

Association of School Business Officials International **Certification**

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL VERSION 1.2



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Management System

Scope

The policies and procedures documented herein outline the ASBO International management system guided by ISO/IEC 17024 Conformity assessment – general requirements for bodies operating certification of personnel for the following program(s):

Certified Administrator of School Finance and Operations[®] (SFO[®])

Location

This *Certification Policies and Procedures Manual* and all documents supporting them shall be available in Adobe PDF format on the network at: P:\CertificationDocs\Policies-Procedures. An updated and current print version shall be available from the certification director and also provided on ASBO International's public Website, www.asbointl.org/certification.

Enforcement

The certification director shall be responsible for overall maintenance and updating of the *Policies and Procedures Manual*. If the certification director is not available, the director's designee shall fulfill the enforcement functions of the certification director.

Review and Modification

The chair of the Certification Commission shall appoint a subcommittee of Certification Commission members to conduct an annual review of the Certification Commission policies and procedures and recommend any additions or changes to the Certification Commission. Changes to the policies and procedures must be approved by a simple majority affirmative vote of the Certification Commission.

Changes

The Certification Commission reserves the right to make changes in its policies and procedures at any time and will make every effort to give advance notice when such changes are made.

Appropriate revisions shall be made to the *Certification Policies and Procedures Manual* and the changes shall be summarized on the *Certification Policies and Procedures Manual Modification and Training Log* to include

- The section of the Certification Policies and Procedures Manual modified
- The reason for modification
- Personnel impacted by the proposed change
- Effective date.

Employees whose responsibilities are impacted by changes adopted in the *Certification Policies and Procedures Manual* shall be trained on the appropriate sections after the adoption of the change. This training shall be documented and records of such training

shall be kept in the *Certification Policies and Procedures Manual Modification and Training Log*.

Governance

Authority

ASBO International is a non-profit corporation governed by its board of directors. The ASBO International board of directors grants authority to the Certification Commission to independently make essential certification decisions related to standards and eligibility, policies and procedures of the certification, and the issuance of certifications. These decisions shall be made independently of and under no influence by any other individual or business entity within or outside of ASBO International.

Insofar as the ASBO International board of directors is legally responsible for governing ASBO International, it maintains the right to intervene if the Certification Commission acts in such a way as to violate regulatory, statutory or contractual requirements, certification industry standards, or its stated policies or procedures or otherwise puts the organization at risk. Such intervention shall occur in such a way that assures the integrity of the certification process and assures fair and equitable treatment of all persons involved in certification.

Mission

The mission of the Certification Commission is to provide oversight to the development and administration of credible credentials for school business officials and to ensure the credentials meet high standards of ethical practice for the profession.

Purpose

The Certification Commission shall develop and administer a fair and equitable certification program(s) for the school business management profession. Acting on behalf of the best interest of the profession, the Certification Commission will serve to uphold the highest professional standards and ethics.

The Certification Commission's purpose is to establish the governing rules and regulations related to the certification program, conduct the program, make determinations regarding eligibility and all essential certification decisions, and provide mediation and interpretations for the program as needed by staff and other volunteer groups.

Composition

The Certification Commission shall be comprised of 9 to 11 industry professionals who represent the breadth and scope of the credential(s). The Certification Commission members shall serve a term of three years, which may be renewed for a second three-year term of service. Members of the Certification Commission shall collectively represent and eventually possess the certification(s) the commission provides oversight

to and shall, through education and experience, represent the stakeholder interests served by the certification.

Suggested Categories of Membership on the Certification Commission:

- Chief School Business Official (3)
- Information Management (1)
- Financial Management (1)
- Facility Management (1)
- Human Resources Management (1)
- Ancillary (Transportation, Risk, Food Management) (1)
- Educational Enterprise (1 legal; 1 legislative) (2)
- Public Member (an individual external to the profession but who understands school business management; perhaps someone from a college of education) (1)

Upon certification program launch, certificants shall begin replacing the non-certified but eligible individuals. As soon as practicable, all Certification Commission members qualified for certification shall hold the certification, with the exception of the representative from the public.

Responsibilities

The Certification Commission is to provide oversight to the development and administration of a credible certification program(s) for school business officials.

The Certification Commission has the authority and autonomy to act in all matters related to the certification program(s), which shall include developing and implementing all policies and procedures related to granting, maintaining, suspending, or withdrawing certification. All matters and decisions of the Certification Commission shall relate specifically to the development and administration of a credible certification program(s). In pursuing its mission and objectives, the Certification Commission shall serve as or appoint as necessary, all technical and sub-committees required to support the activities of the Certification Commission, including governance, eligibility, examination, recertification, ethics, and disciplinary.

Responsibilities of the Certification Commission include

1. Develop and implement policies and procedures to support all decisions related to certification, including granting, maintaining, suspending, or withdrawing certification.
2. Provide oversight to the nominations, elections, and appointment process of members to the Certification Commission and the technical and sub-committees required to support the certification program(s).
3. Establish the qualifications and requirements for service of volunteers.

4. Recruit and maintain a cadre of subject-matter experts to participate in the development of a valid, reliable, and legally defensible certification examination(s).
5. In conjunction with staff and experts in certification, develop and maintain all program elements, such as eligibility, examination, recertification, ethics, and discipline.
6. In conjunction with the staff, develop the annual operating budget for the certification program(s). The Certification Commission shall make recommendations that ensure that all commitments are secured to implement and maintain a credible certification program. The Certification Commission shall advise the ASBO International board of directors regarding funding for special projects and/or services required to maintain a valid, reliable, and legally defensible examination.
7. Review at least annually, all psychometric reports, such as item analysis, examination performance reports, etc. The Commission members shall take under advisement and address any changes to the examination and its administration pending review of psychometric reports.
8. Ensure an adequate item bank is maintained.
9. Provide oversight for the administration of contracts for psychometric and examination administration services.
10. Establish the code of conduct required of certified persons and serve as the professional conduct body.
11. Monitor appropriate use of certification trademarks.
12. Report annually to the ASBO International board of directors.
13. Assure financial continuity of the certification.
14. Serve as the appeals body.
15. Approve the cut-score for the examination.
16. Maintain the integrity of the program through maintenance of confidentiality of personal and program records.

