

NASSCED Member Resource Survey 2010

#31

State Represented *	New Jersey
Organization Represented *	New Jersey Association of Student Councils
Executive Director #1 *	Lou Miller
E-Mail Address *	lmiller@njasc.org
Executive Director #2	Wendy Sitzler
Executive Director #3	
Executive Director #4	
Approximate Number of Member Schools *	200
Annual Membership Fee	\$75
Does your membership elect State Officer...	Students/Individuals
Please describe how your association selects its State Officers/Schools:	
<p>State Officers are elected at our Winter Convention each January. In odd years candidates must be from our Northern counties, and in even years candidates must be from our Southern counties. Potential candidates must attend the "Running For State Office" workshop with their advisor at our Fall Business Meeting in October, they are interviewed by our outgoing State Officers at their December meeting after which the State Officers create a slate deciding who will run for each office, and then the candidates give their speeches and voting takes place at the Winter Convention in January. Each member school in attendance gets one vote, usually by their council President.</p>	
Which best describes the sponsorship (if any) of your association?	Independent of your State Principals Association
Is the Executive Director of your association a full-time position?	No - with a stipend
Does your association currently have 501(c)3 non-profit status?	Yes - as a stand alone organization
State Convention 2010-2011 date	January 5, 2011
For your State Convention, how are students primarily housed?	Single Day Event
For your State Convention, what is your primary meeting facility?	College Campus
Please identify and describe a unique or outstanding aspect of your State Convention.	<p>Campaigning takes place during registration, and the entire TCNJ student center becomes a giant campaign hall. Once campaigning is over, we then move to another building where we present awards and have our primary keynote speaker. Then there are workshop sessions, which are presented by volunteer students to share the great ideas that</p>

happen in their schools. While this is going on, the State Office elections take place. At the end of the day, everyone reconvenes and the next set of State Officers is announced.

Other Conference/Event #1, with 2010-2011 date Fall Business Meeting - Tuesday October 19

Other Conference/Event #2, with 2010-2011 date Spring Awards Program - Thursday May 12

Other Conference/Event #3, with 2010-2011 date

Please identify and describe a unique or outstanding aspect of one of the three events listed above.

At the Spring Awards Program, we present a variety of awards to recognize student leadership and support of our annual State Charity. The overall donation amount is revealed, and the identity of the next State Charity (chosen by the State Officers the prior month) is revealed.

Prior to the award presentations there are several student performers, which come from our member schools to entertain the nearly 5000 in attendance.

We also present the Freda Marden Award, named after our first Executive Director, to any retiring advisor with at least 25 years of service.

After our program is over, there are advisor workshops and students get to spend the remainder of the day enjoying the rides and attractions of Six Flags Great Adventure.

Does your association currently include middle level schools as members? Yes

As State Officers? YES

As Regional or District Officers, within your state? Not applicable

At the same state Conventions or Conferences? YES

At their own state Conventions or Conferences? NO

At Regional conferences? YES

At NASC L.E.A.D. Conferences? YES

At NASC National Conferences? YES

In the same award programs as high schools? YES

In their own award programs? YES

Does your association conduct a summer leadership program? Other

If your answer above was YES, please list below the name and summer 2011 date (if known) for each of your summer programs:	LTC - Session 1 - July 13-16, 2011 LTC - Session 2 - July 17-20, 2011
What is the fee per delegate for your summer program?	\$399.00
Have a separate advanced level program?	YES
Have a separate middle level program?	NO
Serve as a prerequisite to becoming a State Officer?	NO
Award/Program #1 Description:	Standards of Excellence - schools conduct a rigorous self evaluation, and then are placed in a triad where each school goes out to visit and evaluate one other school. During the visit, ideas are shared while evaluation takes place regarding council administration, effectiveness, and programs. Each council reflects on its own experience afterward and the evaluations are sent to the State Officers, who decide on a point cutoff for this award. Schools may only win this award once every five years.
Award/Program #2 Description:	<p>Top Ten Projects - each year the State Officers choose ten projects/programs from member schools that are outstanding in one of the following categories: Educational, Fundraising, Service, School Spirit, or Middle Level. These awards are presented at the Winter Convention each January, and project summaries are posted on the NJASC website for all to see.</p> <p>Member schools can submit one project for consideration each year, in doing so they explain why they chose this project to submit as well as describing the planning, execution, and overall success of the project.</p> <p>The point is to recognize excellent projects taking place in our member schools, and to share the great ideas of their councils with many others.</p>
Award/Program #3 Description:	Honor School - this program is a self-evaluation, similar to National Council of Excellence, where schools check off the things they are doing that reflect an excellent council and share project ideas that they have done. This award is cumulative, for example we have 10-20-30 year Honor Schools and for the first time this coming year we will have a 50th year Honor School.

How does your association deal with the issue of advisor turnover?

This is a major problem. We do our best to maintain a strong communication presence with member schools through regular e-mails, advisor newsletters, etc. and for the most part when advisors leave they do pass on to us the necessary contact information of their successor to keep things rolling.

We also rely on a core of advisors - especially those of the current State Officers - to reach out to new schools or those who were active but dropped out and get them involved.

We have gotten a number of new member schools - this year about 20. However, each year we seem to lose about the

same number of schools as we gain. We have a core of about 100-125 schools that are longtime actively involved members, and another 100-125 that seem to drop in and out every few years.

What is another significant problem currently facing your association, and how are you dealing with it?

Right now we are running LTC at a loss, as we try and keep it affordable for our member schools - especially in this economy. When we moved from a camp site to a college campus several years ago, our costs went up dramatically. We really had no choice but to move because the camps could not accommodate us in July and keeping LTC in August was not an option due to conflicts with high school sports. Having LTC on a college campus did raise the status of our program with staff, schools, parents and was the right move - we just need to keep it affordable.

It was very encouraging this past year that, in the face of massive budget cuts by our Governor to school districts, while many schools no longer paid all or part of the cost for their delegates to LTC, many parents picked up the bill themselves. Our schools, advisors, and parents of student leaders know that LTC is a great program - and were willing to pay for it.

So far, we have been able to compensate by keeping our other events throughout the year profitable. We are reviewing current membership, registration fees, etc. to ensure that this continues. We are also trying to get our LTC numbers up, as that will minimize the loss by spreading fixed costs over more delegates. This is a work in process.

What advice do you have for someone who has just become a new Executive Director?

Get to know your fellow Executive Directors through NASSCED, and maintain that communication throughout the year. They are in many cases dealing with similar problems that you have, and can provide a lot of advice and guidance to help you out.

Also, try to keep your advisors - especially the dedicated ones that support your program year after year - satisfied as best as you can. However, do NOT sacrifice the quality of your program or your role as its' Executive Director to accomplish this. You will lose schools from time to time - and there is little you can do about it - but do not allow it to become a trend.

Created 3 Oct 2010 9:59:14 AM	68.196.115.0 IP Address
PUBLIC	