

We, the Media

Let's talk numbers.

204: The total number of people who attended NASBE's Annual Conference 2015 in Baltimore.

860: The number of tweets using the NASBE Annual Conference hashtag #NASBE15.

75: The number of people live tweeting NASBE's Annual Conference 2015.

These numbers show tremendous growth. This year's conference drew double the number of people who came to Denver the previous year, and the flurry of activity on social media during the conference (even though the numbers are an approximation using free analytics tools) indicates that attendees were deeply engaged.

Now consider these numbers:

68: The number of retweets NASBE receives for every 100 tweets.

12 million: The total impressions—that is, how often NASBE tweets showed up in Twitter followers' streams in the past year.

I gathered that last data point from a digital media agency, Social Driver, which did a complimentary audit of NASBE's social media efforts. I was blown away. How could one tweet have such potential?

Emily Rasowsky, Social Driver's director of marketing strategy, explained that a tweet can have a big impact when influential people share it. In our case, this happened when Indiana State Board Member Byron Ernest retweeted this NASBE tweet during the conference:

Ernest, who just joined NASBE's board of directors as its new member representative, has over 280,000 Twitter followers—more than any other person tweeting about #NASBE15 during the

conference. Ernest's followers alone, not to mention those of other live tweeters such as NASBE President Mary Lord and Massachusetts's Mary Ann Stewart, gave NASBE's tweet 25 times the exposure it would otherwise have had. That's huge for an organization with just under 11,000 Twitter followers!

Emily had a few other ideas. If just a handful of NASBE members had the potential to reach millions with a single tweet or two, imagine what the combined efforts of the entire membership could accomplish? Reaching a sizable audience is only a starting point. Engagement—when followers interact with your content—is where real impact lies. The Every Student Succeeds Act returns great authority to the states, and when it takes effect, state boards of education will be even more essential. It will be important to help the education community understand who state boards are and what they do. We must share state success stories and engage the public in state policymaking. Social media can be a great way to leverage NASBE's combined influence as a membership organization.

In the coming months, NASBE will be taking a close look at our membership to identify social media superstars: power users like Byron Ernest and Mary Ann Stewart, who have a strong follow-

ing and great potential to help raise NASBE's national voice and share our unique viewpoint with an expanded audience.

NASBE has such an active, inspired membership! I look forward to tapping its potential. ■



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Communications Director

