

ALASBO

News Link...



A newsletter publication of Alaska Association of School Business Officials

ALASBO News Link
is published for the members of the Alaska
Association of School Business Officials
and its affiliate members.

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*Would you like to receive this newsletter in print,
rather than by e-mail? Send a message to Amy
Lujan at the above address..*

President's Message

Karen Goodwin, Northwest Arctic

Time's up!

Not only does time go by faster as you get older, but time passes by at warp speeds when you have a deadline such as the 2009 ALASBO conference pending.

It is bittersweet - while the work put into the conference is exhausting, it is a moment to be cherished as the great minds of ALASBO have worked together to create one of the best opportunities in our history. Like you, I am expecting an outstanding conference. Have a wonderful Thanksgiving enjoying your time with family and friends; I look forward to seeing all of you at the conference.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Amy Lujan, Executive Director

The ALASBO Annual Conference is coming soon! A packed trade show...a dynamic keynote speaker...critical professional development...networking social events...and, new this year, Casino Night! Who would want to miss it? Be sure to recommend the ALASBO conference to your friends and colleagues.

*Don't miss out! If you have not already registered for the annual conference, register online now:
www.regonline.com/alasbo_2009_annual_conference*

At our registration website, take a look at the Tentative Schedule, to begin planning your info-gathering strategy for this year's conference. Also, don't miss the pre and post-conference sessions, offered on Sunday, December 6 and Thursday, December 10.

New school business managers may be interested in this year's pre-conference School Business Academy, for an in-depth review of some of the most critical topics in school business management. Pre-conference sessions on payroll and basic accounting are excellent resources for review, info-sharing and Q&A. For current and new participants in the ALASBO p-card program, there will also be a pre-conference session on the Details Online software.

Both the Division of Retirement and Benefits and EMA are offering post-conference sessions, to take advantage of ALASBO members being in Anchorage. Information is available on our conference website (above), but you must register separately for these sessions..

I look forward to seeing all of you in Anchorage!

In other news, sixteen ALASBO members returned recently from the ASBO International conference in Chicago. Once again, we enjoyed a fantastic conference full of information sharing and networking opportunities with our colleagues from around the country and around the world. It's amazing how school district issues are similar just about everywhere.

Chicago is an exciting city to visit, and we enjoyed some beautiful autumn weather, between a few rain showers. **Thanks to American Fidelity** for sponsoring a dinner cruise on Lake Michigan, where ALASBO

members and guests enjoyed the spectacular backdrop of the Chicago skyline. Other social venues included the great hall of the Field Museum, at the foot of a very large dinosaur named "Sue", and the House of Blues, where we enjoyed some fantastic Blues Brothers and Aretha Franklin impersonators!

On a personal note, I recently enjoyed a family trip to Turkey. Once again, we had the opportunity to visit a school. Most of the students were taking a "high stakes" exam, but we did get to visit with some very enthusiastic pre-schoolers, who were already able to chat with us in English.

Later, our guide was explaining our professions to one of our Turkish hosts. I noticed that it took a very long time for him to explain that I was involved with school business, which I had described as "the department that pays teachers, orders supplies, etc." I asked why this was so difficult, and our guide explained that they don't really have school business professionals in Turkey; the schools are small and the teachers just get together to perform these tasks, or they rely on the federal government. Sometimes we forget how lucky we are!

If you have questions about any ALASBO program, please do not hesitate to contact me at alasbo@gci.net, or 907-500-9086. You'll also find useful information at: www.alasbo.org.



ALASBO SUMMER LEADERSHIP RECAP

*Yodean Armour
Klawock School District*

Over the summer a number of ALASBO members were able to get together in Kodiak to discuss and update ALASBO's strategic plan, conduct a SWOT analysis, and plan for this year's annual December Conference.

After reading 2008 conference evaluations, and

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with help from consultant Jerry Covey, a list of strategic goals and values was created / updated. This list was the driving force for planning the annual December conference.

