

## STEPS IN THE SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH PROCESS

### INTRODUCTION

- Consultation with the IASB search consultant(s) is available throughout the search process.
- IASB guarantees to continue to work with the Board of Education until a selection is made.
- Please note there are five services identified as “Optional.” If any or all of the optional services are selected by the Board of Education, the additional/applicable fee(s) will apply (see Menu of Services).
- The steps in this document pertain to a superintendent search. When contracted to facilitate a professional search for a different position (e.g., CSBO, assistant superintendent, principal), the steps are adjusted as appropriate and agreed to.

### STEP 1. **Develop Timeline, Announcement of Vacancy, Criteria, and Salary (Open Session)**

After an official board action to approve the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) to facilitate the superintendent search, an IASB consultant will meet with the Board of Education to establish the timeline and process to be followed in the search. It is important to have agreement about a clear process which will give the search “transparency” and legitimacy in the eyes of all.

Each member of the board will complete a survey\* which is used to determine the ideal candidate section of the announcement of vacancy. In addition, a link to an online survey will be made available to the staff, parents, and/or the community to solicit their input on priorities regarding the person to be sought as superintendent. The surveys will be tabulated by IASB. A summary report of the board, staff and/or community surveys will be shared with the board at a scheduled meeting. The survey results will be used to develop the “Ideal Candidate” traits and requirements that will be included in the *Announcement of Vacancy*.

\*The survey provided is used statewide, and was developed in consideration of the *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders*. It identifies traits/skills needed for educational leader success, and forces participants to choose those most significant to them. The responses of the stakeholder groups – Board, staff, parents, and/or community—will be analyzed for congruence. In addition, specific questions can also be added about the education, experience, and residency of the new superintendent.

The IASB consultant will provide the board with salary data (i.e., regional/state data only—not candidates’ salary history, per 2019 legislation) to help the board determine the compensation to be offered.

***Optional Module A:*** Conduct In-District Focus Group interviews.

The IASB consultant will act as an interviewer and facilitator to gather perceptions of key district members (e.g., representatives from district administration, staff, parents, and/or other members of the school community) regarding the characteristics and skills to be sought in a new superintendent. This up-front input will be used in conjunction with the survey results to develop the “Ideal Candidate” criteria.

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### STEP 2. **Announce and Advertise the Vacancy.**

The IASB will solicit applicants for the position in accordance with the timeline established by the board. As part of an aggressive nationwide search, the vacancy will be placed before potential candidates across the nation and around the globe. Postings and/or contacts might include:

- IASB posts positions on its website ([www.iasb.com/executive](http://www.iasb.com/executive)).
- Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA) Job Bank (<https://www.illinoiseducationjobbank.org>).
- National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers (NASS) members. <https://www.nsba.org/services/school-board-leadership-services/superintendent-search>
- Position posting on K12jobspot.com.
- National School Board Association (NSBA) members.
- Illinois Council of Professors of Education Administration (ICPEA) members.
- Higher Logic email to the following groups:

Illinois Association of School Business Officials (IASBO).

Illinois Principals Association (IPA) membership.

Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA) membership.

Illinois Council of Professors of Educational Administration

Current Superintendents throughout the State of Illinois.

A listing of individuals who have indicated an interest in receiving the IASB vacancy notices and current superintendents.

The IASB consultant will assist the board in developing and completing the material for the *Announcement of Vacancy* (i.e. customized advertising brochure) which will publicize the position. The *Announcement of Vacancy* will typically reference information regarding the application process, the candidate traits and experience sought, compensation, key search timeline dates, the district and the surrounding area, the financial structure of the district, and the members of the Board of Education. The *Announcement of Vacancy* will be reviewed and discussed in Open Session.

#### ***Optional Module B:*** Utilize Additional Advertising

Advertisement in *Education Week*, a national publication devoted entirely to education.

Advertisement on the AASA homepage, the AASA Career page, the AASA News of the Nation and Leader's Edge e-newsletters.

Advertisement through the Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS).

### STEP 3. **Collect Applications; Verify Qualifications, Experience and Licensure of all Candidates.**

IASB accepts only online applications. IASB will verify candidates' qualifications and licensure and will field questions from those interested in the position.

