



## Council of State Association Presidents

### In This Issue

Volume 2  
February 2006

Reaching Out  
Across the  
State

An Introduction  
to Conflict  
Resolution

Staying  
Connected to  
Individuals  
Working on Board  
Projects

#### **FROM THE EDITORS**

*Lisa O'Connor, 2005 Past President*

*Mary Friehe, New Editor 2006*

Happy New Year. We had a very successful CSAP meeting in San Diego and it was wonderful having so many state association leaders in attendance. As the 2005 Past President and Editor of this very new CSAP e-newsletter, I am delighted to include articles pertaining to state association management in this first issue of the year. Kathy Boada, Past President of the Colorado Speech-Language-Hearing Association, has written an excellent article on tele- or video-conferencing for Board meetings. She explains how they facilitated this type of board interaction, and provides strategies to assist others in implementing this type of meeting activity.

Mel Cohen provides an excellent article as an introduction to conflict resolution. This is something we can use as part of our board involvement or it has great relevance across all work settings. Finally, I have included a brief article about how to systematically follow board work in progress and stay connected with projects who may be chaired by individuals who may not hold actual board positions. The work of such individuals, however, does have importance to the state association and so there needs to be a way to monitor the work and keep in touch. You are welcome to publish any of these articles in your state association newsletters and/or to share them with all of your Board members.

This is my final issue as Editor of the CSAP e-newsletter as my term on the CSAP board has ended. I very much enjoyed all of my involvement in CSAP over the past five years, and I will miss all those wonderful opportunities for networking and meeting new friends. It is now my pleasure to introduce the new Editor, Mary Friehe, from Nebraska. I know that I am passing the baton to capable hands, and that this new publication will flourish under her charge. Mary will now share some of her plans for the future.

As with any new endeavor, the needs of the readers are foremost. This issue has valuable information about staying connected with Board members and others who are working on issues related to Board business. The next newsletter will be out soon after the CSAP meeting in Portland and, hopefully, will contain information about building positive relationships with local and state government. Embedded in this topic is marketing and public relations so we will be looking to provide resources for your association to use with your specific "moans" and "groans". IF YOU HAVE AN IDEA FOR A SHORT ARTICLE ON EITHER LOBBYING / WORKING WITH LEGISLATIVE ISSUES OR PUBLIC RELATIONS / MARKETING, PLEASE CALL (402-554-2211) OR EMAIL ([mfriehe@mail.unomaha.edu](mailto:mfriehe@mail.unomaha.edu)).

## REACHING OUT ACROSS THE STATE

*Katheryn L. Boada,*

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As a part of our effort to grow our membership and find ways to directly involve state-wide constituents in board of director (BOD) activities, the Colorado Speech-Language-Hearing Association looked into tele- or video-conferencing with BOD members and committee members from other cities. Monthly BOD meetings are typically held in Denver and historically, BOD members have come almost exclusively from the Denver-metropolitan area. Several dedicated therapists from other areas of the state (for example Ft. Collins and Greeley to our north and Colorado Springs to the south), have made the 2-4 hour round trips over the years; however, this is seen as a barrier to participation for many.

This past December, we successfully held our final BOD meeting of the year with two committee members conferencing in from Fort Collins and two board of directors conferencing in from Colorado Springs. One member traveled 35 minutes from Pueblo to Colorado Springs to join the video-conference – a savings of an extra hour drive one way and signifying the first time in over a decade that we had a representative from that far south on our Board!

How did we do it? Partnerships, in-kind support, coordination and persistence! In late fall, I began looking into the possibility of telephone conferences and/or video-conferencing. Tele-conferencing initially seemed to be the most logical place to start as most folks have access to a telephone and only one site needed to have the ability to tie in all of the lines. In the end, however, this proved to be more expensive as I was unsuccessful in getting phone charges donated or reduced for this activity. I was successful, however, in finding groups willing to work with me to video-conference. In my role as Manager for SLP Services at The Children's Hospital in Denver, I conduct or participate in several video-conferences and video-interviews a year. I approached the Director of our Biomedical Communications Department initially for information as to how to set this up for our state-wide organization. I discovered that placing a call to one other location was relatively simple, but to involve two or more sites required a "bridge". The Children's Hospital contracts with the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center (UCHSC) to bridge their multiple site video-conferences and so this involved coordination with the Educational Support Services at UCHSC. In summary, here is what was needed to make this meeting a reality. You may be able to follow similar steps in your State – no technical knowledge needed by you!

- **Sponsorship of our video-link and bridging costs** was obtained from The Children's Hospital.
- **Appropriate sites** in each city were identified (Ft. Collins & CO Springs). Facilities that provide this type of conferencing often have a list of video-ready sites around the state/nation. Determine at least two options in each location as one may be booked on your desired date.
- **Identify an on-site liaison.** I asked one BOD member/committee member from each site to be a liaison to first reserve to room in the appropriate facility and during the call, to be the contact person for the AV specialist if needed. (In Colorado Springs, this required a bit of leg work as the first site contacted was booked out for several months.)
- **Identify a coordinator/facilitator at the host site**– I served in this capacity, receiving the confirmations of room reservations and collecting the names of the auditory/visual specialist from each site to provide by AV specialist.