Examples of how the goals and values were incorporated into the conference schedule are presented below:

GOAL: Provide professional development programs that are relevant, timely and applicable to members

- Monthly ALASBO "Power Lunches"
- Second year of School Business Academy
- Post-Conference opportunities with EMA & Division of Retirement and Benefits
- "Hot Topic" issues (this year ARRA reporting) presented at various times

VALUE: Sharing Knowledge and Expertise

- Roundtables, Sectionals & Cracker Barrels (many presented by ALASBO members)
- Mentor program for new Business Managers (2nd year)
- Website / email list continually improving and becoming a "hub" for information (no need to re-create the wheel)

Participating in the Summer Leadership Conference was a great experience, and I would like to thank Richard M. Swarner's family for the donation that allowed me to attend. It is held during the busy audit preparation time of year, but is well worth the time and a great way to give back to an organization that strives to help all levels of business professionals.



CALL FOR PHOTOS!

We are in need of photos for the Annual Slideshow! Please send pictures (preferably JPG's) of your schools, summer activities etc. Email them to:

yodean.armour@klawockschool.com



ALASBO Member Spotlight

Luke Fulp

Kodiak Island Borough School District

Tell us about your school district

The Kodiak Island Borough School District has approximately 2,700 students located within the City of Kodiak and seven outlying communities.

How long have you been in school business?

I'm in my fifth year of Alaska school business; however, I've also worked two years at the University of California, Berkeley as an Assistant Business Manager within Intercollegiate Athletics. So, all said, I'm entering my seventh year of school (and higher education) business.

How did you get into this business?

I graduated from Gonzaga University in May of 2003. That spring, my sister and brother-in-law encouraged me to apply for a vacant position at the school district where they were teaching...this happened to be the Kashunamiut School District in Chevak, Alaska. Strapped with student loans and no work experience, the answer was "yes!"

My first year in school business was made possible thanks to Dennis Niedermeyer, Sam Matchian and Lillian Olson. Those folks helped me understand school business fundamentals along with simple things like how to use the fax machine and the best method for protecting yourself against arctic terns on the tundra (this would be similar to stop, drop and roll).

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What do you like best about your job?

I like the importance and responsibility associated with my position. When you can see how your contributions impact the same school system that you were brought up in, it's very rewarding. (Luke is a graduate of Kodiak HS!)

What advice do you have for those new to school business?

Make sure reconciliations are getting done. (You'll thank me later.)

How have you benefited from membership in ALASBO?

ALASBO is made up of a very talented and successful group of professionals. This organization has given me an opportunity to network with and learn from these folks.

What do you like to do for fun?

This might not sound like "fun" for most, but I like to do things that challenge me and give me a sense of accomplishment. For instance, in my senior year of college I did a triathlon. When I'd set off to train for the event, I would tell my roommates, "Sorry, I can't hang out - I don't know how to have fun anymore." It was the joke around the house that "Luke has cut fun out of his life." I, however, really did enjoy the experience.

If you could visit anyplace in the world, where would you go and why?

Dubai. I have a friend who is working over there as an engineer and the place sounds awesome. The things they are building don't seem possible - I would like to see them firsthand.

Tell us something about yourself that most people don't know?

Six months ago I did a three-mile sky dive (15,000') above Las Vegas, Nevada. The free fall lasted sixty seconds. It was one of those experiences where you really question why you're doing it before hand; but I have to say, with my feet back on the ground and no broken bones, the rush was well worth it.

What is your proudest accomplishment?

Next month I'll be graduating with my MBA from the University of Alaska Southeast. Ever since I became the Director of Finance here in Kodiak, my time has not been my own. There have been countless days when I've had to create time to study, which often meant working late into the evenings. Thirty-six credits and two and a half years later, I'm proud of myself for having disciplined and sticking with the program.

ASBO INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Amy Lujan, Executive Director

Some of the most popular programs administered by ASBO International are the Meritorious Budget Award (MBA) and Certificate of Excellence (COE) programs. Both of these programs involve peer review of budget and financial statement documents against rigorous standards.

David Means of Juneau School District currently serves on the MBA review committee. To find out more about the programs, visit the ASBO International website, www.asbointl.org.

