

Thursday Workshops

Session 6

4:15 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.

The Meaningfulness Gap: Diagnosing Your Board's Health



Location: Mish-an-Nock, Boat

Presenting: Joel Lovstedt, The Academy Public Charter Schools

Reimbursable: Yes

Boards don't drift from lack of effort—they drift when meaning fades. In this engaging, interactive session, superintendent Joel Lovstedt introduces a Vision × Buy-In framework to plot your board's current "health" and identify prescriptions to restore focus and energy. Participants will gain a clear diagnostic tool, actionable strategies for alignment, and practical takeaways—delivered with a touch of humor.

No Drama! No Surprises! Board Meeting Best Practices

New Board
Member Track



Location: Coeur d'Alene, Boat

Presenting: Moderator: Jayson Lloyd, Idaho School Boards Association
Michelle Lucas, Twin Falls School District #411
Renae Johnson, Pocatello/Chubbuck School District #025
Marianne Southwick, Coeur d'Alene School District #271

Reimbursable: Yes

What should you say, do, or ask during your first few board meetings? In this practical session, a panel of experienced board clerks will walk new trustees through the essentials of effective board meeting participation. Learn how agendas are built, motions are made, and discussions stay on track—all within the framework of Idaho's Open Meeting Law. Bring your questions and leave with tips, tools, and increased confidence in your role at the board table.

Common Ground: How Supers, CTOs, and Comms Professionals Can Work Better Together

Location: Spirit, Boat

Presenting: Jeremy Keck, Apptegy

Reimbursable: No

As more districts deploy sophisticated communication campaigns that include robust multipurpose websites, apps, and two-way communication tools, cross-functional collaboration is more important than ever. Three key personas—superintendents, chief technology officers, and chief communication officers—must work in sync. Otherwise, they risk reduced enrollment, recruitment deficits, PR crises, and more. This presentation is unique among SchoolCEO Research in that it is a synthesis of existing research with three original case studies. Together, we'll explore the key traits of each persona, showcase three districts that exemplify positive working models, and offer best practices for finding common ground.

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Navigating Public Records Requests and Information Disclosure



Location: Shadow, Boat

Presenting: Monica Pauley, Idaho School Boards Association Consultant
Jess Cushman, Idaho Falls School District #091
Kelly Fisher, Lake Pend Oreille School District #084

Reimbursable: Yes

This presentation will equip school board clerks with the knowledge and tools needed to effectively navigate public records requests and information disclosure requirements, ensuring compliance with Idaho law while maintaining transparency, protecting sensitive information, and supporting the work of the board and district/charter.

Empowering Student Success Through Real-World Learning



Location: Kootenai, Boat

Presenting: Brittney Palmer, Junior Achievement of Utah and Idaho

Reimbursable: Yes

Prepare students for the real world through hands-on learning. This interactive session highlights how Junior Achievement of Idaho equips students with essential skills in financial literacy, career readiness, and entrepreneurship. Discover how JA Inspire Virtual introduces students to careers in high-demand industries, especially in rural and underserved areas, and how JA's partnership model connects school districts with local business professionals and community leaders to deepen impact. Attendees will leave with practical tools, success stories, and strategies for integrating real-world learning into their district or charter goals.

Elements to Achieve Student Success In Charter Schools



Location: Beauty Bay, 1st Floor

Presenting: Wally Hedrick, Meridian Technical Charter High School

Reimbursable: Yes

What makes some charter schools stand out when it comes to student achievement? This workshop explores six essential elements that consistently drive success in high-performing charter schools. From strong governance and effective leadership, to high-quality instruction, robust community engagement, data-driven decision making, and a culture of high expectations, participants will walk away with a clear framework for fostering environments where students thrive.

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Hot Topics in School Finance



Location: North Cape Bay, 1st Floor

Presenting: Jonathan Gillen, Idaho School Boards Association Consultant

Reimbursable: Yes

Idaho's public schools face a shifting financial landscape, with challenges that directly affect local districts and charter schools. This session will explore pressing issues such as declining enrollment, attendance-based funding struggles, special education funding, fund balance management, and other emerging trends. Attendees will gain a clearer understanding of how these factors impact school budgets and what questions they should be asking to make informed decisions. Staying ahead of these hot topics is essential to strong governance and ensuring resources are aligned with student needs.

Strategic Planning



Location: Kidd Island Bay, 1st Floor

Presenting: Phil Gore, Idaho School Boards Association

Reimbursable: Yes

Effective school boards don't just react to challenges—they set the course for the future. Explore essentials of strategic planning as a tool to align values, vision, mission, and goals with student success at the center. Learn how to create a living plan that guides decision-making, fosters accountability, and builds trust with the community. Leave this session with practical strategies to clarify priorities, monitor progress, and keep your schools focused on what matters most.

Running Smooth Meetings: Robert's Rules for Small Boards



Location: Casco Bay, 1st Floor

Presenting: Anne Ritter, Idaho School Boards Association Consultant

Reimbursable: Yes

Small boards often face big challenges when it comes to conducting productive, respectful, and efficient meetings. This breakout session will explore how Robert's Rules of Order—tailored specifically for small boards—can streamline decision-making, promote fairness, and prevent confusion. Whether you're a seasoned board member or new to governance, you'll learn practical strategies to apply simplified parliamentary procedures that enhance collaboration without getting bogged down in formality. Walk away with tips, templates, and confidence to lead or participate in meetings that actually get things done.

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Superintendent Evaluation



Location: The Shore Room, 1st Floor

Presenting: Spencer Barzee, Idaho Department of Education

Reimbursable: Yes

Research shows that a high-quality superintendent/charter administrator evaluation is one of the most critical responsibilities of a school board. This session shares best practices for evaluations, with guidance from the Idaho School Boards Association model. Attendees leave with practical tools to enhance evaluations, be equipped to align evaluation criteria with district goals, foster constructive communication, and build a process that promotes accountability and continuous growth.

What Works: How School Districts Are Expanding Child Care for Staff Retention



Location: Boardroom 4, 7th Floor

Presenting: Martin Balben, Teton School District #401

Reimbursable: Yes

Across Idaho, school districts are exploring an often-overlooked strategy to retain staff: expanding access to child care. This session will highlight real examples of how districts have implemented successful child care partnerships or programs to support their workforce. This presentation will share what it takes to get started, how board leadership helped, and what makes these efforts sustainable. Participants will leave with practical ideas and inspiration to explore solutions in their own communities—and a clearer sense of how board members and district leaders can play a pivotal role.

Turning Challenges into Opportunities for Growth - Blackfoot Charter School's Journey



Location: Boardroom 5, 7th Floor

Presenting: Janelle Hill, Blackfoot Charter School
Craig Gerard, Blackfoot Charter School

Reimbursable: Yes

Blackfoot Charter School has faced significant challenges over the past decade—from declining enrollment and morale to academic and behavioral struggles compounded by the pandemic. In this session, Executive Director Craig Gerard and Board Chair Janelle Hill share the school's journey of turnaround and renewal. Participants will learn how the board and administration partnered to modernize facilities, strengthen school culture, implement an intervention/enrichment model, and embrace professional development to improve student outcomes. With the support of statewide networks and a clear focus on mission and vision, Blackfoot Charter has seen measurable growth in student achievement, engagement, and staff retention. This session offers lessons in resilience, collaboration, and the power of aligning board leadership with academic success.