



OCT - DEC 2023 | 1ST QUARTER

THE QUARTERLY FOCUS

The Florida Association of Special Districts' Official Newsletter

CHECK OUT WHAT'S
INSIDE THE ISSUE:

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Education Foundation**

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National Coalition

..and more!

1ST QUARTER RECAP

Written By FASD Staff

Has your district successfully completed the crucial process of renewing its membership yet? It's essential to note that the renewal period began on October 1 and is currently drawing to a close.

As we approach the end of this membership renewal period, we are delighted to announce that we have renewed 100 Special Districts and 42 Business Affiliates! This accomplishment underscores the dedication and active participation of our valued members in fostering a thriving community.

To further enhance your engagement and keep you well-informed about all the latest developments and innovations within our community, we extend an invitation to download our newly launched FASD smartphone app. This user-friendly application is designed to provide you with seamless access to relevant updates, ensuring that you stay ahead of the dynamic happenings within our association. Embrace this opportunity to stay connected and experience the benefits of our innovative communication platform.

Download the FASD smartphone app today and join us in fostering a stronger and more interconnected community!



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UPCOMING FASD EVENTS

2024 EVENTS

JAN 22 - 26 - CDM PROGRAM, TALLAHASSEE

JAN 23 - 24 - LEGISLATIVE FORUM, TALLAHASSEE

2024 EVENTS

APR 25 - 26 - QUARTERLY MEETING, SARASOTA

APR 25 - 26 - CDAP (CERTIFIED DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL) PROGRAM, SARASOTA

JUN 10 - 13 - ANNUAL CONFERENCE, ORLANDO

OCT 24 - 25 - QUARTERLY MEETING, ST. AUGUSTINE

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FASD STAFF

- David Ramba,** Executive Director
- Angela Weeks-Samanie.** Education Coordinator
- Rachel Kruse,** Administrative Assistant



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Written by David E. Ramba

During this special time of the year, FASD wants to make sure you know how much you, our members, sponsors, and Business Affiliates a/k/a Associate Members, are appreciated. We hope your holiday season is full of health and happiness!



Legislative changes in 2023 mandated 4 hours of ethics training for specific officials, including constitutional officers, elected municipal officers, commissioners of community redevelopment agencies, and elected local officers of independent special districts. To aid these officials in meeting this legal requirement, we collaborated with the John Scott Dailey Florida Institute of Government (FIOG) at Florida State University to create an online course. This course, featuring video lectures and practice assignments, is accessible 24/7 and designed for self-paced learning. Recordings for all modules are completed, with the anticipated launch scheduled for February 1, 2024.

FASD is broadening its training offerings to include Administrative Professionals with the development of the Certified District Administrative Professional (CDAP) Program. Specifically designed to elevate skills in Florida's local government environment, this comprehensive program targets crucial areas of success. It offers specialized insights into Florida-specific topics, empowering professionals to excel in their roles within the unique landscape of local governance.

A subcommittee will be formed to establish a mentorship program for effective onboarding of new Business Affiliates. Priority in selecting presentation slots at meetings and events will be given to Sponsors and Business Affiliates. Proactive outreach for potential Business Affiliates will be initiated through enhanced website content and targeted email marketing. Customized email and social media communications will be developed for Business Affiliates. Initiatives, such as creating a Business Affiliate brochure and related web content, have commenced, but board action is pending decisions on specific items. Completion of these initiatives will be pursued promptly after board decisions, aiming for presentation at the earliest opportunity.

The 2024 Legislative Session begins January 9, 2024. Keeping with tradition, the Certified District Manager (CDM) training program will be held in conjunction with the FASD Legislative Forum. The CDM Program is scheduled January 22 -23 and 25-26, 2024, with FASD Quarterly Board meeting January 22nd, at the Hotel Duval. The Legislative Forum will take place on Wednesday, January 24th. CDM Attendees will have that Wednesday off from their training to join other FASD members as a joint effort to educate the Legislature, state agencies, and the public about special districts and their role in Florida.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Written by Jim Millican

Greetings everyone,

I want to extend warm wishes for a Happy New Year! I trust each of you had an enjoyable Christmas, spending quality time with family and friends.



I also want to express my appreciation for the invaluable contributions our special district members play while having a crucial role in bringing the holiday spirit to families and children across our state. Thank you for your dedicated work and ongoing commitment to our communities.

As we navigate through the 2024 legislative session, actively engaging with various bills, I am eagerly anticipating our Legislative Forum on January 24th. The event will take place at Hotel Duval, featuring an informative morning session with breakfast. Afterwards we will give you the entire day to meet with your local delegation to discuss the needs of your districts, followed by an evening reception providing an opportunity to connect with legislators back at Hotel Duval.