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### STEP 4: **Review All Applications.**

IASB will assemble a team to review the materials submitted by all applicants. Consultants independently and collectively review all applications in order to identify ideal candidates.

IASB unbiased reviewing team will interview candidates before presentation of recommended candidates to the Board. As a result of these formal, structured interviews, the IASB review team will finalize the slate of candidates to be presented to the board.

### STEP 5: **Develop a List of Recommended Candidates.**

IASB will use the “Ideal Candidate” section of the Announcement of Vacancy to identify candidates who are deemed the best fit/match for the district.

### STEP 6: **Conduct Limited Background Inquiries on Recommended Candidates.**

The IASB reviewing team will verify references of recommended candidates. IASB will perform a limited background inquiry of each applicant before placing him/her in the pool of candidates that is presented to the board.

The ultimate employer of the candidate should make personal contact with the semifinalist candidates’ references, since you as the employer will be held accountable for your hiring decisions. Therefore, the references you rely on to make this decision should not be second-hand. The district is responsible for conducting a criminal background check on the candidate selected for employment and completing other hiring protocols as required by district policy or recommended by district legal counsel. Many employers wish to utilize an Employment Screener Provider to ensure they are securing the very best people to fill positions. To that end, Peopletrail is one service that offers organizations an array of pre-employment solutions. (See additional information on the last page of this document).

### STEP 7: **Schedule Candidate Interviews with Board of Education.**

IASB consultant will schedule first round interviews at the discretion of the Board of Education and the availability of the candidates.

### STEP 8: **Present Recommended Candidates and Interview Preparation (Closed Session).**

The IASB consultant will meet with the Board of Education in Closed Session to provide:

- A report with a summary of the entire applicant pool (e.g., number, state of residence, educational preparation, and current responsibilities/positions).
- A slate of candidates recommended by the reviewing team, including the professional preparation of each candidate. The board will receive the complete application packet of each of the candidates recommended by the reviewing team.
- Information, documents, and procedures to assist the board in conducting first and final round interviews, evaluating candidates, and conducting a Site Visit.

#### ***Optional Module C: Conduct Practice Interview Session***

In order to prepare for interviews with the recommended candidates, an IASB consultant will conduct a practice interview session with the board. This will occur in Closed Session.

### **Conduct Initial Interviews of the Recommended Candidates.**

To prepare, the board will study the candidates' credentials and application materials. In addition, the board president, or his/her designee, will conduct reference inquiries. The board will conduct the first round interviews with each candidate in Closed Session.

### **Conduct Second Interviews of the Identified Candidates.**

From those initially interviewed, the board will select candidates in whom it has a high degree of interest for second round interviews. If not already completed, the board president, or his/her designee, will conduct reference inquiries. The board will conduct the second round interviews with each candidate (i.e., the semi-finalists) in Closed Session.

### ***Optional Module D: Facilitate Stakeholder Group Interviews with Semi-Finalists.***

IASB consultant will facilitate stakeholder group (e.g., representative district administrators, teachers/staff, parents, community members) interviews with each semi-finalist candidate.

## **STEP 9. Conduct Site Visit and Finalize Decision.**

After narrowing the field to a preferred finalist, the IASB recommends that a delegation of two board members visit the community in which the finalist works and/or resides. The site visit will serve as a further means of assessing the favored candidate's appropriateness for the position. The board will hear a report of the site visit from the delegation. Based on the report by the delegation, the board will either offer a contract or re-evaluate the candidates. The board will finalize its process as a result of the interviews, reference inquiries, and site visit and will offer a contract to the person of its choice.

## **STEP 10: New Superintendent Hired.**

Upon official board action and signing of contract, the board will notify staff and the community of the selection. The Board will make arrangements for the district and community members to meet the person as quickly as possible.

