



Friday Focus Workshops

Friday, November 21, 2025 • Sheraton Grand Chicago (one level above the main lobby)

Schedule

MORNING WORKSHOPS

8-9 a.m.
Continental Breakfast
and Registration
9-11:30 a.m.
Workshop
11:30 a.m.
Adjournment
(lunch **not** included)

AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

11-11:30 a.m.
Registration
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Lunch (**included**)
12:30-3 p.m.
Workshop
3 p.m.
Adjournment

IASB Friday Focus Workshops provide school board members with knowledge and resources to be an effective and efficient school leader. Grow your governing and board leadership skills with multiple half-day sessions (morning and afternoon).

- Gain in-depth knowledge from education experts on current issues impacting school governance.
- Dig into your role on the local board of education and learn how you and your board can gain a leadership advantage.
- Find fresh perspectives on the topics that matter most to your students, parents, and communities.

Half Day A.M.

- Trust: The Key to Successful Educational Leadership
- Leading Schools in a Highly Polarized World
- Fierce Conversations
- Dollars & Decisions: School Finance for Board Members
- Introduction to Collective Bargaining for Board Members and Administrators
- Navigating the Board Presidency: Roles, Responsibilities & Real-Life Scenarios
- Board Scenarios for New Board Members

Half Day P.M.

- Tiny Moments, Big Impact: Leveraging Everyday Interactions to Build a Thriving Culture and Drive Academic Success
- Trust: The Key to Successful Educational Leadership (Repeat)
- Leading Schools in a Highly Polarized World (Repeat)
- Dollars & Decisions: Leading Through the Noise — Fiscal Strategy in a Politicized Climate
- Introduction to Collective Bargaining for Board Members and Administrators (Repeat)
- Navigating the Board Presidency: Cultivating Effective Board Meetings
- Superintendent Evaluation: The Essential Work of the Board

Plus a full day Student Board Member Leadership Summit for current and aspiring student board members

\$199 for one Workshop. \$398 for two Workshops.

Joint Annual Conference attendees have the option to register for one or two half-day training workshops offered in the morning and afternoon. The price of one half-day workshop is \$199. Two half-day workshops are \$398.*

*IASB Friday Focus Workshops are only available to those who have registered for the 2025 Joint Annual Conference. For additional information contact Miranda Sexton at (217) 528-9688, extension 1118, email msexton@iasb.com.

Morning-Only Workshops

Morning

Fierce Conversations FCAM

Corporate and board jargon and yes-individuals get you nowhere. That's why Justin Caldwell, Ed.D., is tearing up the old playbook on board interactions. He's mastered the art of fierce conversations — authentic discussions that tackle issues head-on. Drawing from the bestseller *Fierce Conversations* by Susan Scott, Dr. Caldwell helps organizations ditch the fluff and start addressing the uncomfortable truths stifling progress. His background shapes a fresh perspective on cultivating transparent dialog that sparks change. Don't keep kicking those tough conversations down the road. It's time to have those real talks you've been avoiding, one honest word at a time. The rewards? Improved work performance, stronger relationships, and greater overall fulfillment. It starts with getting fierce.



Presenter: **Justin Caldwell Ed.D.**, Adjunct Professor, Governors State University; Co-Owner, Sweet Darren's Bakery; Sales Operations Manager, Cardinal Health; and School Board President, Bradley-Bourbonnais CHSD 307

Morning

Dollars & Decisions: School Finance for Board Members DDFAM

Back by popular demand and updated for the year ahead: Ann Williams, Ed.D., a nationally certified finance leader and senior editor of *Essentials of Illinois School Finance*, returns to demystify the complex world of school finance. From property taxes and debt to budgeting and equity, this session gives board members a powerful foundation for financial oversight. Learn how your decisions shape student opportunities — and leave equipped to lead with confidence, clarity, and credibility. Recommended for new and returning board members who have not previously attended this session.



Presenter: **Ann Williams, Ed.D.**, Deputy Superintendent of Operations for School District U-46 (Elgin) and Senior Editor of IASB's *Essentials of Illinois School Finance*

Morning

Navigating the Board Presidency: Roles, Responsibilities & Real-Life Scenarios BPRAM

The school board president role comes with a unique set of responsibilities and, sometimes, head-scratching situations. This engaging workshop will dive into the key aspects of leadership. Join us to explore the expected roles, the essential responsibilities, and most importantly, how to navigate the real-life scenarios that keep things interesting.