At the Legislative Forum we will be announcing that we are seeking submissions for committee participation. These committees play a vital role in guiding the board towards the vision of introducing changes, benefits, and opportunities for FASD membership. It is my sincere intention to offer members additional avenues for involvement and sustained engagement in our association.

Preparations are underway for our April Quarterly Meeting in Sarasota as well as the Annual Conference, scheduled for the last year at the Rosen Plaza in Orlando. I am pleased to share that we have already secured notable speakers, with Samantha Livingstone headlining as our main keynote speaker. The upcoming Annual Conference holds special significance as we celebrate FASD's 45th anniversary—a milestone event that promises to be memorable.

Wishing everyone continued safety, and I eagerly look forward to seeing you in Tallahassee.



Have You Renewed Your District Membership?

Have you renewed your membership with the Florida Association of Special Districts that started on October 1st? As a valued member, you'll keep benefiting from perks, networking opportunities, and access to essential resources for managing Florida's special districts. Don't let another year of professional growth and collaboration slip by – make sure you continue getting the support you need. The renewal window is closing in just a couple of weeks, so act now to stay engaged and enjoy the perks in our vibrant community!

For help, please contact Katherine at khughes@cmc-associates.com or Rachel at rachel@fasd.com



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QUARTERLY MEETINGS



OCTOBER

The October Quarterly Meeting was held October 12 - 13, 2023, in Ft. Lauderdale at the fabulous Riverside Hotel!

We had an educational-packed Thursday with the seldomly taught in-person CDO Component Public Relations. Followed by a 4-hour workshop on generational differences with your employees.

We had 61 members attend!

LEGISLATIVE FORUM

The first CDM Program of the year is being offered during our upcoming Legislative Forum, January 22 - 26, 2024, in Tallahassee.

Legislative Forum is Wednesday, January 24, 2024. Legislative packets will be handed out - you don't want to miss this!

[Click Here](#) to register today!



APRIL

Our April Quarterly meeting will be held April 25 - 26, 2024, in Sarasota at the Embassy Suites.

This quarterly meeting will also debut the newest certification program we have to offer: Certified District Administrative Professionals.

This certification program will focus on day to day tasks and requirements that your district's administrative professional encounters.



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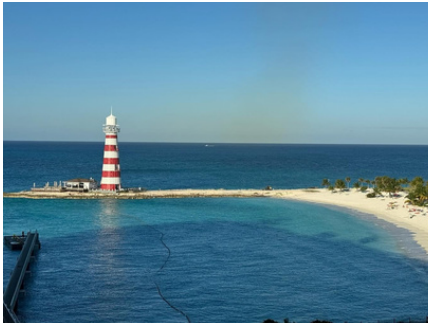
A MESSAGE FROM KIM EIKOV, MARK GRIMMEL, AND THE FASD EDUCATION FOUNDATION BOARD

To all the sailors who went on the 2023 Inaugural Cruise aboard the MSC Seaside, we want to express our sincere appreciation for your decision to support the inaugural education foundation cruise. Your participation in this special event means a lot to us.

We value your commitment to advancing education and community-building through engaging initiatives. It was an honor for us to be a part of this journey, and we are looking forward to future collaborations and adventures.

We would like to extend our special thanks to our two cruise sponsors - Ramba Consulting Group LLC and Egis Insurance & Risk Advisors!

Once again, we are grateful for your generosity and for the memories that will last a lifetime.





FOUNDATION INVESTORS

Investments in the FASD Education Foundation support professional development scholarships, quality educational opportunities, and Foundation initiatives to improve the special district community.



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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Eye Protection Is Essential PPE

Written by Preferred Governmental Insurance Trust

Most are aware that Florida municipalities are not subject to the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and that there has not been state oversight since the early 1990's. Nonetheless, OSHA standards are still considered Best Practices.

The following is the OSHA standard as it applies to eye protection: The employer shall ensure that each affected employee uses appropriate eye or face protection when exposed to eye or face hazards from flying particles, molten metal, liquid chemicals, acids or caustic liquids, chemical gases or vapors, or potentially injurious light radiation.

Special Districts should conduct a job hazard analysis to determine if a particular job would require eye protection. Generally speaking, eye protection is required when the following exposure exists:

- Projectiles (dust, concrete, metal, wood, and other particles).
- Chemicals (splashes and fumes).
- Radiation (especially visible light, ultraviolet radiation, heat or infrared radiation, and lasers).
- Bloodborne pathogens (hepatitis or HIV) from blood and body fluids.

Some examples of job functions in the Public Sector that require eye protection include, but are not limited to: Water and Wastewater, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Fire. Clerical and administration often use computers and can experience Digital Eye Strain. Digital Eye Strain describes a group of eye and vision related problems that result from prolonged computer, tablet, and cell phone use. The average American worker spends seven hours a day on the computer either in the office or working from home.

