



Dr. John Heim  
Executive Director  
National School Boards Association  
1680 Duke St. FL2  
Alexandria, VA 22314

February 16, 2022

Dear Dr. Heim,

As the Executive Director of the Arizona School Boards Association (ASBA), I am writing you today concerning ASBA's ongoing relationship with the National School Boards Association (NSBA). As a confederation of state associations, NSBA has existed since 1940 to provide national support to its state-level affiliates and an opportunity for locally elected school board members to gather at the national level to advance the effective governance of, and advocate for, district public schools. ASBA has helped advance that mission since 1949 through its own work and as a member of NSBA.

Since March of 2020, board members have had to make many difficult and contentious decisions, and some felt that they were risking their safety by continuing to serve. No elected official should feel that they are putting themselves or their families at risk by serving the public.

I appreciate that you, who I recognize was not NSBA Executive Director at the time the letter was written, and the NSBA board have realized the enormous error of employing this type of language when referring to the parents and guardians of public school students. I also appreciate that NSBA has undertaken an impartial outside review of the circumstances surrounding the letter and plans to share the results of that review when they become available. These are important steps toward rebuilding public trust.

Despite these efforts, it has become clear that ASBA's continued membership in NSBA has become a hindrance to the work we are undertaking here in Arizona on behalf of Arizona's public school students. While we continue to believe that there is value in a national association of school boards, our primary obligation is to advocate for Arizona's students to have strong, quality public schools. We are unable to do that if we are continuously called to account for the actions of NSBA. Therefore, I must inform you that the ASBA board of directors has voted to discontinue membership in the organization.

I wish you all the best in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dr. Sheila Harrison-Williams".

Dr. Sheila Harrison-Williams  
ASBA Executive Director

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