## **Post Search Workshop for the New Team (facilitated by Field Services Director).**

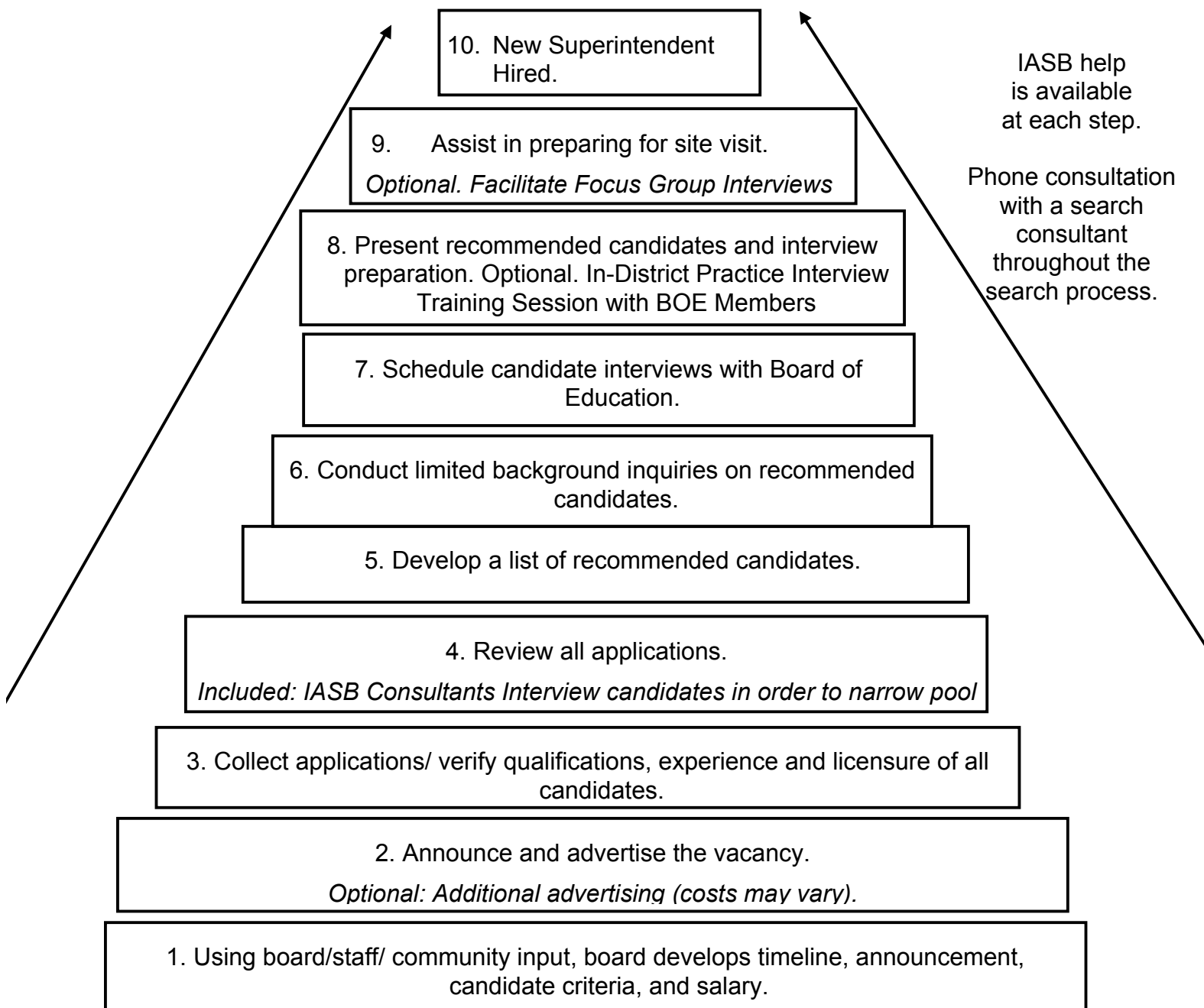
IASB is pleased to offer your board and new superintendent team a complimentary in-district workshop to assist you as you move forward working together during this first critical year. This workshop will provide an opportunity for the board and new superintendent to begin to build the new governance team and to become acquainted with resources your school board association has available to support you in this important work. The workshop generally will be a "team building" workshop that may be customized based upon district needs.

***IASB guarantees to continue to work with the board of education until a selection is made.***

IASB Superintendent Search

# THE PROVEN PYRAMID

**“Being clear about search criteria  
builds a firm foundation for the project”  
STEPS IN HIRING A NEW SUPERINTENDENT**



IASB help is available at each step.

