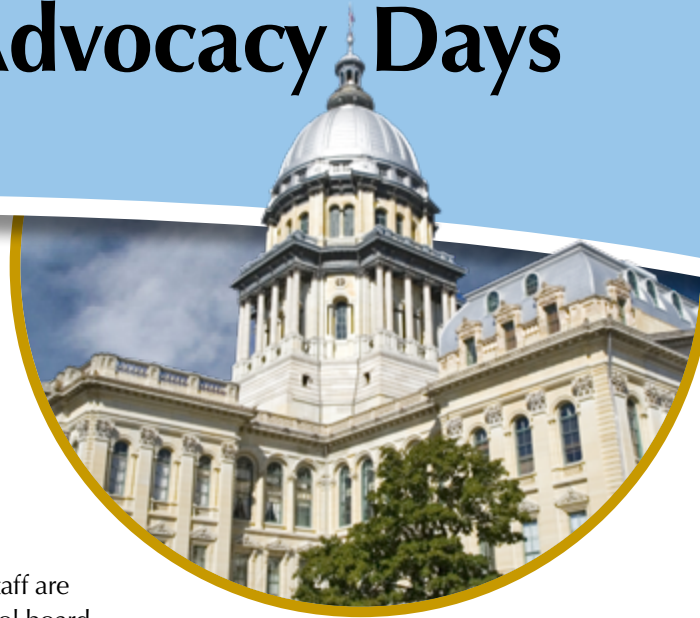


Top Five Benefits of Advocacy Days for School Board Members

IASB sponsors state and federal Advocacy Days at which school board members travel to the Capitol to attend issue briefings, meetings with legislators, and other related events. These events offer key benefits for school board members.



- 1. Build Relationships** – Face-to-face meetings with legislators and staff are the number-one way to build relationships. Advocacy Days help school board members connect with legislators and staff without the administrative burden of coordinating these key visits. These relationships transform school board members’ advocacy into two-way communication between legislators/staff and trusted local education experts. When urgent issues arise, such as funding shortfalls or legislative changes, these relationships are already strong, and school board members can quickly express messages of concern.
- 2. Transformative Information Source** – The fast pace of the current legislative environment creates a significant challenge in staying up to date. Advocacy Days include briefings on current legislation, emerging trends, and issues that are dominating the policy dialogue. This knowledge informs board members’ advocacy and knowledge about changes that may impact their schools.
- 3. Professional Growth** – Advocacy Days provide training in the key skills needed to share the district story and essential views about legislative proposals. In addition, they offer networking opportunities with other board members and education professionals, which can spark new ideas and strategies for improving governance and student outcomes.
- 4. Influence Policy Decisions** – Once the legislative knowledge and advocacy skills are built, Advocacy Days provide school board members with a direct line to legislators and policymakers who make decisions impacting public education. This allows board members an ongoing role in shaping laws, budgets, and regulations that directly affect their students and schools.
- 5. Represent Your Community** – Board members are elected to be the voice of their community. Advocacy Days allow them to ensure that the unique needs of their district are heard. This representation can lead to more equitable funding, better resources, and policies tailored to local realities.

“ Board Members play a crucial role in advocacy when it comes to advancing the enduring mission of public education. Their unique lens and role as conduits between our communities and our schools enable meaningful bridge-building with elected officials and policymakers. As a superintendent, I have witnessed the powerful impact of school board members’ advocacy and can attest to the difference it has made on not only my own school district, but also public education.”

— Mary Gorr, Ed.D.,
Superintendent,
Mount Prospect SD 57