Thursday Workshops

Session 3

9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Legal Hot Topics



Presenter:
Amy White, Partner, Anderson, Julian & Hull

Location: Boise Centre West 100C

Stay ahead of the curve on the latest legal issues affecting schools in Idaho and across the nation. In this session, an Idaho school law expert will break down current challenges, share practical strategies, and highlight key considerations for school board members and school leaders. This is your opportunity to get clear, informed answers and walk away better prepared to navigate complex legal situations with confidence.

From Wish List to Roadmap: A Board's Guide to Long-Term Facility and Financial Planning



Presenter:
Christine Stoll, VP Strategy and Market Development, Clearwater Financial
Wally Hedrick, Board Chair, Meridian Technical Charter High School
Craig Miller, Charter Administrator, Meridian Technical Charter High School

Location: Boise Centre West 100D

Facility decisions can shape a school's finances, programs, and students' experience for decades. This interactive session gives board members a practical framework for connecting educational goals, facility needs, community input, project costs, and funding capacity before committing to a capital project. Using Meridian Technical Charter High School's long-term planning process as a case study, presenters will show how the school evaluated growth, tested facility scenarios, balanced priorities with affordability, and developed a phased roadmap. Attendees will leave with questions, tools, and next steps they can apply in districts and charter schools of any size.

Inside the Audit: What Board Members Need to Know



Presenter:
Jonathan Gillen

Location: Boise Centre West 100E

An annual audit can be intimidating, but board members don't need to be accountants to understand their role in the process. This workshop will provide an overview of what an audit is, why it matters, and what board members should look for when reviewing audit results. Participants will learn about the auditor's role, common findings, and red flags, and how to ask informed questions about their school's financial health. The session will also explore the board's responsibilities before, during, and after an audit and how audit results can help strengthen financial oversight and accountability.

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Best Practices in Communicating Charter Information Between Administrator and Board

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Presenter:
Anne Ritter, Board Chair, Meridian Medical Arts Charter High School; Consultant, Idaho School Boards Association
Benjamin Merrill, Charter Administrator, Meridian Medical Arts Charter High School

Location: Boise Centre West 110A

Category: Charter

Effective communication between charter school administrators and their governing boards is essential to building trust, maintaining strong governance, and keeping the school moving in the same direction. This workshop explores best practices for sharing information, establishing clear communication expectations, and ensuring the board has the information it needs to fulfill its governance responsibilities. Special attention will be given to the unique metrics, accountability requirements, and operational situations charter directors and administrators should monitor and communicate—including academic performance, enrollment, finances, authorizer expectations, charter compliance, and progress toward the school's mission and performance goals. Participants will examine common communication challenges, strategies for building productive board-administrator relationships, and practical ways to improve communication before, during, and between board meetings.

Idaho's Comprehensive Plans

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Presenter:
Karyn Kilpatrick-Snell, Program Manager - Literacy and Dyslexia, Idaho Department of Education
Katie Bosch-Wilson, Coordinator - Computer Science and Emerging Technologies, Idaho Department of Education
Gina Kwid, Coordinator - Mathematics, PE, Health, Idaho Department of Education

Location: Boise Centre West 110B

Category: New Board Members

The Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Plan and Idaho Comprehensive Mathematics Plan provide statewide frameworks that support local decision-making and continuous improvement. This session will provide school board trustees, superintendents, and district leaders with an overview of each plan, including its purpose, key priorities, and role in improving student outcomes. Participants will explore how the plans align with strategic planning, educator development, evidence-based instruction, and district improvement efforts. Leave with a clear understanding of how these frameworks can help strengthen teaching, learning, and student achievement across Idaho.

Did You Know...
ISBA offers model job descriptions for more more than 100 certified and classified positions!