Phone consultation with a search consultant throughout the search process.

**GENEVA CUSD 304 SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH TIMELINE**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| February 14, 2022.....                                  | IASB consultants present overview of Search Process (Open Session)   |
| Late February/Early March, 2022 .....                   | Official Board action to approve contract (Open Session)   |
| March / April, 2022 .....                               | Surveys of Board, staff, and parents/community administered and “General Information of District” form completed   |
| April / May, 2022 ( <b>Optional/Recommended</b> ) ..... | In-District Focus Group Interviews   |
| June, 2022.....   | Survey and Focus Group results presented, as well as a draft of <i>Announcement of Vacancy</i> for Board review and consensus (Open Session)                                 |
| July, 2022.....   | Position Posted on IASB/IASA Websites; <i>Announcement of Vacancy</i> widely distributed and posted on websites (e.g., IASB and IASA Job Bank)                               |
| September / October, 2022 .....                         | Deadline to apply for position   |
| October, 2022 .....                                     | IASB consultants analyze applications  |
| October, 2022 .....                                     | IASB consultants conduct screening interviews of top potential candidates  |
| October/November, 2022 .....                            | Slate of candidates presented to Board, as well as info/guidance regarding interviews and processes  |
| TBD (Optional).....                                     | Practice interview session/training for Board (Closed Session)   |
| November, 2022 .....                                    | Board conducts First Round Interviews (Special Board Meeting – Closed Session)   |
| December, 2022 .....                                    | Board conducts Second Round Interviews (Special Board Meeting – Closed Session) ( <b>Optional/Recommended</b> ) IASB-facilitated Stakeholder Group interviews with finalists |
| December, 2022 .....                                    | Board conducts Site Visit (if desired and feasible)  |
| By the end of January, 2023 .....                       | Board offers and negotiates contract and appoints Superintendent   |
| July 1, 2023 .....                                      | Employment Commences   |
| TBD.....  | IASB Field Services Director leads post-search workshop with Superintendent/Board  |

***Post search workshop for the new team facilitated by a Field Services Director within 6 months of new superintendent start date.***

**IASB SEARCH EXPERIENCE**

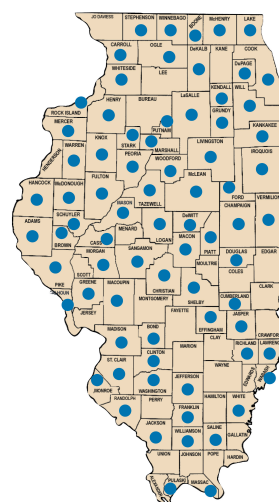
The Association is well-equipped to search out qualified candidates. Its staff is familiar with the many ways of reaching potential candidates around the state and the nation. Also, the IASB has many years of experience at helping individual school boards define their particular needs and in identifying candidates who can fill those needs with competence. The IASB is an active member of the National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers (NASS). Thomas F. Leahy is a former chair of NASS.

During the 2020-2021 school year, according to IASB records, IASB conducted the following 19 administrative searches:

|                                      |                               |                                   |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Altamont CUSD 10</b>              | <b>Evergreen Park ESD 124</b> | <b>Metamora CCSD 1</b>            |
| Effingham County                     | Cook County                   | Woodford County                   |
| <b>Beardstown CUSD 15</b>            | <b>Forest Ridge SD 142</b>    | <b>Orangeville CUSD 203</b>       |
| Cass County                          | Cook County                   | Stephenson County                 |
| <b>Carbondale CHSD 165</b>           | <b>Gavin SD 37</b>            | <b>Paw Paw CUSD 271 (S/P)</b>     |
| Jackson County                       | Lake County                   | Lee County                        |
| <b>DeSoto Cons SD 86</b>             | <b>Herrin CUSD 4</b>          | <b>Pecatonica CUSD 321</b>        |
| Jackson County                       | Williamson County             | Winnebago County                  |
| <b>East Alton-Wood River CHSD 14</b> | <b>Knoxville CUSD 202</b>     | <b>Summit Hill SD 161</b>         |
| Madison County                       | Knox County                   | Will County                       |
| <b>Edwardsville CUSD 7</b>           | <b>Maroa-Forsyth CUSD 2</b>   | <b>West Washington Co CUSD 10</b> |
| Madison County                       | Macon County                  | Washington County                 |
|                                      | <b>Mendota CCSD 289</b>       |                                   |
|                                      | LaSalle County                |                                   |