The type of safety eye protection you should wear depends on the hazards in your workplace:

- If you are working in an area that has particles, flying objects or dust, you must at least wear safety glasses with side protection (side shields).
- If you are working with chemicals, you must wear goggles.
- If you are working near hazardous radiation (welding, lasers, or fiber optics) you must use special-purpose safety glasses, goggles, face shields or helmets designed for that task.

There are four things you can do to protect your eyes from injury:

1. Know the eye safety dangers at your work.
2. Eliminate hazards before starting work by using machine guards, work screens or other engineering controls.
3. Use proper eye protection.
4. Keep your safety eyewear in good condition and have it replaced if it becomes damaged.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

(...continued from previous page)

Vision is our most precious of senses. Protecting eyes and vision in the workplace is extremely important. Using the proper protective eyewear can help keep you safe from any type of eye hazard on the job. If you sustain an eye-related injury on the job, or if you have pain in the eye, blurred vision, or loss of any vision, immediate attention is extremely important. Prompt medical attention could help reduce damage or even save your eyesight.

For more information on Eye Protection please contact your insurance provider risk management consultant and/or visit the OSHA website.

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ATTENTION!
PEER TO PEER REQUESTS

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Your fellow members need your help! Take a look at this forum to see if you're able to assist in these peer to peer requests. This is Members Only access.

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NATIONAL COALITION NEWS

REFLECTING ON 2023, NSDC LOOKS FORWARD TO ADVANCING AND MEETING GOALS IN 2024

This year was the fifth formal year for the National Special Districts Coalition. As the Coalition turned five, it experienced growth into new states, strengthened federal advocacy efforts, increased capacity to provide resources of interest to the nation's special districts, and has begun to develop an early framework for Coalition action beyond securing a federal "special district" definition.

Milestones Hit in Federal Definition Efforts: Crafting federal policies takes time, and successfully shuttling legislation across the finish line can take multiple congresses. NSDC's Advocacy Team have been hard at work to clear hurdles and remove roadblocks to achieving the Coalition's No. 1 federal policy priority.

Much of NSDC's legislative focus in 2023 remained on development and advancement of the definition. A national working group developed, and the NSDC Executive Committee approved a formal "special district" definition in May 2023, marking its first major milestone.

The second was achieved when the Coalition secured a bipartisan pair of Representatives – Pat Fallon, R-Texas, and Brittany Pettersen, D-Colo. – to lead what is expected to soon become the "Special Districts Recognition Act."

After four months of independent vetting, majority staff members on the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability, which has jurisdiction over federal and intergovernmental organization issues, have given the green light for Special Districts Recognition Act in January.

NSDC is committed to advancing the "Special Districts Recognition Act" with the advocacy of its grassroots supporters and special districts across the nation, to President Biden's desk in 2024.

Coalition Engagement: The Coalition offered to special districts its first webinar series in partnership with [The Ferguson Group](#) (TFG) and Paragon Government Relations. The three-part summer webinar series was shared with NSDC Association and Special District members – to make available to their members online,

on-demand – covers best practices for grants strategy, prioritization, and research; approach to key advocacy topics; and a synopsis of the federal earmarks program for special districts.

NSDC districts also received access to resources and best practices for public fund investment from [Public Trust Advisors](#), an NSDC Platinum Affiliate, and ADA compliance resources from [Streamline](#), a NSDC Gold Affiliate.

DMTD Continues To Grow: The [Districts Make the Difference](#) (DMTD), the national public awareness campaign for special districts, grew substantially in 2023. As of Thanksgiving 2023, more than 2.5 million impressions on DMTD's social media platforms across the country, further elevating awareness of special districts and the services they provide to millions every day.

Central to DMTD is the annual [Student Video Contest](#), a scholarship program for high school students to create 60-second videos highlighting the significance of special districts. Submissions to the national contest increased to 47 from 22 states, marking a 23 percent increase in contest entries from its first year accepting national submissions in 2022. Both the DMTD public awareness and NSDC will synergize for further growth of the campaign in 2024.

Contact Cole Karr for more:
colek@nationalspecialdistricts.org



LOOKING FOR PROJECT FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES?

NSDC HAS YOU COVERED.

Earlier this year, the National Special Districts Coalition (NSDC) launched a tool to streamline special district members' ability to search for project or program funding opportunities.

In partnership with The Ferguson Group (TFG), NSDC established a "project idea portal" for districts to submit projects for which funding opportunities are sought. Districts are welcome to submit details of the project via the webform, which TFG's grants team will review and work with the district to identify and apply for potential grant and finance opportunities.

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE NSDC PROJECT IDEA PORTAL](#)



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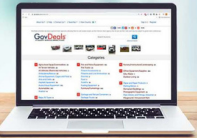
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