



## Bolstering Public Schools

Public education remains the backbone of our democracy and our economy. Only public education has the responsibility to reach all students and to ensure that every child has access to a free, high-quality education. There are shining examples of success in public schools throughout the state and throughout the nation.

To highlight these success stories of our public schools, the National School Boards Association (NSBA) has launched a national Stand Up 4 Public Schools campaign. It complements the WASB's Stand Up for Public Education campaign that was initiated last fall and intended to help spread the word about all of the great things happening in our public schools.

The intent of the NSBA's Stand Up 4 Public Schools initiative is to counter the aggressive, well-funded attacks on public education with a public campaign that supports local school board governance and honors the achievements of America's public schools. The campaign operates under a simple premise: "Who I am today began with public education," paired with the rejoinder, "Today's public schools are better than ever."

To help get these messages out, NSBA has enlisted the help of several celebrity advocates: Sal Khan, founder of the not-for-profit Khan Academy; Earvin "Magic" Johnson, basketball legend and business mogul; and Montel Williams, former talk show host and celebrity spokesperson.

The campaign includes a website, print ads, digital ads and a dedicated social media campaign. You can access the campaign at [www.standup4publicschools.org](http://www.standup4publicschools.org) or by clicking on the WASB Stand Up for Public Education button at [wasb.org](http://wasb.org).

A key tenet of the campaign emphasizes the responsibility and ownership everyone has in our public schools. Community ownership of public schools safeguards transparency, accountability, equity and excellence in education for every child. This campaign is about partnering with public school advocates across the country and keeping the public in public education. This effort also ties into the WASB's Stand Up for Public Education website, which highlights positive stories about Wisconsin public schools.

The NSBA's campaign is part of a refocused and renewed advocacy plan. A key element of the research-based campaign is the NSBA-developed "A School Board Vision for Public Education." Wisconsin's Elk Mound School Board President Tim Sivertson was a member of the committee that helped develop NSBA's public advocacy focus (see page 41).

To learn more about the Stand Up 4 Public Schools campaign and to participate in this important effort, visit [www.standup4publicschools.org](http://www.standup4publicschools.org). Or you can access it through the WASB website by selecting the Stand Up for Public Education button at

[wasb.org](http://wasb.org). There is a wealth of resources to help school leaders reach out to the public and become better advocates for your schools. Additionally, NSBA urges school leaders to visit the site over the course of the year as new content and resources will be added.

We also encourage you to tell your community members about these campaigns. Post links on your district's website or Facebook page. The best advocates for our public schools are our public. Having prominent community members speak out in support of their local public schools sends a convincing message to other community members.

We need to tell our stories. I urge you to visit the NSBA Stand Up 4 Public Schools website and encourage you to keep sharing your local stories on the WASB Stand Up for Public Education site.

Finally, I would like to end by thanking all of our members who attended, presented, and participated in the 93rd State Education Convention in January. We are proud to work with the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators and the Wisconsin Association of School Business Officials to put on a great convention. We hope you had a memorable experience, connected with other Wisconsin school leaders, and gained important information and ideas to improve student achievement in your schools. ■

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