



November 20-22, 2026

**JOINT ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

*Lighting the Way*



# Friday Focus Workshops

November 20, 2026 • Sheraton Grand Chicago (one level above the main lobby)

## Schedule

### MORNING WORKSHOPS

8-9 a.m.  
Continental Breakfast and Check-In

9-11:30 a.m.  
Workshop

11:30 a.m.  
Adjournment (lunch **not** included)

### AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

11-11:30 a.m.  
Registration  
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.  
Lunch (**included**)

12:30-3 p.m.  
Workshop

3 p.m.  
Adjournment

IASB Friday Focus Workshops provide school board members with knowledge and resources to be an effective and efficient school leader. Grow your governing and board leadership skills with multiple half-day sessions (morning and afternoon).

- Gain in-depth knowledge from education experts on current issues impacting school governance.
- Dig into your role on the local board of education and learn how you and your board can gain a leadership advantage.
- Find fresh perspectives on the topics that matter most to your students, parents, and communities.

### Half Day A.M.

- Navigating the Board Presidency: Presiding with a Purpose
- Fierce Conversations Foundations
- Regeneration: Reimagining and Revitalizing Rural Education
- \* **Tech, AI & Student Achievement: How Students Learn Best**, presented by Saturday General Session Speaker Jared Horvath, Ph.D.

- \* **The Future-Proof Catalyst: From Inspiration to Implementation**, presented by Sunday General Session Speaker Mary Hemphill, Ph.D.

- EQUITY 26: Listening Across Difference

### Half Day P.M.

- Navigating the Board Presidency: A Day in the Life
- \* **Tech, AI & Student Achievement: How Students Learn Best**, presented by Saturday General Session Speaker Jared Horvath, Ph.D. (Repeat)

- \* **The Future-Proof Catalyst: From Inspiration to Implementation**, presented by Sunday General Session Speaker Mary Hemphill, Ph.D. (Repeat)

- Governing in an AI Environment: Where Boards Must Draw the Line
- Making Meetings Matter

- EQUITY 26: Writing Ourselves Into Being

- Superintendent Evaluation: The Essential Work of the Board

*Rural district Workshop*



Don't miss the workshops presented by Conference General Session Speakers!



Check out the EQUITY 26 workshops!

**\$225 for one half-day Workshop. \$450 for two half-day Workshops.**

Joint Annual Conference attendees have the option to register for one or two of 13 half-day training workshops offered in the morning and afternoon. The price of one half-day workshop is \$225. Two half-day workshops are \$450.\*

\*IASB Friday Focus Workshops are only available to those who have registered for the 2026 Joint Annual Conference. For additional information contact Miranda Sexton at (217) 528-9688, extension 1118, email [msexton@iasb.com](mailto:msexton@iasb.com).



Additional information and registration instructions at [Friday Focus Workshops | IASB](#)

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# Morning-Only Workshops

## Navigating the Board Presidency: Presiding with a Purpose (AM)

The school board president role comes with responsibilities and perplexing situations. Dive into the key aspects of leadership and explore expected roles, essential responsibilities, and how to navigate the real-life scenarios that keep things interesting. Hear from superintendents and board presidents about their real-life experiences as they navigated challenging situations.

Presenters: **Patrick Allen**, Director of Outreach & Training, IASB and **Katie Bulava**, Director of Outreach & Training, IASB



## Fierce Conversations Foundations (AM)

In today's fast-paced environment, the most expensive problem an organization faces is the missing conversation: The things we need to say but don't. Fierce Conversations Foundations equips you with the tools to bridge the gap.

Presenter: **Justin Caldwell, Ed.D.**, Director of Outreach & Training, IASB



## Regeneration: Reimagining and Revitalizing Rural Education (AM)

This interactive workshop moves beyond the "deficit model" of rurality. Participants will engage with the latest data trends, dissect systemic barriers, and explore scalable, innovative solutions before applying these insights to their own local districts and communities.

Presenter: **Todd Dugan, Ed.D.**, President-Elect, Association of Illinois Rural and Small Schools (AIRSS), and Superintendent, Bunker Hill CUSD 8



## EQUITY 26: Listening Across Difference (AM)

Can you truly hear viewpoints that challenge your own? Can you react in ways that build trust, not division? This interactive session, built on John A. Powell's *Belonging without Oothering* framework, explores how division forms and how to interrupt it. Leave with listening strategies for tense meetings and conversations!

Presenters: **Sabine Denise Jaques**, Joy, Justice & Equity Specialist, Joy & Justice in Schools, and **Thomas Chang**, Consultant, Joy & Justice in Schools



# Afternoon-Only Workshops

## Navigating the Board Presidency: A Day in the Life (PM)

Join fellow board presidents in the afternoon session for a "Day in the Life" networking opportunity in which you can talk about the hottest topics currently at your board table. Then join a panel of attorneys to answer your most pressing legal questions.