We are proud to have several award recipients in our state for the most recent review periods:

Meritorious Budget Award FYE 2008-2009

- Kenai Peninsula Borough SD

Certificate of Excellence FYE 2008

- Anchorage SD
- Bering Strait SD
- Fairbanks North Star Borough SD
- Kenai Peninsula Borough SD

Kudos to the school business officials in these districts for achieving this level of excellence!!

In other ASBO news, ASBO International is developing a certification program for school business officials, which it plans to launch in the fall of 2010. Jenny Martens of Nome School District was recently able to participate in one of the ASBO working groups preparing for this new program.

Some states and countries already have requirements for certification, although Alaska does not. This new certification program will provide yet another way for school business officials to demonstrate excellent in their profession.



ALASBO Director's Take

Jim Farrington, Department of Education

Over the past few years I have had the opportunity to interact with a lot of people in Alaska School Business, most of whom I have had the privilege of meeting face-to-face. So I would like to take this time to let you know a little bit more about me and what led me to my current role in the Department of Education & Early Development (DEED). Many of you know me through the various programs I help to administer with DEED: such as Pupil Transportation, School Debt/Bond Reimbursement, Boarding Homes, Indirect Costs, Tuition Rates, etc. What you may not know is how I came to work for the department and what other experiences played a key role in making my work for DEED a good fit.

I am a graduate of Pacific University in Forest Grove, Oregon with a double major in Mathematics and Business Administration. Throughout my high school and college education I balanced my studies with many extracurricular activities, which included wrestling, football and judo. While attending college I also spent time as a tutor in the university study skills center and helped coach wrestling at the local middle school.

After graduation from college, I moved back to the Seattle area and began working for Alaska Airlines. I also returned to my old high school and volunteered as an assistant wrestling coach. I found this experience to be not only rewarding but a great way to balance my workweek with outside activity. After one year I stepped in as the regular assistant and two years later became the head coach. After ten years of working the two positions, I was given an advancement opportunity with the airline and decided to pack up and move to Alaska in 1999.

My first stop was in Petersburg where I was the Customer Service Manager for Alaska Airlines. With the announcement of my position in Petersburg, Alaska Airlines also noted my coaching experience in wrestling. I was soon recruited by the Petersburg High School coach to not only help coach wrestling but I also continued as a wrestling official in the southeast region. This was a fantastic opportunity to see more of the great state of Alaska. My time in Petersburg led me to understand and appreciate the many things Alaska has to offer.

After spending three years in Petersburg I was promoted again, however this time I relocated to

Juneau as the Ground Operations Manager. Again I continued to stay involved with the school system in southeast as a wrestling official. After three years in Juneau, the company offered an opportunity to take what was essentially an early retirement. By this time I was coming up on 16+ years with Alaska Airlines and was ready for a change.

My experiences in Alaska led me to not only stay, but to seek employment within the state system. A friend mentioned that DEED had a position open and after doing a little research it seemed like a logical fit with my education and work experience. In addition, I also had worked at many of the schools, not only in Southeast Alaska but in Anchorage too, officiating multiple regional and state wrestling tournaments. This gave me a unique perspective that I felt would benefit the department. They seemed to agree as I was hired into my current position in 2005.



Over the next couple of years through learning the many formula based programs that the department utilizes, I have somehow managed to acquire the nickname of "Math-man". This especially seems to come out during the legislative session when many of these formulas are being reviewed or altered. I also was fortunate that DEED has been supportive of my involvement in officiating wrestling tournaments throughout the state of Alaska.

Life has led me in many directions professionally and I feel fortunate to have landed in Alaska. I enjoy my work with DEED and the chance to meet and talk with many people all over the state in my day-to-day-functions.

