

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE ASSOCIATION

The Board of Directors recently concluded its annual, mid-year meeting in San Antonio, TX, January 24-26. Minutes, soon to be posted to the website, will reflect attention to a variety of topics, including the N4A-NCAA Partnership, member services, the National Convention, region issues, and Constitution and By-Law proposals.

My immediate purpose for this report is to communicate to the membership the Board's discussion and decision regarding current published reports involving our N4A President-Elect, Mark Meleney of Florida State University.

The situation at Florida State continues to evolve and further reports are pending from FSU and, at some point, the NCAA. The facts, as known to the Board, include Florida State's admission of academic fraud by a staff member and a tutor employed within the academic support program. Mark Meleney, Director of the program, has been notified that his current employment contract will not be renewed. Highly respected at both FSU and in the N4A, Mark has over 20 years of experience and is presently considering reassignment and employment within the University. This ongoing situation will remain fluid for some time.

Board members exercised very deliberate and thoughtful discussion concerning Mark's future as President-Elect. The Board reviewed the "N4A Code of Ethics" and applicable areas of the Constitution and By-Laws. Members had an opportunity to express their concerns and ask questions regarding Mark's situation and the potential impact on the Association. Opinions ranged from possible resignation to unequivocal support. Board members sought to assess the risks to the Association and evaluate cause for removal.

Following this discussion, with the information at hand, it was the consensus of the Board that we endorse Mark Meleney to remain in the position of President-Elect and the role to which he was elected by the membership. At the end of its deliberations, the Board found no breach of the N4A Code of Ethics and concluded that Mark had not compromised his integrity, had not engaged in ethical misconduct, and that there was no factual basis upon which to request his resignation. Mark genuinely declared his intention and desire to continue serving the N4A. The Board members extended their trust and support for Mark and directed that he protect, as well as lead, the Association. Mark agreed that he would resign if, at any time, he lacked the focus or energy for the position or if future facts handicapped his ability to lead. Finally, the members voiced their intention to reconvene the Board, if necessary, as this situation unfolds.

The Board fully considered the public perception risks and the potential, negative implications for the organization. It is, however, evident that a member of the N4A 'family' has been confronted with elements beyond his control relative to staff misconduct which was not caused or created by him.

The Board feels strongly that, at the general election in Phoenix, Mark was deemed a worthy and competent representative of the Association, possessing the character, experience, and professional integrity required of the Presidency. The unanimous opinion of the Board, at this time, with the available facts, is that Mark's qualifications to effectively lead the N4A are not diminished and that he remain a member of the Association's leadership.

Should you have questions regarding this decision, please contact any member of the Board of Directors. If you wish to contact me directly, please email or call (phughes@ksu.edu; 785-532-5409).