

# The Value of Service: LOOKING AHEAD

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**I**t with distinct pleasure that I introduce myself to the family of Indiana school board members that I haven't met, yet. I am certain that over the years I have met hundreds of you (perhaps thousands, if I count everyone that Bill Wilson has introduced me to), but to those whom I haven't had the pleasure of meeting yet, I sincerely hope that I have the chance to personally thank each and every one of you for your dedicated service to your local communities. A free, public education for all is the noblest and finest invention of American society. It is the glue that binds our society together, as the common experience that nearly all of us partake in and share. The manner in which we run our school systems makes them responsive to the needs and desires of the communities they serve, an amazing demonstration of democracy at work. It is one of the highest honors of my life to have been selected to serve as your leader and our collective spokesperson for the coming term.

When people consider the features associated with sound leadership, the foremost general quality desired is always "character." Now, no one polled can actually give you a solid or consistent definition of what "good character" is, but as someone freshly elevated to this leadership position, I'll give it a good ole' Boilermaker try (I probably should mention early on that I bleed Black and Gold and have a fairly large Purdue necktie collection at home). I believe the

character that people seek for leadership roles is a confidence that a specific individual will react in a positive, ethical, and moral manner to whatever circumstances arise in the commission of their duties, given the facts and information available to them at the time.

There are several important elements to this statement. First, it's a belief held by others about you. To continue being a leader, you have to prove yourself worthy of that trust. It's knowing that you will react in the best way possible in a specific situation and not simply choose an expedient alternative, just to reduce some short-term pressure or pain point. That's a long term, decision-after-decision scorecard kept on you. Leaders must be particularly vigilant about this point. One simple misstep can destroy years of solid work and a well-earned reputation. Finally, character is about making decisions in an environment of informed, reasoned consideration and not in ignorance or by emotion. It means setting aside "gut" reactions and thinking logically about things. Character means doing the hard work and digging for the knowledge that you need to do your job. A leader cannot passively sit and wait for answers. Sometimes you may not dig up all the information that you might desire, but you will never know unless you've actually done the spadework yourself.

In summary, I don't think that I'd be too far off if I stated that essentially, character is

personified by most of the school board members that I know. We are where we are, doing what we do, because it needs to be done right. We do this not for us, but for kids. Everyone's kids! On my local Lafayette board, that statement is our mantra. We don't have crystal balls, and we can't guess the next nonsensical governmental mandate. However, we can take each day as it comes and try to do the very best we can for our children.

We have to remember, that without knowing the future, we work for the future. Public education is central to the American dream and the core of what we stand for as a society. It's certainly deep within my belief system and in my blood. All four of my grandparents were public school teachers that gave their professional lives to the betterment of the school children of this state. Every time I walk into one of our buildings, I know beyond any shadow of a doubt that the work we do is honorable and important, and I am proud to do my part.

I am here to help you. The Indiana School Board Association is your organization, here to serve you, the school board members

of Indiana. Our mission is to be the preeminent voice for locally controlled public education in the state of Indiana. Our directors are school board members from across the state, and they, along with my fellow officers, are dedicated to meeting your special needs as school board members. Our executive director and staff are among the finest in the country, and our entire team is dedicated to seeing that we have the best legal representation, lobbying in the statehouse, policy development, regulatory interaction, and professional development for our membership possible.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions. As I have always told my own children and I constantly tell my college students, I expect nothing less than the very best, and that includes the standard that I set for myself and our organization. As Abraham Lincoln stated in one of my favorite quotes, "I've only tried to do the best I could each and every day." I give you my solemn promise to provide my very best work for you, my fellow Indiana school board members, and for the public school children of this state. 🇺🇸



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INDIANA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANAGEMENT SERVICES

**ISBA IS EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE OUR COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANAGEMENT SERVICES (CPMS).** CPMS is a more robust service beyond the policy advisories from ISBA that will be continued for all members.

Policy-making is a top priority of any school board's governance responsibility. The policies put in place should comply with current Indiana and federal laws and reflect the educational values of the school corporation and the community.

ISBA is your resource for Indiana public school policy development and management. Through a yearly subscription, ISBA's legal team can provide your school corporation with:

- POLICY EVALUATION, CUSTOMIZATION, & MANUAL CODING**  
Review and evaluation of your current policies, full customization of policies to ensure your school corporation meets required legal mandates, and receive the ISBA policy code, tables of content, and index for organizing your local policy manual.
- FOCUSED CONSULTATION**  
Quarterly Zoom video conferencing meetings to talk with corporation representatives about the CPMS Quarterly Report.
- QUARTERLY POLICY UPDATES REPORT**  
Receive in depth information on policy topics and sample policies on individual topics through the Quarterly Report.
- SAMPLE POLICIES AND POLICY LISTS**  
Receive the Required policy list and sample policies along with the Essential and Discretionary policy lists as well.
- POLICY TRAINING**  
Ensure your board and administrators are knowledgeable on the current policies with policy training sessions.

LEARN MORE ABOUT CPMS ON OUR WEBSITE AT: <https://www.iisba-ind.org/cpms.html>  
OR E-MAIL: [CPMS@isba-ind.org](mailto:CPMS@isba-ind.org)

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**BoardDocs can:**

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- Support locally defined policy categories, code numbers, and policy titles
- Minimize problems with version control of draft and final policies
- Include robust word-processing, tracking changes, and editing/layout capabilities
- Allow role-specific access (e.g., editing versus view only)
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The BoardDocs PL is for groups that do not already have an online policy management system in place or are looking for a better, more cost-effective system. Districts that subscribe to BoardDocs LT or BoardDocs Pro Meeting Management Systems have all of the functionality of the policy feature built in!





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