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## CHAPTER/ASSISTANT RELATIONSHIPS

**"R**ising tides raise all ships."

I've heard industry veterans recite this quote because they truly believe we all benefit from those individuals who are active in improving our industry.

During the three years I've contributed to this magazine, many of my columns have focused on association involvement opportunities for assistant superintendents. In giving your time to your association, you're helping yourself and everyone else.

From personal experience, my 2007-08 tenure serving the GCSAA Assistant Superintendent Committee (ASC) was one of the greatest opportunities of my career. While this group had many goals, its main theme was to emphasize the benefits of membership and promote participation. Recognizing that chapter organizations are vital in increased involvement, we formulated a guide to walk chapters through the process of creating opportunities for assistant superintendents.

This brilliant committee did not have to think long and hard about what to include in the template. Most of the ASC members had prior experience engaging their local constituents from working on their respective chapter boards. It was the ASC's goal to create a model for what an assistant superintendent advisory position on a chapter board would encompass.

Before getting overexcited about this idea, we needed to determine whether there was a need for it. With the good folks at GCSAA as our resource, we learned about 30 percent of GCSAA chapters had some assistant activity on their boards. We knew the template might help grow this number.

This template, which is available at [gcsaa.org/chapters/chpmgmt/WorkingWithBOD.asp](http://gcsaa.org/chapters/chpmgmt/WorkingWithBOD.asp), contains eight parts in which our committee tried to answer possible questions that might arise.

It starts by explaining why chapter associations should consider incorporating assistant superintendent activity into their board structures. The job market is not what it was years ago; you're seeing assistants with longer tenures before they're able to ascend to the next level. So instead of hoping these future superintendents will want to become active in the chapter association when that time comes, take the time to develop that mind-set now. That way, as assistants, the desire is there when they become superintendents.

While taking part in chapter activities benefits assistants in a variety of ways, there are noteworthy benefits for the associations and superintendents:

- Improved recruitment and retention of Class C members;
- A larger pool of volunteers for chapter events;
- Help generating new ideas and thoughts for seminars, events and meetings;
- An increase meeting and event attendance from the Class C members;
- An increase in longevity of the association due to the development of future leaders;

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- Help preparing assistants for professional meetings they may attend with their superintendents or alone, such as board meetings and green committee meetings.
- An increase in assistant value to employers by furthering their industry;
- Bringing recognition to the superintendent and golf course of the participating assistant;
- Help with membership and or seminar costs; and
- Exposing assistants to opportunities that may provide an extra benefit to their employment.

Golf is steeped in heritage and tradition and I'm proud to have experienced a very small part of it. However, most would agree the positions of superintendent and assistants have evolved over the years, as well. It's time to embrace that change and include assistants in enhancing our profession.

The concept of assistant activity in GCSAA chapters may be foreign to some groups, but please accept this information with an open mind. To those chapters who've adopted this concept, thank you, and please continue to support this idea. To all chapter officers reading this today who have no assistant position at the board level, please know that by engaging your Class C members, you'll ensure the perpetuity of your hard work and that of those before you. **GCI**