Role of the Certification Commission Members

- Attend all meetings and perform all commission assignments and other duties as required.
- Understand the mission and purpose of the certification program.

- Read, understand, and comply with the certification program policies and procedures and governance documents.
- Behave in a professional manner, adhering to the Certification Commission Code of Conduct.
- Respect the confidentiality of written and verbal communications, and maintain the confidentiality of documents and information they receive in the course of their service.
- Sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement and Conflict-of-Interest Statement as a condition of service.
- Avoid personal and professional conflicts of interest. If a conflict of interest arises, the individual shall inform the chair of the Certification Commission.
- Understand and accept their fiduciary responsibility to ASBO International, the certification program, and the public it serves.
- Not speak or act for the Certification Commission without proper authorization.
- Publicly support all decisions made by the Certification Commission.
- Act fairly and be impartial in their role on behalf of and in service to ASBO International, its certification program, and the public it serves.

Selection Procedures

Commission Officers

The president of ASBO International will appoint the first chair of the Certification Commission and the ASBO International board of directors shall appoint a Nominating Committee separate from the board to solicit candidates and select the best qualified individuals to serve on the first Certification Commission. The ASBO International board of directors may appoint the first Certification Commission. The Certification Commission, once seated, shall elect from within its officers, which shall include the vice chair and secretary/treasurer. Subsequent elections shall include chair, vice chair, and secretary/treasurer. These elections shall be to one-year terms. Officers may be re-elected to one additional one-year term.

Officers will be selected each year by having an open call for nominations and/or interested volunteers from the existing Commission membership. Officer candidates are voted on in an open discussion and/or a closed ballot process. Each office is voted on individually.

Commission Members

The term of service for members of the Certification Commission shall be three years, with one additional opportunity for re-election to a second three-year term. Initially the Certification Commission will be appointed to staggered terms so there is a rotation system in place to ensure approximately one-third of the commission turns over at one time. Depending on the number of commission members determined, the rotation schedule shall cycle as follows:

3 members appointed for a one-year term; may be re-elected to a full three-year term

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3 members appointed for a two-year term; may be re-elected to a full three-year term

3 members appointed for a three-year term; may be re-elected to second three-year term

Chair: appointed for a two-year term; may be re-elected to a three-year term as a committee member

Sample rotation schedule:

Chair: appointed in 2009 and serves until 2011; possible re-election as member to a three-year term ending in 2014; or a new member is elected to a three-year term ending in 2014

3 members are appointed for one year serving from 2009–2010; eligible for re-election to a three-year term ending in 2013

3 members are appointed for two years serving from 2009–2011; eligible for re-election to a three-year term ending in 2014

3 members are appointed for a three-year term serving from 2009–2012; eligible for re-election to a three-year term ending in 2015

Public Member: serves an initial three-year term from 2009–2012; not eligible for re-election; new public member elected in 2012

2013: 3 members are elected

2014: 4 members are elected

2015: 3 members are elected; 1 public member is elected

Nomination and Selection Procedures

Purpose and Responsibilities of the Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall consist of 3 to 4 members and its purpose is to ensure proper conduct of the nomination process and, for the first Certification Commission, the selection of candidates. Following the appointment of the first Certification Commission, the Nominating Committee shall oversee an election and shall be responsible for implementing the nominating and election policies and procedures of the Certification Commission, and serve as a subcommittee of the Certification Commission.

The Nominating Committee shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Ensure the nominating and appointment (eventually election) process is followed according to the policies and procedures, including conflict of interest, of the Certification Commission.
2. Establish a timeline of activities.
3. Issue a Call for Candidates.
4. Review candidate information.
5. Establish a slate of candidates.
6. Present the slate of candidates to the ASBO International board of directors for appointment of the first Certification Commission.

Following the seating of the first Certification Commission and at such a time as an election procedure will permit, discontinue step 6 above and implement the following steps. In the interim, the Certification Commission will assume responsibility of appointment from the slate of candidates, future members of the commission.

7. Develop the Official Ballot.
8. Disseminate the Official Ballot with candidate profiles to certificant population.
9. Prepare the election packet.
10. Conduct the election (recommend electronic).
11. Supervise the ballot counting.
12. Prepare and deliver the election results.

The chair of the Nominating Committee shall meet the following qualifications:

- Must not currently be serving as a director on the ASBO International board of directors or on any other committee which may present a conflict-of-interest.
- Must possess an understanding of the role and responsibilities of the Certification Commission and the responsibilities of individual commission members.

- Must understand the leadership requirements of the Certification Commission as well as the level of industry knowledge required of members.
- Must understand the democratic process of identifying and electing leadership and be familiar with the policies and procedures of the Certification Commission.
- Must understand the mission and purpose of the certification program and the public served by the credential.
- Must possess a broad understanding of the stakeholder groups represented by the credential in the industry.
- Must be fair, unbiased, and free of influence at every stage of the nominations process.
- Must be judicious and prudent in the exercise of all decisions and in the conduct of the nominations process.
- Must follow the written procedures for soliciting nominations and conducting an election.
- Must sign ASBO International's non-disclosure agreement and adhere to policies and procedures around confidential information.

Selection of Candidates

The Nominating Committee shall issue a Call for Candidates, which shall include the following information:

1. A description of the duties and responsibilities of Certification Commission members
2. The term of service
3. Requirements for meeting attendance
4. Requirements for executing fiduciary responsibilities
5. Requirements for avoiding conflicts of interest
6. Requirements for upholding the policies and procedures of the certification program
7. Published deadlines for the nominations and election process

The Call for Candidates will include a Candidate Statement of Interest to Serve.

All interested parties are required to include, at a minimum, the following information in their statements:

1. Name and contact information.
2. Expiration date of certificate (once enough individuals become certified).
3. A statement declaring good-standing status, or a pledge to bring his/her status up to good standing (once enough individuals become certified).
4. Areas of expertise.
5. Demographic information including employment setting, region represented, education, number of years in the industry, segments of the profession represented.
6. A description of leadership and volunteer experience.
7. Expertise in any specific areas the Certification Commission may deem necessary and desirable. The Certification Commission from time to time may need to fill positions with a member(s) possessing specific skills or expertise, for example, in the event a new credential or program is being developed and no resident experience exists.
8. A statement that no sanctions have been imposed and no investigation is pending on the certificant (once enough individuals become certified).
9. Candidate Biography and Statement of Interest to Serve per published requirements.

