



**LEADERSHIP FOR
THE NEXT 250**



**BOARD LEADERSHIP
INSTITUTE 2026**

May 8-9, 2026

Hilton Columbus/Polaris



**OHIO SCHOOL BOARDS
ASSOCIATION**

BOARD LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE 2026:

A GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

As America marks 250 years of democracy, the role of local leadership has never been more important. For generations, school board members have shaped communities and brighter futures for Ohio's public school students. The OSBA Board Leadership Institute supports your leadership, equipping you with the information and resources needed to govern effectively, navigate complex challenges and help ensure every student's success.

TOP REASONS TO ATTEND

1 **Strengthen your governance skills.**
Build practical expertise in board governance, policy development, financial oversight and legal responsibilities — essential tools for effective leadership.

2 **Stay informed on critical issues.**
Gain timely updates on legislation, school law, labor negotiations and public records requirements that directly impact your board decisions.

3 **Lead with confidence during change.**
Develop strategies to navigate complex challenges, communicate effectively and lead your district with clarity and purpose.

4 **Learn from experts and peers.**
Engage with experienced facilitators and fellow board members who understand the realities of public service and school district governance.

5 **Build connections that strengthen your work.**
Connect with colleagues from across the state, exchange ideas and expand your network of leaders committed to strong public education.

REGISTER TODAY

Build the governance and leadership expertise needed to lead your community into the next era of public education.

[REGISTER](#)

COST

The cost to attend is \$450, which includes breakfast and lunch each day, a reception and refreshments.

HOTEL ROOM RATES

Stay at the Hilton Columbus/Polaris for \$181 per night if booked by April 15.

[BOOK A ROOM](#)

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, MAY 8

8 a.m.	Registration and breakfast
8:45 a.m.	Welcome
9 a.m.	Opening General Session
10 a.m.	Networking break
10:15 a.m.	Concurrent breakout sessions
11:15 a.m.	Networking break
11:30 a.m.	Concurrent breakout sessions
12:30 p.m.	Lunch (sponsored by Sedgwick)
1:30 p.m.	Concurrent breakout sessions
2:30 p.m.	Networking break
2:45 p.m.	Concurrent breakout sessions
3:45 p.m.	Networking reception (sponsored by Frontline Education)
4:30 p.m.	Adjourn

SATURDAY, MAY 9

8:30 a.m.	Breakfast
9:15 a.m.	Concurrent breakout sessions
10:15 a.m.	Networking break
10:30 a.m.	Concurrent breakout sessions
11:30 a.m.	Lunch and Closing Address (sponsored by Sedgwick Managed Care Ohio)
1 p.m.	Adjourn

The schedule is subject to change. Visit the [2026 BLI webpage](#) for the most up-to-date schedule.

CONCURRENT SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

FRIDAY, MAY 8

10:15 a.m.

Option 1	<p>Reading reimagined through student-led AI</p> <p>Discover how Ridgewood Local (Coshocton) high school students designed and built an artificial intelligence (AI)-supported literacy platform, “Reading Reimagined,” to address reading engagement and comprehension challenges. Learn how empowering students to lead AI innovation can strengthen literacy, develop career-ready skills and model responsible, ethical AI use in schools.</p> <p>Lester McCurdy, teacher, and Kenzie Bice, Addison Lahmers, Sofie Paugh, Sophia Bluck, Keira Schrock, Bridget Kobel and Autumn Joyce, students, Ridgewood Local’s AI for Youth class</p>
Option 2	<p>Democracy in action: ‘6-7’ weeks of the Ohio legislature</p> <p>The next few weeks will be a busy time at the Ohio Statehouse. Learn what issues could move through the process and how board members can get involved to advocate for their schools.</p> <p>Jennifer Hogue, director of legislative services, and Nicole Piscatani, deputy director of legislative services, OSBA</p>
Option 3	<p>Ensuring opportunities for military-connected students</p> <p>Ohio leads the nation in military-connected schools, communities, districts and programming. More than 700 schools have been recognized with the Purple Star Award, highlighting their commitment to students and families connected to our nation’s military, while the state’s Military Interstate Children’s Compact Commission (MiC3) addresses key educational transition issues encountered by children of military families. Hear how your district can provide stability and support to these students and families.</p> <p>Pete LuPiba, commissioner, Ohio MiC3</p>

11:30 a.m.

Option 1	<p>Painting your district’s financial picture</p> <p>Effective school-funding strategies include one essential component: Ensuring your community understands how the funding is being collected and used. District treasurers share resources and data so you can help your school district paint a clear financial picture for the public.</p> <p>Cajon Keeton, treasurer, Benton-Carroll-Salem Local (Ottawa); and Jeffrey J. Dornbusch, treasurer, Port Clinton City</p>
Option 2 New Board Member Focus	<p>Policy in action: Tools every board member needs</p> <p>Policy is one of a board’s strongest leadership tools. In this interactive session, we will clarify how policies are developed, where your authority begins and ends and how to ensure policies support effective operations. Real-world scenarios will help you determine when a policy is needed — and when it may create unintended challenges.</p> <p>Kenna S. Haycox, deputy director of board and management services, OSBA</p> <p>Note: This session was offered at “From Election to Action” earlier this year; particularly relevant to new board members who missed that session.</p>

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CONCURRENT SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

FRIDAY, MAY 8

11:30 a.m.

Option 3

Brain + eyes = keys to supercharging learning

Explore how vision enhances student performance when the brain is added to traditional vision screenings. Neuro-visual training (NVT) are brain and eye exercises designed to improve everyday function and elite sport performance. By employing NVT, educators can improve visual function and academic outcomes. Review fun, interactive activities to integrate vision care into school programming.

Bradley Jacobs, neural rehabilitation therapist, Neuro Visual Institute, Cincinnati

1:30 p.m.

