

## Section on Intergovernmental Administration and Management

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### From the Chair ...



In my undergraduate and graduate courses, I've taught the advantages and disadvantages of mandates in our intergovernmental system. As a long time academic, I have not had the personal experience having to adjust my organization's work to a new national or state mandate that many of our practitioner-colleagues in SIAM experience as a regular part of their working environment. But now I have.

In September 2005 my public school district initiated a year long process to prepare a strategic plan. The strategic plan was in addition to the regular, "operational" planning the state mandates all districts to use. The school district employed a consultant to provide the strategic planning approach we would use. I served as a one of the parents on the 30 member Core Strategic Planning Team. Our team met for three days at a retreat to draft seven core values, a mission statement, three strategic objectives, and five strategies to achieve the strategic objectives.

We were enthusiastic about our work, especially because our mission

statement seemed to challenge the adequacy of the current national and state focus on testing in reading and math. The Core Team proposed our district's mission is "to inspire in all students the love of learning and creating, and to empower them to discover and pursue their individual passions with knowledge, confidence, and caring to shape the future." The Core Team concluded that the district already had met achievement expectations in core subjects (e.g., math) measured by state tests for nearly all students, so the mission should challenge the district to help students in other ways. After presentations to the school employees and the school board, we turned the work of developing action plans and measurement tools over to other working teams.

Before the end of the planning year in Fall 2006, however, the state decided to require all 501 public school districts to prepare a strategic plan and to file the plan by Fall 2007. The state's focus in the strategic plan remained grounded in No Child Left Behind (NCLB). What were the consequences of the new state mandate?

My school district's efforts are being delayed in order to allow time to integrate the two planning processes. Some overlapping exists, such as crafting a mission statement, but differences exist as well. For example, the state expects us to specify achievement goals related to traditional subject areas that are tested (reading and math) that we did not think required special attention in our district. Also, additional staff and volunteer time is needed to complete both versions of the strategic plan. Finally, as we get closer to the date for the school board to discuss and vote on the strategic plan, questions arise about the viability of some of the objectives and strategies in my district's locally prepared plan in the face of the state's mandate.

To be sure the state's mandate will spur other school districts in the state to move beyond operational plans to think strategically. Also in those districts struggling to teach students reading and math, the mandate to think strategically may help them find solutions to meet the standards in NCLB.

As with all mandates that affect hundreds of governments, in this case school districts, one size does not fit all, and indeed can make creative thinking about the future more difficult for some.

*I look forward to seeing you at 2007 ASPA meeting,*

*Craig Wheeland*

# Upcoming SIAM Events

The ASPA 2007 Conference will be held March 23-27 in Washington, DC. We hope you will join SIAM at our annual membership meeting during which we will award the Donald Stone Award to a practitioner and a scholar and the Junior Stone Award to a graduate student. If you can't make the meeting, be sure to drop by the *SIAM booth* in the exhibitor's hall (booth #34).

Please mark your calendars (*be sure to check the ASPA program for room numbers*):

*SIAM Board Meeting . . . . . March 25th, 7:00 - 8:00 am*  
*SIAM Membership Meeting. . . . . March 26th, 8:45 - 10:15 am*

If you are able to spend any time working the SIAM booth it would be much appreciated. This is a great opportunity to network and help SIAM do some recruiting. If you are interested, please contact Craig Wheeland at [craig.wheeland@villanova.edu](mailto:craig.wheeland@villanova.edu).

## SIAM Board Members

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# SIAM Endorsed Panels at ASPA

Each year, SIAM has the opportunity to review the panels at the upcoming ASPA conference and endorse those with intergovernmental themes that would be relevant to our members. Below is the list of this year's SIAM endorsed panels for the upcoming ASPA conference:

**March 23, 2007**

**Friday:** 9:45 - 11:15 am *Performance and Responsiveness in Local Governments*

**March 24, 2007**

**Saturday:** 9:45 - 11:15 am *Regional Governance Issues*

9:45 - 11:15 am *Varieties of Collaboration*

1:15 - 2:25 pm *Collaborations between Tribes, States, and Municipalities*

1:15 - 2:45 pm *Working Effectively with Tribal Governments: Successful Intergovernmental*

**March 25, 2007**

**Sunday:** 8:00 - 9:30 am *Local Government Collaboration in Practice*

9:45 - 11:15 am *Intergovernmental Issues: Impact on Communities*

9:45 - 11:15 am *Hot Topics in Local Government*

1:30 - 3:00 pm *Partnerships in Homeland Security*

**March 26, 2007**

**Monday:** 8:00 - 9:30 am *Community-Based Collaborative Networks: How Managers Make Them Work*

9:45 - 11:15 am *Enhancing Fiscal Performance through Intergovernmental and Intersectoral Collaboratiaon*

3:00 - 4:30 pm *Collaboration to Explore New Frontiers in Urban Innovation*

**March 27, 2007**

**Tuesday:** 9:45 - 11:15am *Assessing the Impacts of Inter-organizational Collaboration; Developments in Taiwan and China*

# An Invitation to be the Newsletter Editor

After many years of excellent work, Kendra Stewart will step down as editor of the SIAM newsletter. I know the entire SIAM membership appreciates the quality work Kendra has done and we wish her well.

We would like to have a new editor appointed by early summer. Below is the job description. If you are interested in being the Newsletter Editor, or want to recommend a SIAM member, please feel free to contact Kendra Stewart at [kendra.stewart@eku.edu](mailto:kendra.stewart@eku.edu) or (859) 622-4390.

Thanks,

*Craig Wheeland*  
*SIAM Chair*

## *SIAM Newsletter Editor Job description*

The SIAM newsletter editor is responsible for working with the newsletter committee in developing and distributing at least three newsletters a year. In order to do this, the committee meets via email and conference call periodically at the call of the editor. The committee provides ideas and support by soliciting and writing articles. The editor collects and organizes the articles, writes additional articles as appropriate, and develops the layout and design for the newsletter. Once the newsletter is finished it is circulated to the chair and newsletter committee and upon approval emailed to the SIAM membership by the newsletter editor.

Serving as newsletter editor has several benefits. It is a great opportunity to network and meet SIAM members while staying abreast of important intergovernmental issues. The organization pays a modest stipend and covers the travel and lodging expenses for the national ASPA conference for the newsletter editor.