**Over the last eleven years (2009-2021) IASB has done superintendent searches for 305 districts in 76 different counties.**

**Be sure to check our web site ([www.iasb.com](http://www.iasb.com)) for more information on IASB search services and information on current and past searches.**



# Foundational Principles of Effective Governance

As the corporate entity charged by law with governing a school district, each School Board sits in trust for its entire community. The obligation to govern effectively imposes some fundamental duties on the Board:

## 1. The board clarifies the district purpose.

As its primary task, the board continually defines, articulates and re-defines district ends to answer the recurring question -- who gets what benefits for how much? Effective ends development requires attention to at least two key concerns: student learning and organizational effectiveness.

- Ends express the benefits the school district should deliver, thereby providing the entire system with clarity of purpose and a clear direction. A school board rarely creates district ends; rather, it most often detects them through listening and observing.
- Ends reflect the district's purpose, direction, priorities and desired outcomes and are recorded in statements of core values/beliefs, mission, vision and goals.
- In effective school districts, every part of the organization is aligned with the ends articulated by the school board in written Board policy.
- Well-crafted ends enable the school board to effectively and efficiently monitor district performance and assess organizational success (Principle 5).

## 2. The board connects with the community.

The school board engages in an ongoing two-way conversation with the entire community. This conversation enables the board to hear and understand the community's educational aspirations and desires, to serve effectively as an advocate for district improvement and to inform the community of the district's performance.

- Community engagement, also called public engagement or civic engagement, is the process by which school boards actively involve diverse citizens in dialogue, deliberation and collaborative thinking around common concerns for their public schools.
- Effective community engagement is essential to create trust and support among community, board, superintendent, and staff.
- A board in touch with community-wide concerns and values will serve the broad public good rather than being overly influenced by special interests.
- The school board must be aggressive in reaching out to the community – the district's owners – to engage people in conversations about education and the public good. In contrast, people who bring customer concerns to board members should be appropriately directed to the superintendent and staff.

## 3. The board employs a superintendent.

The board employs and evaluates one person - the superintendent - and holds that person accountable for district performance and compliance with written board policy.

- An effective school board develops and maintains a productive relationship with the superintendent.
- The employment relationship consists of mutual respect and a clear understanding of respective roles, responsibilities and expectations. This relationship should be grounded in a thoughtfully crafted employment contract and job description; procedures for communications and ongoing assessment; and reliance on written policy.



- Although the board is legally required to approve all employment contracts, the board delegates authority to the superintendent to select and evaluate all district staff within the standards established in written board policy.

### **4. The board delegates authority.**

The board delegates authority to the superintendent to manage the district and provide leadership for the staff. Such authority is communicated through written board policies that designate district ends and define operating parameters.

- Ultimately, the school board is responsible for everything, yet must recognize that everything depends upon a capable and competent staff.
- “Delegates authority to” means empowering the superintendent and staff to pursue board ends single-mindedly and without hesitation. A board that does (or re-does) staff work disempowers the staff. High levels of superintendent and staff accountability require high levels of delegation.
- Delegation is difficult for anyone accustomed to direct action. However, to appropriately stay focused on the big picture and avoid confusing the staff, members of the school board must discipline themselves to trust their superintendent and staff and not involve themselves in day-to-day operations.

### **5. The board monitors performance.**

The board constantly monitors progress toward district ends and compliance with written board policies using data as the basis for assessment.

- A school board that pursues its ends through the delegation of authority has a moral obligation to itself and the community to determine whether that authority is being used as intended.
- Unless the board is clear about what it wants, there is no valid way to measure progress and compliance.
- A distinction should be made between monitoring data (used by the board for accountability) and management data (used by the staff for operations).
- The constructive use of data is a skill that must be learned. The board should have some understanding of data, but will typically require guidance from the staff.