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Level Up: Fixing the Communication Systems Frustrating Your Families

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Presenter:
Brittany Keil, Senior Manager of Media and Research, Apptegy

Location: Boise Centre West 110C

Category: Community Engagement

Your families are trying to reach your district. Too often, your systems are making that harder than it should be. A parent needs an attendance answer. A new family needs enrollment information. Another just needs to know who to call. Too often, families hit phone trees, outdated pages, and unanswered inboxes, then stop trying. For superintendents, that is not just a communications issue. It affects trust, attendance, enrollment, and the overall experience families have with your district. This session gives district leaders a direct look at where family communication breaks down and why those breakdowns carry real consequences for funding, absenteeism, community trust, and staff capacity. More importantly, it offers a practical path forward. You will explore how leading districts are moving beyond fragmented, one-way communication and building systems that make it easier for families to get answers, stay connected, and feel supported. You will leave with a clearer understanding of where your current communication systems create friction, how better two-way communication can surface problems.

Governing with Clarity: Strengthening Transparency, Accountability, and Decision-Making in School Boards

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Presenter:
Charlie Rigby, Business Development Manager, Simbli by eBOARDsolutions
Mark Willis, Chief Operating Officer, Simbli by eBOARDsolutions
Jesse Howard, Business Development Representative, Simbli by eBOARDsolutions

Location: Boise Centre West 110D

Effective school board governance requires more than well-run meetings—it demands clear processes, transparent communication, and strong alignment to district priorities. In this session, board members will explore practical approaches to improving governance through structured workflows, better access to information, and intentional use of technology. Rather than focusing on tools, this session highlights how boards can reduce risk, improve public trust, and make more informed decisions in today's complex environment.

Policy Management for School Board Clerks: Updating, Adopting, and Retention Best Practices

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Presenter:
Monica Pauley, Consultant, Idaho School Boards Association
April Hoy, Research & Policy Specialist

Location: Boise Centre West 120A

Category: Clerk

This session will provide board/charter clerks with practical guidance on the full policy lifecycle from initial drafting and board adoption to ongoing updates and long-term retention. Participants will learn how policies are properly introduced, revised, and approved in accordance with Idaho Open Meeting Law requirements, including notice, agenda placement, and documentation of board action.

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Assessment Oversight, Simplified: What Boards Need to Know

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Presenter:
Amber Van Vooren, Interim and Formative Assessment Coordinator, Idaho Department of Education
Samantha Thompson, Accountability Coordinator, Idaho Department of Education

Location: Boise Centre West 120B

Category: New Board Members

School boards across Idaho are asking the same questions about assessment data — is it useful, are we testing too much, and how do we compare to similar districts and charters? Drawing on recent statewide research, this session helps board members know where to focus their oversight, and what questions to ask their district or charter school leaders. We'll explore what a balanced assessment system looks like, available tools for reviewing and strengthening local assessment practices, and how to find and understand your own district or charter school's data — including how it compares to similar districts and charters across the state.

Board Chair and Vice Chair Roundtable

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Presenter:
Dave Wagers, Board Chair, Boise SD #001
Jason Sevy, Board Chair, Marsing JSD #363
Janelle Hill, Board Chair, Blackfoot Charter School
Leslie Baker, Board Chair, Moscow Charter School
Jayson Lloyd, Board Development Manager, Idaho School Boards Association

Location: Boise Centre West 120C

Category: Board Chair & Vice Chair

Being a board chair and vice chair comes with unique opportunities—and unique challenges. This interactive roundtable gives board chair leaders a chance to connect with peers, share experiences, and learn from one another. Participants will discuss topics such as leading effective board meetings, working with the superintendent, navigating difficult board dynamics, engaging fellow board members, and handling challenging situations that arise throughout the year. Come prepared to share what has worked (and what hasn't), ask questions, and gain practical ideas from other board chairs and vice chairs across Idaho.

Return on Goodwill

Presenter:
Sam Demma, Keynote Speaker

Location: Boise Centre West 130

This breakout session will be based on the ideas shared in Sam Demma's new book, Return on Goodwill, which teaches us that when we do good, expecting nothing in return, life surprises us with beautiful experiences and lovely people. It's eight chapters about generosity, service, curiosity, and all the ways we generate goodwill with others. Building off the practices in the book, Sam will guide the group to explore these ideas in order to create deeper relationships with the people around them.