When enough individuals have become certified, the following will apply: Candidates may be nominated by any certificant in good standing within the ASBO International certification program. In addition to the nomination by certificants in good standing, any certificant in good standing may nominate himself or herself. All nominees must complete the Candidate Information Requirements and meet all published deadlines. All candidate information must be submitted to the chair of the Nominating Committee, addressed to the ASBO International Director of Certification. (See also Requirements for Nominees, below.)

Election Packet (to be developed when elections occur)

The Election Packet shall include the following: (assumes electronic voting):

1. An explanation of how to vote

2. Candidate information provided for voters:
 - Candidates listed in alphabetical order
 - Biographical information provided by the candidate per requirements
 - Candidate Interest to Serve Statement
3. Deadlines and voting requirements

Nominations, Ballot, and Election Procedures

For each election, the following procedures are administered. The ASBO International staff supports the duties of the Nominating Committee by implementing the following procedures in accordance with the predetermined schedule:

1. At the direction of the Nominating Committee, sends out instructions and solicitation for nominations to all current certificants or stakeholders until such a time as sufficient number of certificants exists.
2. Collects materials.
3. Forwards materials to Nominating Committee for review.
4. Schedules a conference call for the Nominating Committee to review materials for compliance with published requirements.
5. Develops candidate information, with approval of candidates.
6. Sends ballot to Nominating Committee for approval.
7. Emails ballots with cover letter from Nominating Committee and Candidate Information to all current certificants (or stakeholders until a sufficient number of certificants exist). Due date specified.

In addition,

1. The chair of the Nominating Committee, serving as the Supervisor of Elections, reviews all ballots for conformance with deadlines, information requirements, and number of candidates to be chosen and voted on. Improperly completed ballots are disqualified. The supervisor supervises the count and records the vote tally against the candidate's name. Disqualified ballots are reported, but not counted in the results. The results are tabulated showing the total votes cast, the candidate's name and the number of votes received.
2. The supervisor sends the finalized Election Results Report via email to the chair of the Certification Commission and the commission members.

3. The chair of the Certification Commission announces the election results to the ASBO International board of directors.
4. The Nominating Committee sends congratulations letters to elected individuals.
5. The Nominating Committee sends thank-you letters to candidates not elected.
6. A general announcement of officers and members is published to the certificant population (or other stakeholders) via newsletter or Website, and in an official letter (or email).

Election Report

The Election Report shall include the following:

1. Total number of ballots cast
2. Number of invalid ballots
3. A list of all candidates showing the number of votes each received and which candidates are elected.

Appeal of Election

Candidates may appeal the result of the election by written notification to the chair of the Nominating Committee within 30 days of the official count of the ballots.

Destruction of Ballots

After the period of time required for an Appeal of Election, all ballots shall be destroyed.

Requirements for Nominees

A. Candidate Information

To provide information to assist the Nominating Committee in selecting candidates and presenting information to certificants for voting, nominees are required to provide biographical and demographic information. The Nominating Committee will publish candidate biographical and demographic information and the candidate Statement of Interest to Serve with the official ballot. Candidates will be required to review this information prior to it being published as part of the official election ballot.

The biography should include experience, education, employment history, and other relevant background information. The biography must conform to the following rules:

1. The statement must be submitted in typewritten form. An email attachment is acceptable. No handwritten information will be included.
2. The biography must not exceed 150 words. Only the first 150 words will be published.
3. The submission must be signed by the nominee, attesting to the accuracy of the information provided.

B. Statement of Interest to Serve

Candidates must provide a written statement that should indicate the purpose of their candidacy, issues they hope to address during the term of service, and a list of relevant previous accomplishments. The statement shall conform to the following rules:

1. The statement must be submitted in typewritten form. An email attachment is acceptable. No handwritten information will be included.
2. The statement must not exceed 100 words. Only the first 100 words will be published.
3. The submission must be signed by the nominee, attesting to the accuracy of the information provided.
4. ASBO International staff will distribute this information along with the Official Ballot to all current certificants.

Officers and Recorder

The chair, vice chair, and secretary/treasurer of the Certification Commission shall be elected at the last Certification Commission meeting of the year and shall serve a term of one year beginning on January 1 of the next calendar year.

The chair shall preside at all meetings of the Certification Commission, shall see that orders and resolutions of the Certification Commission are carried out, shall represent the Certification Commission, and shall have primary responsibility for carrying out the functions of the Certification Commission. The vice chair shall have the authority to perform all of the duties of the chair when the latter is unavailable or unable to perform them, and shall perform other tasks as delegated by the chair.

A staff recorder shall maintain notes of all Certification Commission meetings and decisions.

Vacancy

If the chair vacates his or her position, the vice chair will assume the position for the remainder of the vacated position's term. The vice chair position will remain open for the remainder of the term.

If a member of the Certification Commission vacates his or her position, the position will remain vacant until the next election cycle, with the exception of the public member position, which if vacated, will be filled by appointment of the chairperson to complete the remainder of the vacated position's term.

Removal

An appointed or elected member of the Certification Commission may be removed for any action that is determined by the Certification Commission to be detrimental to the best interests of the certification program. Removal of any member will be by recommendation to the chairperson and approval by a 2/3 majority vote of the Certification Commission, provided the member was given notice and offered an opportunity to address the Certification Commission prior to formal action.

Volunteer Agreements

Certification Commission members shall sign the *Certification Program Contributor Agreement* and its supporting documents covering confidentiality, security, and conflicts of interest prior to accepting their positions.

Meetings

The Certification Commission shall meet at least once annually, but may meet as often as necessary to accomplish its responsibilities. Certification Commission meetings shall convene in person, by phone, or by electronic means. The chair shall formulate an agenda for each meeting.

Notice

The Certification Commission may schedule meetings at its discretion upon agreement of all members. All Commission members shall receive a 15-day notice of each meeting, unless such notification is waived by 2/3 majority vote of the Commission. Notice shall be automatically waived by attendance at a meeting.