Presenters: **Patrick Allen** and **Katie Bulava**, Outreach & Training Directors, IASB



Morning

Board Scenarios for New Board Members BSAM

Working alongside colleagues from across the state, you will navigate real-world scenarios. Participants will gain a greater understanding of their roles as new board members and gather techniques for navigating the complexities of board work.

Presenters: **Laura Martinez** and **Arlana Bedard, Ed.D.**, Outreach & Training Directors, IASB



Afternoon-Only Workshops

Afternoon

Tiny Moments, Big Impact: Leveraging Everyday Interactions to Build a Thriving Culture and Drive Academic Success with Phil Boyte TMIPM

How do we build schools where every student and staff member feels seen, valued, and connected? It starts with the tiny moments — hallway hellos, “you matter” messages — and the choice to truly listen. In this energizing session, nationally recognized culture-builder Phil Boyte will lead student leaders and school board members through interactive experiences that show how small, intentional actions can lead to big, lasting change.

Presenter: **Phil Boyte**, Author, Professional Development and Culture Summit Facilitator, Learning for Living



Afternoon

Dollars & Decisions: Leading Through the Noise — Fiscal Strategy in a Politicized Climate DDFPM

If you’ve attended Dollars & Decisions: School Finance for Board Members, this is the next step. Ann Williams, Ed.D. takes you beyond the basics into the high-stakes world of fiscal leadership during politically charged times. Learn how to interpret complex financial data, navigate public scrutiny, and make courageous decisions that align resources with what matters most — student outcomes. Recommended for board members who have attended School Finance for Board Members or who have a strong grasp of school finance fundamentals.

Presenter: **Ann Williams, Ed.D.**, Deputy Superintendent of Operations for School District U-46 (Elgin) and Senior Editor of IASB's *Essentials of Illinois School Finance*



Afternoon

Navigating the Board Presidency: Cultivating Effective Board Meetings BPCPM

As a school board president, your ability to lead effective and compliant meetings is paramount. In this workshop, we will take the mystery out of Parliamentary Procedure, providing you with the tools to facilitate productive discussions and clear decision-making. Legal experts will shed light on the essentials of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and provide straightforward guidance on the Open Meetings Act (OMA). Join us to gain valuable insights and practical strategies that will help you lead your board with greater confidence and effectiveness.

Presenters: **Patrick Allen** and **Katie Bulava**, Outreach & Training Directors, IASB; **Brandon K. Wright**, Attorney. Miller, Tracy, Braun, Funk & Miller, Ltd. And Member, Illinois Council of School Attorneys



Afternoon

Superintendent Evaluation: The Essential Work of the Board SEPM

The board employs and evaluates one person — the superintendent — and holds that person accountable for district performance and compliance with written board policy. In this age of accountability, good governance requires a superintendent evaluation process that promotes district improvement and provides professional development and growth opportunities.

Presenters: **Perry Hill IV, Ph.D.** and **Natalie Williams-McMahon, Ed.D.**, Outreach & Training Directors, IASB



Morning and Afternoon Workshops

Morning

Afternoon

Trust: The Key to Successful Educational Leadership TSEAM/TSEPM

Even the most well-intentioned initiatives falter when they are missing one key ingredient: TRUST. Once trust is embedded in every meeting, decision, and engagement, then collaboration, creativity, and progress flow freely — because educators, students, and communities are working together for their schools.

In this tailored workshop, David Horsager, the world's leading authority on trust, returns to the Joint Annual Conference to share his 8-Pillar Framework.™ Horsager delivers actionable strategies to build trust across all levels, from administrators to parents to students — and to the world they will one day change! Discover insights needed to grow a high-trust culture from the inside out and to strengthen academic excellence, relationships and the future of education.

Presenter: **David Horsager**, MA, CSP, CPAE, CEO of Trust Edge Leadership Institute, Trust Expert in Residence at High Point University, and Wall Street Journal bestselling author of *The Trust Edge*



Morning

Afternoon

Leading Schools in a Highly Polarized World HPWAM/HPWPM

America is polarized, with deep splits in beliefs, parties, and genders. This session will focus on strategies to center school improvement on the academic needs of current students and avoid political distractions that delay or divert resources and services. Discover tools, strategies, protocols, and templates to:

- Empower a diverse guiding coalition from across the ideological spectrum.
- Focus improvement initiatives on actions that address the current needs of the district's children while maintaining a blame-free environment about the past.
- Generate interest convergence centering on actions to take to meet the community's desire that all students become academically proficient as the central mission of schools, even though individuals may disagree about other issues.
- Avoid trigger words and labeling that may be perceived as inflammatory or indoctrination.