ALASBO Annual Conference

**December 6-9, 2009
Hotel Captain Cook
Anchorage, Alaska**

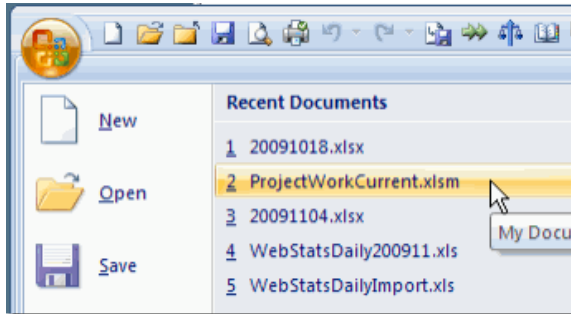
Register online:

http://www.regonline.com/alasbo_2009_annual_conference

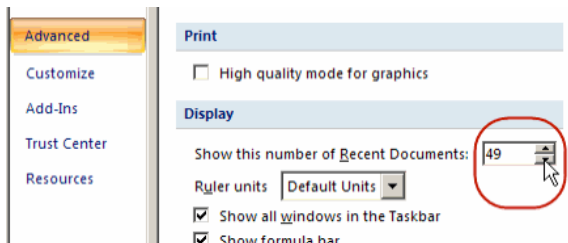
Your Moment of EXCEL Zen Customize That List!

Susan Edwards, Lake and Peninsula Borough
School District

If you are like me, you open up a lot of EXCEL files during the day, and often the same file several times. We all know that if you click on the Office Button you can see the list of your

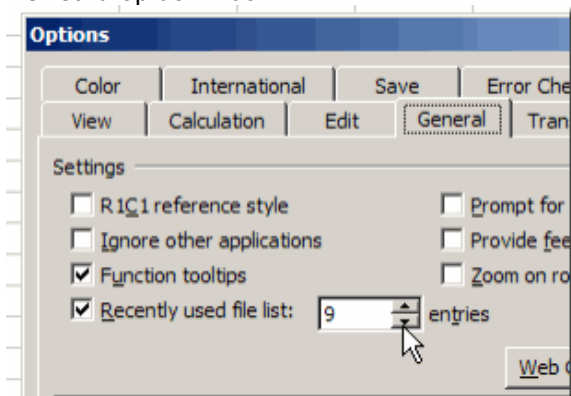


most recently opened files. You can change the number of files shown on the list in Options. Click the Office button and then click the Options Button at the bottom. Click on the Advanced category and in the Display section, change the number of recent documents to any number you wish.



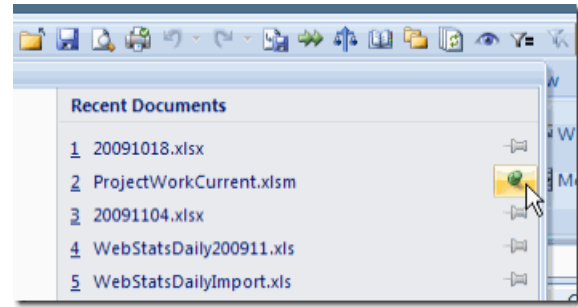
To clear the list, just set the number to zero.

If you are using EXCEL 2003, you can do the same thing by clicking on "Tools" on the menu bar, then "Options". Click on the "General" tab and change the number in the "Recently used file list" drop down box.



And, as they say on the late night infomercials, "Wait, there's more!"

The older files move down the list and eventually drop off. If there is a file that you use every day, you can keep it on the list and in the same position with this handy EXCEL 2007 feature.



Click on the "Pin" on the right hand side of the file list to keep it on the list. It will move down the list if not opened for a time, but it won't drop off the list.

ASBO Live Learning Center

Not able to attend the ASBO International Conference in Chicago? Well, you can still attend many of the sessions *VIRTUALLY* at ASBO's Live Learning Center! Go to:

<http://www.softconference.com/asbo>

From this site, you can access many of the sectionals presented at the ASBO conference. If you attended the conference, you can download handouts and even stream the sectional for free. If you did not attend, you can still purchase the content of training that interests you.

FUN FACTS

- * A goldfish has a memory span of three seconds. (Some days that's about what my memory span is.)
- * A "jiffy" is an actual unit of time for 1/100th of a second.
- * A shark is the only fish that can blink with both eyes.
- * A snail can sleep for three years. (I know some people who could do this too!)