Open Meetings

Due to the confidential nature of the topics discussed, Certification Commission meetings are closed to the public. The Certification Commission will consider requests for an audience on a case-by-case basis.

Votes/Decisions

The Certification Commission's policies may be adopted or amended, and all essential certification decisions made, upon a simple majority affirmative vote of the members of the Certification Commission voting with a quorum present in person, by telephone, or any electronic means.

Votes by committees or subcommittees on recommendations to the Certification Commission may be adopted or amended upon a simple majority vote of the members of the committee or subcommittee with a quorum present in person, by telephone, or any electronic means.

Quorum and Voting

A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Certification Commission shall consist of a majority of the members then in office. All decisions shall be by majority vote of the members present at a meeting.

Parliamentary Procedures

On questions of parliamentary procedure not covered by these policies, Roberts' Rules of Order (latest edition) will prevail.

Records of Meetings

A summary of Commission meeting outcomes shall be recorded and filed according to ASBO International records management procedures.

Certification Activity Reporting

At least annually, the Certification Commission will publish a summary of certification activities that will include, at a minimum, the number of candidates examined, pass/fail statistics, and number of individuals currently certified.

List of Certified Individuals

A current list of certified individuals will be published by ASBO International, except where certificants may have opted out.

Committees

Standing Committees

The following are standing committees of the Certification Commission:

Exam Committee (Part 1 and Part 2)

With guidance from ASBO International's testing agency, the Exam Committee develops the certification Part 1 and Part 2 exams and monitors their performance.

Recertification Committee

The Recertification Committee develops the recertification system and monitors its performance, including quality assurance through audits of certificant applications.

Appeals Committee

The Appeals Committee considers and makes determinations on appeals made by candidates or certificants. Appeals Committee members cannot simultaneously serve on the Exam Committee or Recertification Committee.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall oversee the appointment of the first Certification Commission and implement the nominating and election process for the Certification Commission.

Ad Hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees will be established and appointed as needed by the Certification Commission. Current ad hoc committees include:

Job Task Analysis Panel

Under guidance from ASBO International's testing agency, the Job Task Analysis Panel develops and conducts a study of practicing school business officials to identify the tasks necessary for the practice of school business management, and uses the results of the study to make recommendations to the Certification Commission for updating the test content outline. The job task analysis is conducted as needed or at least every 3–7 years.

Cut-Score Committee

The Cut-Score Committee is responsible for setting the cut-score using a criterion-referenced standard. After initial development of the program and the exam, the Committee is only needed when there are fundamental changes to the exam.

Authority

The committees report to the Certification Commission. The commission authorizes and directs the committees to take all necessary or appropriate action to carry out the purpose and responsibilities assigned.

Volunteer Agreements

All committee members shall sign the *Certification Program Contributor Agreement* and its supporting documents covering confidentiality, security, and conflicts of interest prior to accepting their positions.

Removal of Committee Members

After giving notice as it deems appropriate, the Certification Commission shall have the authority to remove any committee member who fails to perform the responsibilities assigned. Such action shall require a minimum 2/3 vote of the full Certification Commission.

Composition

Each Committee's composition will be determined on an as-needed basis as determined by the needs of the program.

Personnel

Staff Job Descriptions, Evaluations

Staff job descriptions shall be maintained in ASBO International personnel files. Staff performance shall be evaluated annually and documented in ASBO International personnel files. Training and development plans shall be developed and implemented, when necessary, and documented in ASBO International personnel files.

Confidentiality and Conflicts of Interest

ASBO International staff with responsibilities for the certification program shall sign the *Certification Program Contributor Agreement*. This agreement covers terms of confidentiality and conflicts of interest.

Subcontractors

Decision to Issue a Certification

The actual decision to issue a certification shall be made by the Certification Commission and shall not be subcontracted.

Agreements with Subcontractors

When subcontractors are used for any other activity substantively related to the certification program, written agreements shall be made with the subcontractors and shall include, at minimum, the following terms:

- Scope of work
- Payment terms
- Termination
- Conflicts of interest prevention
- Confidentiality and security
- Copyright transfer to ASBO International (if applicable)

Subcontractor List

The certification director shall maintain a current list of all subcontractors with responsibilities substantively related to the certification program.

Document Control

Scope of Document Control

A document control system shall be maintained to control the creation, approval, revision and re-approval, distribution, and prevention of use of obsolete material by any individual associated with the certification programs.

Master List and Controlled Document Maintenance

The controlled documents and a master list of all controlled documents shall be maintained by the certification director. The master list shall identify authority for controlled document changes. The controlled documents and master list shall be maintained electronically and in print. Should the electronic and print versions differ, the electronic version shall be the ultimate source.

Outdated electronic versions of controlled documents shall be moved to an "Obsolete" folder and shall be kept there in accordance with the record control policy.

Access

All personnel shall be able to access controlled documents germane to their responsibilities within the management system.

Records Control

Scope of Records Control System

A certification records control system shall be maintained to demonstrate that certification program policies and procedures requirements have been fulfilled effectively. The records shall be identified, managed, and disposed of in a manner designed to ensure integrity of the program and confidentiality of the information.

Certification Record Control Schedule

Records shall be kept according to the following schedule. The ASBO International Record Control Schedule applies to all general company records not covered here.

Record type	Minimum requirement
Certification Committee, Appeals Board and Exam Development Panel agendas, actions, and meeting minutes/notes	Permanent
Research reports: general statistical reports, item analysis, equating, job analyses, and standard-setting reports	Permanent
Quality reports: evaluation reports, internal audit reports	Permanent
Intellectual property records: copyright and trademark registrations, copies of protected works	Permanent
Test development materials: item and exam review meetings documents, exam forms and scoring keys, score records, pass/fail rosters, signed item writer waivers, testing company	Permanent

contracts and related correspondence.	
Files involving challenges to test administration and/or revocation, suspension, or challenge to certification (including answer sheets, cease and desist letters, supporting documentation, testimony transcripts, etc.)	Permanent
Historical list of certificants	Permanent
Certificant information: name and certification number, effective date of certification, date of expiration, scope of certification	Permanent
Exam items	Six years after discontinuation of use
Individual answer sheets	Six months from date of exam
Record type	Minimum requirement
Currently certified: certification and recertification applications and supporting documentation, exam scores	Retain most recent versions six years from date of last application
No longer certified: certification and recertification applications and supporting documentation, exam scores	Three years following expiration of certification
Applicant incomplete applications	Six years from date of submission

No Retention Required

Documents and other materials (including originals and duplicates) that are not otherwise required to be retained, are not necessary to the functioning or continuity of ASBO International, and have no legal significance may be destroyed when no longer needed. Examples include draft documents, duplicate copies of records that are no longer needed, reminder messages, and miscellaneous correspondence not requiring follow-up or action. No specific retention requirements are assigned to these types of documents.