Learn how to depoliticize school improvement and empower stakeholders to work together regardless of political and social differences.

Presenter: **Ronald S. Thomas, Ph.D.**, Lecturer, Instructional Leadership & Professional Development, Townson University, Maryland



Morning

Afternoon

Introduction to Collective Bargaining for School Board Members and Administrators CBAM/CBPM

Attend this workshop hosted by three experienced negotiators — representing administration, the union and an attorney — to learn what every school board member, and every administrator, needs to know about collective bargaining, including:

- What the law requires of school boards and employee unions.
- Steps involved in bargaining labor contracts.
- Alternative processes.
- Politics and psychology of school bargaining.
- Roles and responsibilities of boards and administrators.
- How to handle labor disputes; and
- How to keep labor relations problems from destroying human relationships.

Presenters: **David Braun**, Attorney, Miller, Tracy, Braun, Funk & Miller, Ltd. and Member, Illinois Council of School Attorneys; **Kyle W. Freeman, Ph.D.**, Superintendent, Washington CHSD 308; and **Kim McCormick**, Mediator, IEA Uniserve Director (retired)



Full Day Workshop for Students

Student Board Member Leadership Summit STBL

Register your student leaders for this opportunity to engage with other students from across the state for a dynamic day to empower student voices in education. This event brings together current and aspiring student board members for interactive, engaging discussions and leadership development, along with the opportunity to connect and learn alongside adult board members and administrators.

Student participants will spend the morning with peers learning about effective governance, advocacy, and making meaningful contributions to their school community.

The afternoon will be spent with board members and administrators in the workshop *Tiny Moments, Big Impact: Leveraging Everyday Interactions to Build a Thriving Culture*, where nationally recognized culture-builder, Phil Boyte, will lead attendees through interactive experiences that show how small, intentional actions can lead to big, lasting change. At the end of the day, registered student leaders are invited to attend the Joint Annual Conference opening General Session, where they will have reserved seating.



Presenter: **Sandra Kwasa**, Training Development Director, IASB

Registration Information for this Event:

- Student leaders must be accompanied by at least one board member or administrator from their district upon arrival. The morning session is for students only, and adults are welcome to register for a separate morning workshop of their choice, then join their students for lunch and the afternoon session.
- Adult board members/administrators are encouraged to register for the afternoon workshop *Tiny Moments, Big Impact: Leveraging Everyday Interactions to Build a Thriving Culture* and attend it with their students.
- The Joint Annual Conference Friday General Session is included in this Workshop.
- If student(s) will only be attending the Friday Focus Workshop and Opening Session, the fee is \$150 per student, and they can be registered by emailing registrar@iasb.com. This full day event includes breakfast and lunch.
- Students who will be attending the entire Conference must register and pay the full Conference fee and the \$150 per student fee or the Friday event.

Advanced Registration Required

Registration for these workshops is open only to those who have registered for the 2025 IASB • IASA • IASBO Joint Annual Conference

Registration

- **School board members** — Contact your district office and ask to be registered for Friday Focus Workshops or contact the IASB Registrar at registrar@iasb.com or (217) 528-9688, ext. 1145.

Workshop Tuition

- **Half-Day Workshop tuition is \$199.** Morning workshops include continental breakfast, breaks, and workshop materials. Afternoon workshops include lunch, breaks, and workshop materials.
- Participants may register for two half-day workshops for a total of \$398, which includes continental breakfast and lunch.

Workshop space can be held with advance payment by check, ACH, purchase order, or credit card. (A 3% transaction fee will be added for credit card payments.) **Advance registrations will be accepted until 4:30 p.m. on Friday, November 7, 2025, if space is available.**

Confirmations and badges will be mailed in early November to the district office address.

Cancellation — Advance registrants who need to cancel must notify the IASB Registrar by email registrar@iasb.com or fax at (217) 528-2831. Friday Focus Workshop registration fees will be refunded if cancellation is received by noon on Tuesday, October 14.

Questions about the Friday Focus Workshops?

Please email [Miranda Sexton](mailto:Miranda.Sexton@iasb.com) or call at (217) 528-9688, ext. 1118.

IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING THURSDAY NIGHT LODGING:

Workshop attendees may want to consider a Thursday night reservation at a Conference hotel to arrive on time Friday.