Option 1

Partners in progress: Leveraging shared resources to foster sustainable community partnerships

Explore effective strategies for building and maintaining partnerships that leverage community resources to enhance student success and school initiatives. Discover how to move beyond transactional relationships to create mutually beneficial and sustainable collaborations.

Angela Hamberg, superintendent, Westerville City

Option 2

New Board Member Focus

Stepping into service: A vision for governance

Learn more about a school board's core responsibilities, governance structure, board/superintendent roles, meeting operations and protocols that support effective leadership. Step forward and lead with confidence in knowing how best to serve your district.

Kristine Robbins, director of board and management services, and **Shantelle K. Jenkins**, board and management services consultant, OSBA

Note: This session was offered at "From Election to Action" earlier this year; particularly relevant to new board members who missed that session.

Option 3

A journey to transparency: Public Records Law Jeopardy

Learn the essentials of Ohio's Public Records law in a fun, memorable way. Ohio Revised Code 149.43 is vital for ensuring transparency and accountability in government, but knowing the rights of the school board and of the requester can be daunting. This interactive, game show-style presentation breaks down the complexities and makes them accessible, memorable and enjoyable.

Erin M. Wessendorf-Wortman and **Giselle Spencer**, attorneys, Ennis Britton Co. LPA

2:45 p.m.

Option 1

Leading together: Effective board relations

Circleville City's leadership team shares strategies for respectful and harmonious working relationships among the district's decision-makers. Discover tips and tricks for cultivating effective board governance and learn how disagreement and questions can make your district better.

Dr. **Kimberly Halley**, superintendent; **Aaron Schirm**, treasurer; and **Patty Truex**, board member, Circleville City; and **Jeff Burrow**, Circleville City and Pickaway-Ross Career & Technology Center

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CONCURRENT SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

FRIDAY, MAY 8

2:45 p.m.

Option 2	<p>The good, bad and ugly of labor negotiations</p> <p>Hear the tale of two vastly different negotiation experiences, from a two-day interest-based bargaining success to a 10-month traditional bargaining session that included an eventual agreement — all in the same district and same year. Eastland-Fairfield Career & Technical Schools and Bricker Graydon LLP share the legal, board, employee and public relations considerations addressed as they navigated these experiences. Learn strategies and tips you can employ at the negotiating table.</p> <p>Nicole M. Donovan, Bricker Graydon LLP; and Shelley Groves, superintendent, Eastland-Fairfield Career and Technical Schools</p>
Option 3	<p>The dynamic duo: The superintendent-treasurer partnership</p> <p>Every Ohio school district depends on the working relationship between its superintendent and treasurer. While the Ohio Revised Code outlines their responsibilities, the real work happens through collaboration, communication and shared leadership. Gain insight into how that partnership functions and how it supports effective governance.</p> <p>Thomas L. Hosler, chief executive officer, OSBA</p>

SATURDAY, MAY 9

9:15 a.m.

Option 1 New Board Member Focus	<p>School law essentials: Rules, risks and realities</p> <p>Serving on a board of education comes with important legal responsibilities, which means board members, whether new or experienced, have a lot to learn. Review the key rules governing open meetings and parliamentary procedure, and common risks and real-world situations boards often encounter. Through practical examples, you'll gain the knowledge and confidence needed to contribute effectively and responsibly in your role.</p> <p>Sara C. Clark, chief legal counsel, and Jennifer A. Hardin, senior deputy director of legal services, OSBA</p> <p>Note: This session was offered at "From Election to Action" earlier this year; particularly relevant to new board members who missed that session.</p>
Option 2	<p>Preparing for the next 250: Immersive mock state government program</p> <p>The American Legion Buckeye Boys and Girls State are leadership and civic programs in which high school juniors from throughout Ohio gather to create city and state governments. Learn how these week-long events educate students on the duties, rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a representative democracy while exposing them to future leadership opportunities and how your district can engage students in these programs.</p> <p>Gwen Schroeder-Zulch, director, Buckeye Girls State; and Richard Zulch, past president and trustee, Buckeye Boys State</p>

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CONCURRENT SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

SATURDAY, MAY 9

9:15 a.m.

Option 3

Setting the course for leadership: Preparing student leaders

Discover how **Princeton City**'s Naval Science program develops students' self-discipline, confidence, citizenship and leadership skills while preparing them for roles in direct leadership and management situations. The program follows military structures and enforces the district's code of conduct, encouraging students to function as effective members within a group while building the skills needed to lead teams.

10:30 a.m.

Option 1

Bridging the divide: Building relationships beyond party lines

Explore the impact of political polarization on public education policy, and learn practical strategies for depolarizing conversations, identifying shared values and engaging decision-makers with authenticity and empathy. Through an immersive role-playing exercise as fictional state legislators, attendees will practice finding common ground and overcoming communication barriers.

Malania Birney, legislative services consultant, OSBA

Option 2

Celebrating our roots: Connecting schools, community and America 250-Ohio

As America approaches its 250th anniversary, school districts have a unique opportunity to connect students with local history. Learn how boards can partner with community organizations and use America 250-Ohio resources to bring history to life through lessons, activities and community engagement.

Paul LaRue, State Board of Education president and co-chair, America 250-Ohio K-12 Education Committee; and **Quinn Maceyko**, board and management services consultant, OSBA

Option 3

Shaping our district through student voice

Empowering students as leaders creates a more inclusive, responsive school community. **Pickerington Local (Fairfield)** describes the impact of the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council, where students collaborate with district leadership to share ideas, address concerns and drive change. See how student perspectives influence decision-making and discover ways to foster meaningful engagement.

Adrienne Bowden, coordinator of engagement and student services; and **Alesia Gillison**, assistant superintendent, Pickerington Local