Confidentiality, Privacy, Security

Privacy and Security of Individual Information

ASBO International shall safeguard the privacy of individuals, where applicable, and shall hold in confidence and in a secure manner the information obtained in the course of certification program activities at all levels of the organization, including the activities of all personnel (paid, subcontracted or volunteer) acting on its behalf. Except as required in this *Policies and Procedures Manual*, information about a particular individual is considered confidential information and shall not be disclosed to a third party by ASBO International personnel (paid, volunteer or subcontractor) without prior written consent of

the individual. Where the law requires information to be disclosed to a third party, the individual shall be notified before the information is provided.

Confidential Information

The nature, format, content and results of examinations administered by ASBO International and all application materials are considered confidential information and will be treated as such in accordance with policies and procedures adopted by the Certification Commission unless appropriate permission is obtained or where otherwise required by law.

Further, ASBO International and its testing agency stores, processes, and uses data collected from application forms and test score reports. Data are stored only to the extent necessary for processing and validating applications/examination scores and in compliance with related record retention regulations. Under no circumstances will individual data or test scores be shared with any entity outside of ASBO International and its testing agency, unless permission is obtained from the candidate or certificant or unless otherwise required by law. Candidate test scores are not released by telephone. ASBO International may develop and publish statistical data regarding the exams provided the identities of the candidates are not divulged.

Privileged Information

The nature, format, content and results of examinations administered by ASBO International are considered privileged information.

Information Disclosure

To protect the confidentiality of candidate records, information about candidates and their examination results are released to third parties only under the following circumstances:

- ASBO International will disclose information that is required to be in compliance with state and federal laws, court orders and military deployment information requirements without certificant authorization.
- Any additional information requested by a third party may be released only after certificant's signed authorization.

Certification Verification

Records of certificants shall be maintained electronically according to the record control policy.

Requests for verification of progress in attaining certification shall be responded to in writing and provided only to the applicant/candidate unless permission is granted in writing by the participant for release to others.

Requests by any stakeholder for verification of an individual's certification status shall be responded to by phone or in writing. Only an indication of whether an individual is

certified or not shall be provided (and if so, the certification term, ensuring that the status of in-progress or unsuccessful candidates is not disclosed).

Security of Exam Instruments

ASBO International shall safeguard the exam instruments and scoring key/rubrics during the course of certification program activities at all levels of the organization, including all personnel (paid, subcontracted, or volunteer) acting on its behalf. Personnel handling the exam instruments and scoring key/rubrics shall be provided and attest to reading and understanding exam secure handling procedures prior to their handling of the materials.

Information Management and Communication

The ASBO International certification program information shall be classified as either public or confidential. Public information is available to anyone and confidential information shall be made available only to ASBO International's Certification Commission, appropriate ASBO International staff (as determined by ASBO International's executive director), and others deemed necessary by the Certification Commission.

The Certification Commission, in conjunction with ASBO International staff, will determine the classification for the information. All documents and other information will be considered confidential unless and until formally determined to be public by the commission.

Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, materials needed to protect the integrity of the certification program, those that might provide a competitive advantage (trade secrets), and personal information of certification candidates and certificants.

ASBO International staff will identify confidential materials appropriately in order to communicate the need for security. The identification will be clear and consistent and be provided to everyone affected. ASBO International staff will also ensure that appropriate security measures are in place to minimize the risk of security breaches; this includes, but is not limited to, technology management, risk management, and internal control management.

ASBO International will also require volunteers and/or staff who are privy to confidential information to review and sign a confidentiality and non-competition agreement annually.

If there are questions or inquiries about the classification of information, they will be directed to ASBO International's executive director or the chair of the Certification Commission.

Fairness and Non-Discrimination

Adherence to Principles

ASBO International adheres to principles of fairness and due process and endorses the principles of equal opportunity. In administering the certification program, ASBO

International shall not discriminate or deny opportunity to anyone on the grounds of gender, age, religion, national or ethnic origin, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, or disability.

Exam Preparation

Authoritative References Lists

ASBO International compiles and publishes Authoritative References Lists for each of its certifications. These lists are concise yet informative guides to key books, articles, and other sources. They serve as valuable tools for all professionals in the industry, especially those preparing for the certifications.

The lists are intended for use as a study aid only. ASBO International does not intend the lists to imply endorsement of the specific references, nor are the test questions necessarily taken from the sources listed.

Preparatory Courses

The Certification Commission does not sponsor, accredit, or endorse preparatory courses leading to its certification examinations.

Program Fees

Fee Establishment and Modification

The Certification Commission and staff determine fee amounts to be recommended to the board of directors, who has final authority.

Certification Schemes

Scheme Committees

The Certification Commission shall serve as the ASBO International certification scheme committee.

Scheme Components

The certification schemes for all ASBO International certifications shall include, but are not limited to, the following components:

- Eligibility requirements
- Examination based on the content outline
- Recertification requirements
- Surveillance

Publication of Scheme

The schemes, including the examination content outline, shall be published in a forum accessible to applicants, candidates and certificants. The forum may be on the Internet, in a professional bulletin or newsletter, in the application, or in all of these. The level of detail made public may be different from the level of detail used by ASBO International internally, but both shall be consistent.

Notification of Scheme Change

If a scheme is changed, notification of the change shall be published in a forum accessible to all applicants and candidates. This notification shall occur a minimum of 3 months up to a maximum of 24 months before the changes goes into effect, dependent upon the significance of the change. The forum may be on the Internet, in a professional bulletin or newsletter, in the application, or in all of these.

