



MIKE BARRAGAN

Assistant Superintendent,
Auxiliary Services
Glendale Elementary School District 40
Glendale, AZ



2021 Candidate for 2022 Board of Directors
**ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS
OFFICIALS INTERNATIONAL**

BIOGRAPHY

Mike Barragan is the assistant superintendent of finance and auxiliary services for the Glendale Elementary School District in Arizona, a position he has held since 2013. Prior to joining GESD, he worked for the Tolleson Union High School District as the finance director, and as a budget analyst for the Arizona Department of Education in the school finance division. His passion for school finance began while being involved with charter schools in the late 1990s. A former president of the Arizona Association of School Business Officials (AASBO), Barragan was elected to serve on the executive board in 2012. In 2017, he was acknowledged by his peers and received the AASBO member of the year award for his contributions to the organization. He has served on the Valley Schools Management Group since November 2017. Valley Schools is a nonprofit entity that provides professional management of insurance pools and combines governmental employers into larger groups to increase purchasing power.

VISION STATEMENT

To serve as a member of the Association of School Business Officials International Board of Directors where my experience in leadership, school finance, and public education policy may be utilized to maximize the organization goals and foster an environment where all students can thrive and succeed.

CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

The vast inequities in education were highlighted during the pandemic, as many students in underserved areas did not have the resources to learn remotely. How can ASBO International help close the learning gap and support accelerated learning recovery?

ASBOI can help close the learning gap and support accelerated learning recovery by:

1. Recognizing that students face different situation/challenges and therefore require specific and relevant solutions based on those unique situation/challenges.
2. Providing empirical data at the national and state levels in a manner that illustrates the various needs of our students, including, but not limited to socio-economic, race and gender data.
3. Consistently advocating on behalf of our students at the federal level.

As an example, the pandemic highlighted the internet accessibility challenges schools and students in low income and rural areas faced. These areas frequently lack robust infrastructure that can support quality distance learning/online instruction. Students in low income and rural areas should not be at an academic disadvantage because of where they live or what their family income level is.

ASBOI could have a two-step approach to address this issue. We should advocate and ask policy makers at the federal level to bring the various stakeholders such as the business community, specifically, utility companies, cellular

phone providers and regulators to the table. Collectively, stakeholders should begin to address infrastructure inequities and design a robust infrastructure that supports rural and low-income communities. State affiliates, with the support of ASBOI (to include data and messaging strategies) would advocate in the same manner, though at the state level, to achieve the same result(s).

This concept is not limited to the example above but can be applied to highlight the needs of students in poverty, the financial disparities by district because of property values/state funding formulas or the needs of our special education students, etc. As President Reagan said, "Education is like a diamond with many facets." It is those many facets that we need to ensure we don't lose sight of when making education policy and it is those many facets that are the names and faces of amazing children throughout the world. Regardless of their situation, students have the ability to learn, achieve and be proficient. It is our responsibility to foster an environment where our schools are receiving the additional resources to close the achievement gap and accelerate learning for all students.

What needs do school business officials have now and what skills will they need in the next 5-10 years that ASBO International should focus on?

The immediate need of school business officials is having a larger pool of a quality workforce in order to maintain continuity and sustainability in the field. In the next five to ten years, ASBOI should focus on assisting its affiliates with accelerating the development of the next "school business official leaders of tomorrow" to include:

1. Leadership and effective management skills
2. Understanding of the legislative process and effective communication skills
3. Strong technical skills, including information technology, accounting, communication, etc.

With a goal of continuing to meet the needs of all our members, what can ASBO International do to encourage racial diversity on the board, on committees, in our membership, and in our cadre of professional development presenters?

As I reflected on this question, it reminded me of what I love about the community Jill and I have raised Mikey and Reagan in; Laveen is about 15 minutes southwest of Phoenix.

In Laveen you will find, equestrian trails, farms, cotton fields, dairy farms and farmer markets. Homes are on one to two acre lots but you will also see new home construction and retail. Laveen has both young and older generations of families and is very racially diverse. As a community, we realize that all cultures have something to offer, we treat each other with respect and are accepting of each other. Simply put, Laveen is a welcoming community, no matter your skin color, background or socio-economic situation.

I have found ASBOI to be welcoming, too. Individuals like Randy Evans, Mark Pepera, Brenda Burkett, Ron McCulley, Brian Mee, Tom Wohlleber, Clair Hertz and the current board (to name a few) have left an impression that is encouraging and leaves me with the desire to be part of ASBOI. Like you and the rest of the individuals mentioned, I believe I can be welcoming and have something to offer. My experiences and journey as a school business official, which includes successes and failures, help to ensure that I can share what I've learned with others who aspire to lead in their districts. It is my firm belief that to attract non-engaged members or potential members, we must continue to be welcoming to everyone from all walks of life. This continues to be our best, and most authentic effort to encourage the diversity that will make us better and successful in achieving incredible things for students across the world.