD's Whole Child initiative, please go to <http://www.ascd.org/whole-child.aspx>.

Finally, on behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for continuing to make ASHA your professional home. Times are tough and we know there are many professional organizations that seek your membership dues. Thanks so much for your continuing support and dedication to the field of school health.

In the months to come, check out the ASHA website ([www.ashaweb.org](http://www.ashaweb.org)) for news and updates. Don't hesitate to contact us with an idea or suggestion. You can always email the office at [info@ashaweb.org](mailto:info@ashaweb.org) or you email me directly at [lapd8082@gmail.com](mailto:lapd8082@gmail.com). Change is hard but as Jim Collins says, we will find a way to make ASHA great!

Yours in Good Health,

*Linda*

Linda Morse, RN, MA, CHES, FASHA  
President, 2012-2014