Certificant Compliance with Scheme Change

If a scheme is changed, the Exam Committee shall develop, document, and implement a plan to bring all current certificants into compliance with the new scheme within a period of time reasonable to the nature of the change.

The scheme shall be published in a forum accessible to all candidates. The forum may be on the Internet, in a professional bulletin or newsletter, in the application, or in all of these. The level of detail made public may be different from the level of detail used to actually develop the exam, but both shall be consistent.

Review of Scheme

The Exam Committee shall review the certification schemes for currency and relevancy at a minimum frequency of five years. The review, findings, and any actions taken shall be documented.

Exam Development and Scoring

Examination Development

A job task analysis study of the school business management profession will be performed no less than every 3–7 years. The purpose of the study will be to identify the day-to-day responsibilities performed by the professionals and the knowledge required to perform these responsibilities. The study findings will serve as the foundation for developing the examination specifications. These specifications will identify the linkages between the responsibility and knowledge areas and will outline the following: (a) the topics to be covered on the examination, (b) the number of questions per topic area to be included on each examination, and (c) the cognitive level at which questions for each topic area should be written. The examination specifications can be reviewed and adjusted by the SFO Exam Committee, as necessary, to reflect current professional practice, government regulations, etc. All examination forms will be assembled in accordance with the examination specifications.

Questions on the exam are written by school business officials who have been trained in preparing multiple-choice items by ASBO International's testing agency.

Pre-testing of Items

To enable the addition of new items with proven sound statistical attributes to the active item bank, new items will be pre-tested on each examination form. Pre-test items will not be scored. Pre-test items will be intermingled among the active items and candidates will not know which items are being pre-tested.

Waiver of Requirements/Deferment

Subject matter experts who participate in the development of certification examination items will not be waived of the program requirements. In addition, they must defer application for the examination for a period of three years from the date of their last content development involvement. After that time, they will be subject to the same eligibility and testing requirements of all candidates.

Examination

The Part 1 examination consists of 70 multiple-choice questions and the Part 2 examination consists of 100 multiple-choice questions. Candidates are presented with a question and are asked to choose the correct answer from the four options provided. Only one answer is correct.

Each candidate is allowed a maximum of 2 hours to complete Part 1 and 2 ½ hours for Part 2 of the exam. These time frames include 15 minutes for the non-disclosure agreement, tutorial, and follow-up survey. There is no penalty assessed for an incorrect answer; points are scored only for correct answers.

Passing Standards and Equating

The passing standard shall be set using a criterion-referenced methodology. The Cut-Score Committee will submit the proposed passing standard to the Certification Commission for final approval.

Whenever examinee volumes permit, equating will be used to maintain the passing standard across different examination forms and to statistically adjust scores, as necessary, to compensate for differences in difficulty across examination forms.

Request for Hand-scoring

No requests for hand-scoring will be provided for computerized examinations. Because the computer instantly records the response provided by the candidate, hand-scoring is not relevant.

Audit

It is the responsibility of the candidates and certificants to maintain accurate and up-to-date files

of their documentation that supports the program requirements. Some documentation may be required during the initial application and recertification processes; otherwise the candidate or certificant will attest to their meeting the program requirements.

Applications will be audited randomly. Each candidate or certificant will be asked to provide documentation to support the application statements. The application is not fully processed until all of the materials have been submitted. If the applicant does not submit all of the required materials within the one-year timeframe of their application eligibility, then his or her application is considered incomplete and the applicant must follow applicable procedures for submitting a new application. The new application will be reviewed automatically by ASBO International staff for complete materials.

Audit Procedures

Application Audit

ASBO International will audit a portion of the applications that are submitted for compliance with the certification program requirements. The following is the process that ASBO International staff will follow to perform the application audits:

1. ASBO International will randomly select (done via the Integral 7 candidate management system) applications submitted to the program.
2. ASBO International will contact the applicant and ask that he or she fill out an Application Audit Form and provide the subsequent documentation to complete the application process. His or her application will not be considered complete until he or she has complied with the audit requests.
3. ASBO International will ask applicants to submit the following:
 - A. To verify educational background, he or she will submit an electronic version of an official transcript. ASBO International will accept degrees earned at accredited institutions. If an applicant earned a degree from an institution outside of the United States and Canada, additional authentication may be required.
 - B. To verify years of experience, he or she will submit an electronic copy of his or her up-to-date professional resume (no more than 5 pages in length).
 - C. To verify current employment in the school district, he or she will be asked to complete an Employment Verification Form that will require a signature from the school district verifying employment. If the applicant is not currently employed in a school district, he or she will have the form filled out by the last school district he or she was employed in.
 - D. To verify ASBO International membership (if indicated by the applicant),

ASBO International staff will check the ASBO International membership database for the status of the applicant's membership. This is only to verify that he or she should receive the membership discount on the application fee.

4. Once ASBO International has received all of the required documentation and the applicant meets the eligibility requirements, his or her application will move on to the next phase of the certification program.
5. If an applicant fails to submit the appropriate documentation for the audit within the one-year timeframe of his or her application eligibility, then his or her application is considered incomplete and the applicant is expected to resubmit an application and pay applicable application fees. ASBO International will automatically audit this application again for completeness.
6. If an applicant shows evidence of submitting false information, ASBO International staff will notify the Certification Commission and its disciplinary committee for application review.

Renewal Audit

There will be no audit of the annual renewal process. ASBO International will monitor the certificants who do not renew and follow appropriate program policies for handling these cases.

Recertification Audit

ASBO International will audit a portion of the recertification applications that are submitted for compliance with the certification program requirements. The following is the process ASBO International will follow to carry out the recertification application audit process:

1. ASBO International will randomly select (done via the Integral 7 candidate management system) the recertification applications submitted to the program for audit.
2. ASBO International will contact the applicant and ask that he or she fill out a Recertification Application Audit Form and provide subsequent documentation to complete the recertification process. His or her application will not be considered complete until he or she has complied with the audit requests.
3. ASBO International will ask certificants to submit the following:

To verify compliance with the required 90 contact hours, he or she will submit documentation that he or she attended the professional development activities. Documentation considered appropriate includes, but is not limited to, official continuing education credits (CEU) or continuing education (CE) or

continuing professional education (CPE) transcripts, certificate of completion or attendance, and/or receipt of payment for the event.

