Thursday Workshops

Session 4

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Legal Hot Topics

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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.

Wait, What? You Are Arming Staff Members?

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Presenter:
Luke Schroeder, Superintendent, Kimberly SD #414
Brad Carlson, Teacher, Kimberly SD #414

Location: Boise Centre West 100D

Category: Safety

This session highlights how a school district once opposed to arming staff used analysis of time and response realities to guide decision-making. The result was a data-driven program to train selected staff. We'll also discuss the board's role in creating policy and procedure, and how this fits into the Emergency Operational Plan along with the Plan's content discussed in executive session.

Better Together: An Evidence-Informed Collaborative Approach to Youth Well-Being

Presenter:
Megan Smith, Professor, Boise State University & Director, Communities for Youth
Sydney Nickel, Regional Initiative Coordinator, Communities for Youth
Andrea Hill, Community Engagement Coordinator, Communities for Youth

Location: Boise Centre West 100E

Category: Mental Health

Upstream Prevention is a data-driven, evidence-informed approach that empowers school boards, parents, and civic leaders to proactively improve student outcomes. Rather than waiting for a crisis, Idaho based "Communities for Youth" initiatives effectively build communities that improve youth well-being. The approach focuses on local control, allowing districts to address specific challenges with community-led solutions. By emphasizing protective factors and practical engagement, we move beyond reactive measures to create a stable, supportive environment for academic success. This presentation demonstrates how data-driven insights and local collaboration foster resilient communities and healthier student populations.

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Two Handbooks, One Leadership System: Clarifying Board and Administrator Roles



Presenter:
Joel Lovstedt, Superintendent, The Academy Public Charter School

Location: Boise Centre West 110A

Category: Charter

The session explores a paired-handbook model in which a Board Handbook clarifies governance practices and an Administrative Handbook addresses delegated authority and implementation. An alignment crosswalk connects the two by defining who decides, recommends, is consulted, and is informed in recurring areas such as agenda development, information requests, complaints, policy implementation, emergency decisions, evaluation, and leadership transitions.

The session would provide board members and administrators with a practical framework for improving role clarity, communication, continuity, and board-superintendent alignment. Participants would receive an adaptable handbook architecture and alignment-crosswalk tool for use in their own districts or charter schools.

The New Federal Tax Credit Scholarship is a Huge Opportunity for Public Schools

Presenter:
Duncan Robb, Chief Strategy Officer, Bluum
Terry Ryan, CEO, Bluum

Location: Boise Centre West 110B

Category: Finance

Learn how the federal tax credit scholarship that goes into effect January 1, 2027, could benefit the students you serve, inject tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars into your school or district, and add millions of dollars across public education in Idaho. Bluum will serve as a scholarship granting organization to collect donations and distribute scholarships to students. Join us to understand the mechanics of the law, what Bluum is doing to take advantage, and what your school or district can do to be prepared.



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Youth Apprenticeships for All: Turning Work-Based Learning Into Nationally Recognized Credentials

Presenter:
Megan Simila, VP of Apprenticeship, Idaho Business for Education

Location: Boise Centre West 110C

Category: Students

What if students could graduate high school with a nationally recognized credential, real work experience, and money already in their pockets? Registered apprenticeships make that possible, and this session shows you how to build one in your community. The session will focus on three case studies: Kuna School District, ELEVATE Academy, and Soda Spring High School to highlight that apprenticeship can work in any community, regardless of size or budget. It will also discuss sponsorship sticking points and how to overcome them with STRAP agreements and the group sponsorship model. Come learn how youth apprenticeship can work for all!

The Important Process of Hiring Your Next Superintendent or Charter Administrator 

Presenter:
Katie Russell, Communications & Programs Specialist, Idaho School Boards Association

Location: Boise Centre West 110D

Selecting a superintendent or charter administrator is one of the most important decisions a board will make. This presentation will explain the superintendent search process, from identifying the necessary qualifications to advertising the position, gathering input from the community and staff, screening applicants, conducting interviews, and making the final decision. The workshop will also cover Open Meeting Law and hiring best practices, aligning your board's priorities, FAQs, and key interview questions.

Strengthening Governance Through Transparency: Navigating Public Records Challenges with Confidence

Presenter:
Monica Pauley, Consultant, Idaho School Boards Association
Kelly Fisher, Clerk, Lake Pend Oreille SD #084

Location: Boise Centre West 120A

Category: Clerk

This session goes beyond basic public records compliance and focuses on complex; real-world scenarios clerks regularly face. Participants will explore handling video requests, mixed-content emails, social media records, and high-volume or politically sensitive requests. Emphasis will be placed on Idaho Public Records Act exemptions, FERPA intersections, and how to craft legally defensible responses.

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Superintendent Evaluation



Presenter:
Spencer Barzee, Deputy Superintendent, Idaho Department of Education

Location: Boise Centre West 120B

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.

Communicating with Patrons and the Media

Presenter:
Jennifer Swindell, CEO/Publisher, Idaho Education News
Randy Schrader, CFO/Data Analyst, Idaho Education News

Location: Boise Centre West 120C

Category: Community Engagement

It's important for elected officials to be open and transparent with patrons, parents and students. Our workshop will give you tips on how to control messaging so your community gets accurate and timely communication from its board. We'll also connect communication to Idaho's open meeting laws and access to public records.

Bring Your Community Together Using Interest-Based Decision-Making



Presenter:
Wendy Johnson, Superintendent, Boise SD #001
Norm Stewart, Superintendent, Marsing JSD #363
Cassea Daugherty, Trustee, Marsing JSD #363
OJ Barber, Trustee, Marsing JSD #363
Debbie Donovan, Trustee, Boise SD #001

Location: Boise Centre West 130

Category: Chair and Vice Chairs

The workshop introduces Interest-Based Decision Making (IBDM) as a collaborative, problem-solving framework for school district leadership. The primary goal is to guide school boards, administration, and community stakeholders away from adversarial, positional debates and toward sustainable, "win/win" solutions for complex and contentious issues. Leaders from the Boise School District and the Marsing School District will share their experiences using this framework.