



2022 Candidate for 2023 Board of Directors
**ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS
OFFICIALS INTERNATIONAL**

MELISSA FETTKETHER

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BIOGRAPHY

Melissa Fettkether is a state-licensed school business official at the Postville Community School District in Postville, Iowa. An SBO since 2006, she has worked in three districts, two simultaneously. Fettkether has been a member of ASBO International since 2008 and has served on various ASBO International committees since 2009. Currently she serves as a focus area liaison for the Education Committee and as the vice chair of the Bylaws Committee. She has presented at several ASBO International conferences, participated as a panelist for roundtable discussions, and contributed to SBA. She was the recipient of the Iowa Professional Leadership Award in 2014, served Iowa ASBO as a board member, and is an Iowa ASBO past president (2016–2017). She is a nationally registered EMT and serves as the service director of her community's volunteer EMS department.

VISION STATEMENT

ASBO International's current vision is to be globally recognized, respected, and consulted as the leading authority in the school business profession. The organization should continue to strive to achieve this vision and constantly make strides to improve upon it. ASBO International currently provides countless services and benefits to the business professional. By monitoring the needs of its current members and determining the best pathways and services that tailor to those specific needs, ASBO International can continue to be known as the leading authority in the school business profession.

CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

Why do you want to be a board member of ASBO International?

When I started my first role as a school business official in 2006, I received one day of training and communication opportunity with the outgoing SBO. During that one day, she informed me that I was making a terrible decision by taking on the role of the SBO and that I "should walk away—no, run," as fast as I could. While the thought crossed my mind (though it wasn't really a viable option at that point), I chose not to walk away, making what was ultimately a fateful decision, as it was there, I discovered my passion as an SBO. Granted, it wasn't an easy endeavor to learn "how to be an SBO," but the Iowa Association of School Business Officials (IASBO)—who knew what all the acronyms stood for that early on in my career?—and eventually ASBO International both became my saving grace. Working in a very small district, where it is a two-person office, there are a lot of things you are responsible for but not a lot of time to truly dig as deeply as needed into many of those things.

The ASBO International organization is there to support us with access to many of the answers that we seek out. Since the beginning of my career as an SBO, they have provided me with the information, support, and networking I require to be successful in this constantly changing role. I would like the opportunity to serve as an ASBO International board member so that I can give back to the great members who have supported and inspired me, as well as provide support for those members just getting started, so they can be successful in their careers as school business officials and hopefully find their passion for the role.

Given the permanent economic changes around the world, including decreased funding for schools, what do you see as the most important areas on which school business officials should be focusing? How does ASBO International help SBOs in that endeavor?

With decreasing funding and increasing costs, school business officials should focus on making student-data-driven decisions. An SBO, along with the administrative team, should work to identify key district goals and determine how best to focus district funds to meet those goals. An SBO needs to make the tough decisions that support what is best for the students and have the data and information for justification available. Transparency and communication are vital, with involvement of all stakeholders for each individual district. While all stakeholders may not be involved in the final decisions, the understanding that comes with the knowledge of why decisions are being made helps with community buy-in. Most importantly, every dollar should be spent with the best interests of the students at the forefront.

ASBO International is committed to K-12 educational funding and advocates legislatively for what is best for students to provide them a quality education. It provides regular updates on the current legislation to help with understanding and preparing for future changes. ASBO International provides a wonderful library of tool kits to help with financial planning, budgeting, and communicating financial information. Take advantage of the Global School Business Network that is offered by ASBO International. Reach out to colleagues and strategic partners for ideas, opportunities, input, and advice.

If you are elected to the Board of Directors position, you will have an opportunity to speak to many members and groups. What would you tell them about ASBO International that would encourage individuals to join and inspire those who are members to become more involved?

ASBO International is one of the greatest organizations in existence! I am not aware of any other organization or group of colleagues that is so supportive. School business officials truly want one another to succeed and excel in their roles. Meeting new people, forming lifelong relationships, sharing your work struggles with those who “get it,” and having access to a vast array of resources are just a few benefits of membership.

There are so many options available for becoming involved in the ASBO International organization and its affiliates. Start with something small. For example, share your expertise on the Global School Business Network, attend an ASBO International conference or event, consider volunteering to serve on a committee. Use the association to meet others who are giving back to their profession, as they are the most inspiring of all. Volunteering time and sharing knowledge both provide so many rewarding opportunities and help make your career more meaningful. Doing so also provides you with the prospect of achieving great personal growth!