Presenters: **Patrick Allen**, Director of Outreach & Training, IASB and **Katie Bulava**, Director of Outreach & Training, IASB



## Governing in an AI Environment: Where Boards Must Draw the Line (PM)

This interactive session is grounded in IASB governance principles and designed for board members. Participants will examine how Artificial Intelligence (AI) intersects with role clarity, ethical conduct, policy alignment, and public accountability.

Presenter: **Gary Fasules**, Director of Outreach & Training, IASB



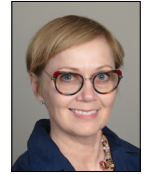
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## Afternoon Workshops, continued

### Making Meetings Matter (PM)

Do you dread your board meetings and wonder if “there has to be a better way”? Join us to be challenged, evaluate your board meetings, and learn best practices to conduct an effective board meeting.

Presenters: **Laura Martinez**, Director of Training Development, IASB and **Arlana Bedard**, Director of Outreach & Training, IASB



### EQUITY 26: Writing Ourselves Into Being (PM)

How can leaders move from competing perspectives toward shared understanding and collective action? Grounded in John A. Powell's *Belonging without Oothering* framework, this interactive workshop helps you translate community voice into more thoughtful, inclusive, and effective leadership practices.

Presenters: **Sabine Denise Jaques**, Joy, Justice & Equity Specialist, Joy & Justice in Schools, and **Thomas Chang**, Consultant, Joy & Justice in Schools



### Superintendent Evaluation: The Essential Work of the Board (PM)

The board employs and evaluates one person — the superintendent — and holds that person accountable for district performance and compliance with written board policy. In this age of accountability, good governance requires a superintendent evaluation process that promotes district improvement and provides professional development and growth opportunities.

Presenter: **Perry Hill IV, Ph.D.**, Director of Outreach & Training, IASB



## Morning and Afternoon Workshops

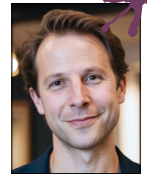
Presented by  
Conference General  
Session Speakers!



### Tech, AI & Student Achievement: How Students Learn Best (AM/PM)

Why is digital technology so often detrimental to learning, and what are the mechanisms driving negative effects? With a deeper understanding of why these tools so often disappoint, we will be much better poised to meaningfully consider when and how we choose to use tech.

Presenter: Saturday General Session Speaker **Jared Horvath, Ph.D.**, Neuroscientist, educator, author, and Director, LME Global



### The Future-Proof Catalyst: From Inspiration to Implementation (AM/PM)

Leaders will define what future-proofing looks like for their communities, map key stakeholders who blend veteran wisdom with fresh energy, craft audience-specific messaging that stays authentic, and leave with a complete 30/60/90-day action plan and ready-to-use tools.

Presenter: Sunday General Session Speaker **Mary Hemphill, Ph.D.**, CEO & Founder, The Limitless Leader



# Advanced Registration Required

Registration for these workshops is open only to those who have registered for the 2026 IASB • IASA • IASBO Joint Annual Conference

## Registration

- **School board members** — Contact your district office and ask to be registered for Friday Focus Workshops or contact the IASB Registrar at [registrar@iasb.com](mailto:registrar@iasb.com) or (217) 528-9688, ext. 1145.

## Workshop Tuition

- **Half-Day Workshop tuition is \$225.** Morning workshops include continental breakfast, breaks, and workshop materials. Afternoon workshops include lunch, breaks, and workshop materials.
- Participants may register for two half-day workshops for a total of \$450, which includes continental breakfast and lunch.

**Workshop space can be held with advance payment by check, ACH, purchase order, or credit card.**

(A 3% transaction fee will be added for credit card payments.) **Advance registrations will be accepted until 4:30 p.m. on Friday, November 6, 2026, if space is available.**

**Cancellation:** Advance registrants who need to cancel must notify the IASB Registrar by email [registrar@iasb.com](mailto:registrar@iasb.com).

Friday Focus Workshop registration fees will be refunded if cancellation is received **by noon on Thursday, October 15.**

## Questions about the Friday Focus Workshops?

Please email [Miranda Sexton](mailto:Miranda.Sexton) or call at (217) 528-9688, ext. 1118.

## IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING THURSDAY NIGHT LODGING:

Workshop attendees may want to consider a Thursday night reservation at a Conference hotel to arrive on time Friday.

# 2026 CONFERENCE General Session Speakers

Friday



**Ben Nemtin**

Make the Impossible Possible

Saturday



**Jared Horvath, Ph.D.**

The Digital Delusion –  
Classroom Technology and Student  
Achievement: What's the Connection?

Sunday



**Mary Hemphill, Ph.D.**

Future-Proof Leadership: Leading &  
Learning in a Skills-Based Economy



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