

CEO Report March/April

Dear Members,

Among the things that are great about The Academy is that everyone has a voice. But what exactly does that mean? Sometimes when we are in a discussion and a person responds, “I hear you and why do you feel that way?” translates to “I care about what you say and tell me more.” They are being an active listener. And then at times, we have people respond to us saying, “Thank you for your comments” and then move on to the next agenda item. How does this make us feel? It is difficult to compare the two responses as we know that the former is more genuine. Why? The active listener is tuning into the passion of your opinion and to your perspective. They may consider the reasons why you feel a particular way.

Within The Academy, we have many and varied voices. I'm proud of this fact. We have voices that seek to serve the marginalized and not be silent. We have voices that welcome others to the conversation. We have voices that rise to the occasion when necessary and speak up for what is right and true. There is no room for exclusion and when The Academy says every voice counts, every voice DOES count! If we're looking at this through the lens of social-emotional learning, having and using a voice allows us to make changes, to communicate our passion, and to see the world with a global view instead of one with tunnel vision. Our voices certainly allow everyone to have a platform to share their thoughts, emotions, and concerns. Occasionally, our voices are challenged, but this is how we grow, consider other options, collaborate and reach a better outcome. Using our voice empowers us and inspires others to use their voices, too.

In concert with the theme of many voices, we are pleased to announce our newest partners: the American School Health Association, the National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability, the Lakeshore Foundation, and Phi Epsilon Kappa. The unique voices and expertise of our partners serve us all. Welcome to this journey!

We encourage you to use voice within the academy.

Warmly,
Maria Melchionda