If the applicant is submitting contact hours under the category of “unstructured” hours he or she should be able to provide similar documentation for the activities. If an applicant is submitting job experience as a contact hour, then ASBO International staff will request the certificant complete an Employment Verification Form and have it signed by the school district to verify employment.

4. Once ASBO International has received all of the required documentation and the certificant meets the recertification requirements, his or her application will be approved.
5. If an applicant fails to submit the appropriate documentation for the audit, then his or her recertification application is considered incomplete and the certificant’s certification is revoked after the initial three-year period of certification has passed.
6. If an applicant shows evidence of submitting false information, ASBO International staff will notify the Certification Commission and its disciplinary committee for application review.

Candidate Confidentiality Agreement

All candidates must sign the Candidate Confidentiality Agreement at the time of examination. The agreement follows:

You understand, acknowledge, and agree

- That the questions and answers of the exam are the exclusive and confidential property of ASBO International, are copyrighted, and are protected by ASBO International’s intellectual property rights;
- Not to disclose the exam questions or answers or discuss any of the content of the exam materials with any person without prior written approval of ASBO International;
- Not to remove from the examination room any exam materials of any kind provided to you or any other material related to the exam, including, without limitation, any notes or calculations;
- Not to copy or attempt to make copies (written, photocopied, or otherwise) of any exam material, including, without limitation, any exam questions or answers;

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- Not to sell, license, distribute, give away, or obtain from any other source other than ASBO International, the exam materials, questions, or answers.
- That your obligations under this Agreement shall continue in effect after the examination and, if applicable, after termination of your certification, regardless of the reason or reasons for termination, and whether such termination is voluntary or involuntary.

Requests for Test Administration Modifications

Reasonable modifications for testing shall be provided at no cost to candidates with special medical needs covered under the *Americans with Disabilities Act*, the *Canadian Federal Disabilities Act*, or the *Canadian Charter of Human Rights* who submit the *Test Modification Request Form*, along with the *Documentation of Disability-related Needs*. ASBO International may submit information regarding the stated disability and requested accommodation to its own expert advisers and reserves the right to provide only those reasonable accommodations as required by law.

Appeals

An appeal shall be made by an SFO candidate or certificant to the Appeals Committee regarding 1) the Certification Commission's interpretation of standards, including candidate eligibility determination, certificant renewal determination, and SFO revocation determination; 2) content of the exam and/or keyed responses to items; 3) alleged inappropriate exam administration procedures; and 4) alleged testing conditions severe enough to cause a major disruption of the examination process.

The appeal to the Appeals Committee shall be made in writing within 30 days of receipt of notification of a certification adverse decision.

The Appeals Committee shall meet to review appeals as soon as practicable. All determinations regarding appeals must be made by a two-thirds vote of the Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee does not have the authority to confer or reinstate the SFO certification.

All Appeals Committee determinations shall be reviewed by the Certification Commission. In the event of such a referral, the Certification Commission has final authority in an appeal determination.

Notice of the Appeals Committee determination (or in the event of a referral, notice of the Certification Commission determination) shall be provided to the appellant as soon as practicable.

The Certification Commission's determination shall be final.

Certification Code of Conduct

All ASBO SFO certified individuals must agree to comply with the certification code of professional conduct as outlined below:

The Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO) is a professional organization that supports and promotes school business management practitioner certification.

The Certification Code of Conduct enables ASBO International to define and clarify the professional responsibilities for present and future ASBO International certificants, i.e., Certified Administrator of School Finance and Operations (SFO).

It is vital that ASBO International certificants conduct their work in an appropriate and professional manner to earn and maintain the confidence and respect of colleagues, employers, students, and the public. That they also work to promote the highest standards of the profession conducting business honestly, openly, and with integrity.

To be qualified for ASBO SFO certification, individuals shall act in a professional manner and in accordance with the ASBO International Certification Code of Conduct as follows.

Applicants for ASBO SFO certification and ASBO SFO certification holders must:

- Not participate in negligent, harmful, and/or intentional misconduct in their professional work;
- Report to ASBO International in writing of any conviction of a crime, except misdemeanor traffic offenses or traffic ordinance violations unless such offense involves the use of alcohol or drugs, or of any professional suspension within 10 calendar days after the date on which the certificant is notified of the conviction or suspension;
- Comply with all local, state/provincial, and federal laws, regulations, and statutes governing the practice of school business management;
- Neither accept nor offer or make any substantial compensation or gifts with the intent of influencing the judgment of any individual or business entity in connection with the work of the certificant or the certificant's employer, nor accept any substantial compensation from a supplier of materials or services in exchange for recommending or promoting the supplier;
- Not engage in conduct involving fraud or the wanton disregard of the rights of others and shall not have been convicted of a crime, the circumstances of which substantially relate to the practice of school business management or indicate an inability to engage in the practice of school business management safely and/or competently, including but not limited to crimes against children, sexual abuse; civil rights violations; embezzlement; theft, etc.;
- Not obtain or attempt to obtain certification by misrepresentation, bribery, fraud, or deception;

- Not make misrepresentations regarding ASBO SFO certification or renewal of ASBO SFO certification; and
- Not engage in cheating or other dishonest behavior that violates exam security, including memorization, reproduction or distribution of secure test content, and tampering with the contents of the exam.

In addition, no person shall be permitted to maintain ASBO SFO certification if, in the judgment of ASBO International's Certification Commission, the person's professional competence is substantially impaired by physical or mental disabilities such as drug or alcohol addiction, accidents affecting the brain, or mental health issues.

Disciplinary Action

Denial, Suspension or Revocation of Certification

The Certification Commission is the only entity authorized to make suspension or revocation decisions with respect to disciplinary actions, subject to appeals brought to the Appeals Committee in accordance with established Certification Commission policies and procedures.

