Uncommon Times

The worst economic meltdown since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Families and communities struggle with:
• Job Loss
• Business Closures
• Education Cuts

The Impact on Students

• Instructional program reductions
• Increased class sizes
• Staff reductions
• Reductions in transportation and other services
• Fewer after-school activities
• A four-day school week
• Reductions and elimination of vital professional development staff
Wanted: Effective School Business Leaders

Must Have

- Skills and experience to establish sound fiscal practices that support educational goals.
- Reliable and current information upon which to base good decisions.
- Excellent communication skills
- A commitment to integrity and transparency.

ASBO International: Developing Leaders Since 1910

Our Mission
To provide programs and services to promote the highest standards of school business management practices, professional growth, and the effective use of educational resources.

Promoting Common Values

- Competence
- Integrity
- Professional Growth
- Responsibility
- Accountability
Elevating the Profession

SFO® Certification

Professionals with the Certified Administrator of School Finance and Operations® (SFO®) have met the standard of experience and expertise in school business management and demonstrated knowledge and skill through an examination of school business management competency.

School Business Management Credentials

- States and provinces have varying degrees of requirements
  - Required certificate/license
    - 17 States and 1 Province
  - Voluntary certificate/registration
    - 19 States and 1 Province
  - No policy/program
    - 14 States and D.C. and 4 Provinces
- Only portable credential in North America
- Provides a career pathway for the profession
- Increases visibility and credibility for the profession

Creating the SFO® Program

- Followed credentialing industry standards
- Over 60 practitioner volunteers involved
- Job task analysis results lead to exam content
- Beta test program in 2010, with first 100 certified
SFO® Value

- Validate skills
- Demonstrate knowledge
- Increase visibility & marketability
- Demonstrate professionalism and competency to your stakeholders

Demographics

- Range from 2 to 32 years of experience
- Public K – 12, charter schools, and technical schools
- Less than 2,000 students to over 10,000 students
- Less than $5M in revenues to greater than $50M in revenues

SFO® Program Requirements

- Adhere to the Certification Code of Conduct
- Meet the education and years of experience criteria
- Pass the two-part exam
- Once certified, have annual renewal and recertification requirements
Program Fees

- **Application fee**
  - $150 for ASBO International members
  - $225 for non-members; includes one-year eligibility period.

- **Exam fees**
  - $195 for **Part 1: Accounting**
  - $295 for **Part 2: School Business Management**; each exam fee includes a five-month authorization to test window.

- **Certification annual renewal fee**
  - $125 and sign the Code of Conduct

- **Recertification period of three years; no additional fees.**

Eligibility Requirements

- **Part 1: Accounting of the Exam**
  - No education requirements
  - No experience requirements

- **Part 2: School Business Management of the Exam and the SFO Certification**
  - Bachelor's degree and three years of related experience **OR**
  - Master's degree in a related field plus two years of related experience **OR**
  - Application process is available for seasoned practitioners not meeting these requirements

Experience Requirements

- Depending on education level, you must have at least 24 or 36 months of overall administrative responsibility at a K-12 or community college education system in each of these school business related areas:
  - Managing accounting systems
  - Managing accounting functions
  - Conducting financial planning and analysis
  - Conducting budgeting and reporting activities.
Experience Requirements

• You must also have at least 24 or 36 months of administrative experience at a K-12 or community college education system, depending on education level, in at least three of the following school business related areas:
  • Risk management activities
  • School facilities
  • Information systems
  • Human resource functions
  • Ancillary services.

Exam

• Part 1: Accounting focuses on skills needed at job entry – 70 multiple-choice questions
  • Manage Accounting Systems
    (28% to 33%)
    Maintain Accounting Software
    Maintain Chart of Accounts
    Reconcile General Ledger Accounts
    Track Fixed Assets
  • Manage Accounting Functions
    (67% to 72%)
    Manage Payroll Functions
    Manage Accounts Receivable
    Manage Accounts Payable Process
    Manage Purchasing Procedures
    Manage Annual Budgets
    Prepare Financial Reports
    Manage Cash Flow

• Part 2: School Business Management focuses on knowledge gained after three years of experience – 100 multiple-choice questions

• Written by and for school business officials – includes Canadian equivalents
Exam Part 2: School Business Management

- Conduct Financial Planning and Analysis (27% to 32%)
  - Review Financial Impact of Strategic Planning
  - Develop Financial Goals
  - Develop Outside Funding Sources
  - Understand Economic Data
  - Develop Short-Term Forecast
  - Estimate Real Estate Property Tax Revenues

- Conduct Budgeting and Reporting Activities (15% to 20%)
  - Project Student Enrollment
  - Evaluate Instructional Program(s) Costs
  - Develop Annual Budgets
  - Manage Grant Activities
  - Prepare for Annual Audit

- Conduct Risk Management Activities (10% to 15%)
  - Evaluate Existing Risks
  - Address Results of Risk Audit
  - Develop Annual Evaluation of Insurance Plans
  - Manage Insurance Plans

- Manage School Facilities (7% to 12%)
  - Update Facility Master Plan
  - Manage Construction and Maintenance of School Facilities
  - Oversee New Construction and Renovations

- Manage Information Systems (4% to 6%)
  - Assist in Developing a Technology Plan
  - Maintain Technology Systems/Oversee Telecommunication Systems

- Manage Human Resource Functions (13% to 20%)
  - Manage Hiring of New Employees
  - Develop Compensation Structure
  - Manage Staff Development and Training Programs
  - Manage Evaluation Process
  - Manage Personnel Administration
  - Manage Employee Benefit Programs

- Manage Ancillary Services (7% to 12%)
  - Manage Transportation Services
  - Manage Food Service Programs
  - Manage Purchasing Process
  - Manage Other Service Programs
Taking the Exam
• Administered at Pearson VUE testing centers in U.S. and Canada
• Computer-based, year-round
• Testing available Monday – Saturday (in most locations)
• Schedule directly with Pearson VUE after you have applied and registered online with ASBO

Preparing for the Exam
• Guide to Studying for the SFO Examinations
  ▫ Practice questions
  ▫ Tips on starting and conducting study groups
  ▫ Authoritative reference list
• Study prep course listing online
  www.asbointl.org/certification

Earning the SFO Credential
• Use SFO® after your name
• Press release sent to superintendent, school board and local press
• Certificate of certification and lapel pin
Annual Renewal
- Adhere to Certification Code of Conduct
- Annual fee to maintain
- Access to SFO® Credential Management System
  - Publish credentials
  - Record contact hours

Recertification
- Every three years submit 90 contact hours
  - Hours must be tied to exam content outline
  - 60 hours from structured learning environment (workshops, conferences, online classes, etc.)
  - 30 hours from unstructured learning environment (work experience, authorship, instructor, volunteer service, etc.)

Application Process
- Online SFO® Credential Management System
  http://i7lp.integral7.com/asbo
- Applications accepted year-round
- Testing is available year-round
Test Your SBO IQ

Sample Exam Part 1:

- Q: What does the "Function" describe in the Chart of Accounts?
  A. The item for which an expenditure is made
  B. The activity being performed for which a service or material object is acquired
  C. A way of classifying expenditures by physical location, budget, or cost center
  D. A plan of activities and procedures designed to accomplish a predetermined objective

Sample Exam Part 2:

- Q: What is the primary purpose of a physical risk inspection?
  A. To identify potential maintenance issues
  B. To identify potential future building needs
  C. To identify potential entry points for intruders
  D. To identify potential threats to the safety of students, staff, and the public

Spread the Word

Obtain your SFO® certification and encourage the colleagues in your state/province to do the same.

www.asbointl.org/certification