### **6. The board takes responsibility for itself.**

The board, collectively and individually, takes full responsibility for board activity and behavior – the work it chooses to do and how it chooses to do the work. Individual board members are obligated to express their opinions and respect others’ opinions; however, board members understand the importance of the board ultimately speaking with one clear voice.

- The school board’s role as trustee for the community is unique and essential to both the district and community.
- While the board must operate within legal parameters, good governance requires the board be responsible for itself, its processes and contributions. Board deliberations and actions are limited to board work, not staff work.
- The board seeks continuity of leadership, even as it experiences turnover in membership. The board accomplishes this by using written board policies to guide board operations, by providing thorough orientation and training for all members, and by nurturing a positive and inviting board culture.

## IASB STAFF STANDARDS

In order to make our members aware of the conduct they have a right to expect from us, the Member Services staff of the Illinois Association of School Boards has adopted the following standards.

As members of the IASB Member Services staff, **WE WILL:**

1. make excellence in local school governance in support of quality public education our highest priority, and take every opportunity to contribute to the understanding of school boards and their essential role in governing the public schools;
2. set an example for members of school boards and their administrative staffs by always acting in a manner that reflects favorably upon the integrity and reputation of the Association, its leadership, membership and staff;
3. make commitments only after thoughtful consideration and make no promises that will not be kept;
4. represent information as factual only when its accuracy can be verified, clearly distinguish between facts and opinion in our comments, and avoid speculation with information that could put someone else at risk;
5. ensure that anyone who calls on the Association for information or assistance receives a prompt, helpful response;
6. accept full responsibility for the exercise of any authority that has been delegated;
7. model the value of continuous learning by engaging in professional development opportunities and self-improvement activities.

Further, as members of the IASB Member Services staff, **WE WILL NOT:**

1. take any action or make any commitment that is not legal, ethical, consistent with the mission of the Association, or in the best interest of school boards as public institutions;
2. use any words or take any action that would intentionally harm individual school board members or administrators;
3. knowingly participate in any activity on behalf of the Association that would be illegal or would abuse the Association's exception under the Open Meetings Act;
4. engage in gossip or divulge information that has been provided in confidence.
5. confuse the distinction between bona-fide legal advice and general information about the law and never give advice that should come from an attorney;

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6. commit the Association to any action that might endanger its financial health or to any expenditure that has not been budgeted or otherwise properly authorized.

In addition, those of us who serve as executive search consultants **WILL**:

1. represent only the interests of client school boards, not individual candidates, and impartially evaluate all candidates based on criteria established by the school board;
2. strive to maintain anonymity to candidates throughout the application and evaluation process by not revealing their identities to anyone, including the client school board, unless or until a candidate becomes a finalist for the position or otherwise gives permission to do so;
3. remain available to help the client school board build an effective working relationship with its new superintendent.

*{this section reviewed and updated June 2013}*

As IASB Staff, we agree to live and be held accountable for these Standards.

Illinois Association of School Boards  
May, 2011



Many employers wish to utilize an Employment Screener Provider to ensure they are securing the very best people to fill positions. To that end, *Peopletrail* is one service that offers organizations an array of pre-employment solutions.

*Peopletrail* has a variety of products and packages available. Examples of the search information available with a nationwide and alias search include: Social Security Number; Global Homeland Security; Interpol Search; National Security / Terrorist Watch-List Report; OIG Excluded Parties Search / Medicaid Sanctions; Nationwide Criminal, Sex, and Violent Offender Report; County Criminal Search; Federal District Criminal Search; Employment History Verification and References; Education Verification; Social Media Checks; and more.

*Peopletrail* follows FCRA procedures and exceed industry guidelines. Their clients include Verizon, Microsoft, LG, intel, and Canon.

If your district does not utilize an Employment Screener Provider and the Board of Education wishes to explore utilizing *Peopletrail* to conduct a background check, please contact:

**Mr. Creed Healey**  
**VP Business Development**  
**Phone:** (801) 307-4109  
**Email:** [creedh@peopletrail.com](mailto:creedh@peopletrail.com)