Disciplinary Action

The Certification Commission may take disciplinary action against any certificant for any one or more of the following reasons:

- Obtaining certification or a renewing certification through the use of fraud or deceit or assisting another person to do so; or
- Violating one or more of the provisions in the ASBO International Certification Code of Conduct; or
- A criminal conviction of a felony for acts done in connection with activities for which the certification was issued; or
- Unauthorized possession, distribution, or use of any ASBO International examination-related materials or assisting another person to do so; or
- Unauthorized use of any registered certification mark or logo owned by ASBO International; or
- Failure to cooperate reasonably with an ASBO International disciplinary investigation.

If the Certification Commission determines that grounds exist to take disciplinary action against a candidate or a certificant, it may take one or more of the following actions or such other action(s) as the Certification Commission may deem appropriate:

- Deny a candidate's application for examination or certification, or a certificant's application for recertification;
- Require a candidate to retake one or more examinations at a time and place to be determined by the Certification Commission;
- Invalidate the examination score(s) of a candidate; require a candidate to wait a specified period of time before reapplying to take the examination(s); and/or revoke a candidate's eligibility to sit for future examinations;
- Issue the individual a reprimand;
- Require the individual to engage in remedial education and/or training;
- Suspend a certificant's certification for a period of time;
- Revoke a certificant's certification;
- Publish findings and sanctions on the ASBO International public Website;
- Notify other legitimately interested parties of Certification Commission's findings and disciplinary action.

Reinstatement of Certification after Revocation

If permitted by the individual's sanction, a request for reinstatements of certification revoked on account of disciplinary actions may be submitted after a minimum of one year after the revocation determination. The request must be in writing and shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Certification Commission.

Should it be determined that an individual whose certification has been revoked may be reinstated, that individual must reapply as a new applicant, pay all associated fees, and fulfill all certification requirements.

Reinstatement of Certification after Voluntary Lapse

An individual who has voluntarily let certification lapse is not certified and may not use any certification designation or associated initial designation. These individuals may reinstate certified status through one of the following options:

Reinstatement of Certification

An individual, whose certification has been revoked due to a failure to submit the annual renewal application and/or fees must take the following steps to reinstate:

Reinstatement within 45 days after annual renewal expiration

Pay reinstatement fee of \$60 in addition to renewal fee

Reinstatement greater than 45 days after annual renewal expiration, but before end of original three-year certification term

Complete another initial program application (with payment) and pay reinstatement fee in addition to the renewal fee for each annual renewal term that is missed

Reinstatement after the original three-year term has expired

Reapply as a new applicant, pay all associated fees, and re-take and pass the certification exam.

Requests for reinstatements for individuals whose certification has been revoked due to other reasons not defined in this policy must be in writing and will be reviewed by the Certification Commission. A final determination will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Results

Communication of Results

The final assessment results and certification issuance status shall be communicated to candidates by email. Each candidate's official examination score report will be emailed after the candidate takes the exam. Because scores are confidential, they are sent directly from the testing company to the candidate. Results will not be given out over the phone.

The examination score reports shall reflect overall scaled score(s) and pass or fail status. Failing candidates shall be given diagnostic, non-numerical information indicating their overall performance for each section of the exam.

Certificates

Certificate Issuance Criteria

A non-transferable certificate shall be issued only to individuals found to meet all certification requirements. No other factors shall be used to determine an individual's qualification to earn the certificate.

Certificate

A certificate shall be issued to all certificants, and shall include the following:

1. Certificant's name

2. Certificant's identification number
3. Certification title
4. Certification scope
5. Certification Commission as the certification issuer
6. Signature of the Certification Commission chair
7. Certification effective date and expiration date

Use of the Certification Marks and Logos

Ownership of the Mark and Logo

The certification mark and logo are the property of ASBO International. Permission to use the certification mark or logo is granted to certified persons at the discretion of the ASBO International's Certification Commission, for permissible uses only.

Persons Authorized to Use the Marks

Use of the ASBO International certification marks and logos is limited to those persons who have been granted the certification by the Certification Commission and who satisfy all maintenance and recertification requirements established by the Certification Commission.

The title and acronym designation may not be used to imply that a business or organization is certified.

Use of the mark and logo by individuals who have not been granted and maintained the certification is expressly prohibited.

Non-Assignability and Non-Transferability

Permission to use the certification mark is limited to the certified person, and shall not be transferred to, assigned to, or otherwise used by any other individual, organization, or entity.

Mark and Logo Use

Those persons who have been granted permission to use the certification mark and logo shall do so pursuant to the rules and guidelines established by the Certification Commission. Persons granted permission to use the certification mark and logo must

familiarize themselves with the established rules and guidelines for use and must execute approved agreements setting forth such rules and guidelines for use.

The ASBO International marks and logo may not be revised or altered in any way. They must be displayed in the same form as produced by ASBO International and cannot be reproduced unless such reproduction is identical to the mark provided by ASBO International.

The mark or logo may be used only on business cards, stationery, letterhead, and similar documents on which the name of the individual certified is prominently displayed.

The mark or logo may not be used in any manner that could bring ASBO International into disrepute or in any way be considered misleading or unauthorized. The mark or logo may not be used in any manner that may imply a connection between ASBO International and the certification which, in fact, may not exist. This includes any use of the mark or logo that the public might construe as an endorsement, approval or sponsorship by ASBO International of a certificant's business or any product or service thereof.

Suspension or Revocation of Permission to Use Mark or Logo

ASBO retains the right, at its sole discretion, to suspend or revoke any persons permission to use its certification mark or logo. In most circumstances, when ASBO International is informed that a person is misusing the certification mark or logo, ASBO International will provide the person notice of the misuse and a reasonable opportunity to comply with ASBO International's rules and guidelines. However, ASBO International retains the right to suspend or revoke privileges without notice and an opportunity to correct, particularly when the violation is of a gross nature and more immediate action is necessary to stop misuse.

Actions by ASBO International to suspend or revoke use of the certification mark shall be communicated in writing to the person whose privileges are being suspended or revoked and to all other persons affected by the decision. ASBO International may also publicize its actions on its website and/or any other of its publications. Should any person continue use of ASBO International certification mark or logo after notice of suspension or revocation, ASBO International shall seek full equitable and/or legal remedies through a court of competent jurisdiction.