The rest was handled by my contact at our host site. They make the calls and show you how to work the video monitors (if you can manage a simple TV remote control, you can do this). The rest was much like any other meeting. The technology is so advanced at this time, that there was virtually no time delay. In fact the meeting actually went faster as we did not have to wait for members to make it through rush hour traffic! In the end, the virtual meeting was a resounding success with 9 members at the Denver host site, 2 in Ft. Collins and 2 in Colorado Springs. We have secured sponsorship for at least 4 such meetings in 2006 and will discuss our plans for future video-conferences at our January strategic planning meeting.

Moving ahead with this plan was initially time consuming, but now that we have the process down, the greatest concern will be obtaining sponsorships each year. It will be important to determine other potential hosts and to this end, I am currently discussing possible sponsorship or support with the Colorado Department of Education. We look forward to increased participation in CSHA from members across the state!

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## **AN INTRODUCTION TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

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“If you wrestle with a pig, you’re likely to wind up rolling in a puddle of mud. Keep in mind that this is an activity the pig enjoys.”

We don’t have to look beyond the evening news to realize that we are surrounded by conflict. From two people who both think they saw the same parking space first ... to two countries whose citizens believe they are entitled to the same piece of land ... to two religions whose members think that their supreme being told has instructed them to convert or exterminate all non-believers.

Conflict can occur as part of normal interaction between two people or within groups. When our values, opinions and perspectives differ from those of someone else, there is likely to be disagreement. If the difference in views occurs as part of a cocktail party conversation, there are no material consequences for the winner or the loser of the debate. Simply walking away from the other person and finding someone else to talk with can resolve the conflict.

Occasionally yielding to another party may be no more consequential than losing a minor skirmish on the way to winning the bigger battle. Other conflicts are more serious and can affect our reputation, bank account, or career. Still others have the potential to create a life or death situation.

When one individual or group needs the cooperation of another to achieve its goals, conflict leads us to evaluate the reasons for the differences between the two sides and to begin a problem solving approach to resolving the conflict in a manner that will make both parties winners. If your receiving a pay increase takes money out of my pocket, I am not very likely to support your request. But if your getting a pay increase costs me little in time, effort or money, and benefits me as well by saving me money in recruitment and retention costs, I would be more likely to support your cause. The happiest resolution to a conflict occurs when you get more of what you want by finding a way to ensure that the other party gets more of what they want too.

Some people thrive on conflict and consider it to be a fun activity for themselves without any concern for the consequences to others. They don’t care if they win or lose; they just enjoy playing the game. Other people are conflict averse. They avoid conflict at any cost, choosing to yield to the other party rather than to use assertiveness to achieve a desired outcome. In between the extremes are those who find conflict to be scary, intimidating, challenging, but a necessary evil. Managing one’s own feelings about conflict and addressing them in a healthy way provides an opportunity for personal growth.

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## **STAYING CONNECTED TO INDIVIDUALS WORKING ON BOARD PROJECTS**

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As a part of Board business. we often create ad hoc committees and task forces, and it is often difficult

to keep track of deadlines, and who is working on what project. In addition, there are always individuals who are serving on an ASHA Committee (e.g. STARS, MICs, SEALS), as well as your elected representatives to the ASHA Legislative Council. All of these individuals have important information to share with the state association board, and yet they may not be officially on the board and may not regularly attend board meetings. How can we stay connected to these individuals and/or keep track of the work they may be completing on behalf of the board? One way is to have the President keep a chart that is regularly updated and shared with the Board at each board meeting. Another is to appoint specific individuals on the Board and ask them to be responsible for regular committee updates. Whatever you choose to do, it is important to have a way to stay connected to these committee chairs or your state representatives to ASHA committees and, if they have an ongoing project, to know the status of the work in progress. When I was the President of the California Speech-Language-Hearing Association, I created a "tracking chart" and what appears below is a sample of the form I used as a reporting mechanism at every board meeting. If you find it useful, feel free to create a similar document. This type of form is also helpful when newly-elected people transition into new Board positions. It provides them with a complete record of the status of board projects and reporting lines for individuals who are representing the state on important national committees. I hope you will find it useful, and if you have other ideas for keeping in touch with association members involved in professional projects important to the board, please send your ideas to the new Editor of the CSAP e-newsletter, Mary Friehe ([mfriehe@mail.unomaha.edu](mailto:mfriehe@mail.unomaha.edu)) so she can include your ideas in the next issue of this e-newsletter.

[Click here for a Sample Chart for tracking Board related projects.](#)