

NWAIS Institutional Leadership Conference

Building Capacity: Identifying and Cultivating The Resources Your Board Needs For Success

Conference Agenda

Sunday, November 6, 2016

12:00pm - 1:00pm Registration

1:00pm - 1:15pm Welcome

1:15pm – 2:15pm Keynote Presentation with Dr. Mark David Milliron

Moving into the Next Generation of Learning

In this presentation, we'll catalyze key conversations about the changing face of education. We'll weave together issues and insights from research and practice on a wide variety of topics:

- The growing diversity of teachers and learners;
- Blended, mobile, and game-based learning;
- Curating digital courseware, BYOD efforts, and open education;
- Competency-based education, MOOCs, and other new models;
- Predictive analytics infrastructures and related adviser, student, and faculty apps;
- Emerging work on brain science and student non-cognitive factors; and
- Our shared commitment to deeper learning and maintaining the human touch. Finally, we'll explore strategies for engaging these conversations in a thoughtful and inclusive way—avoiding the all-too-common hyperbole or hysteria, while being open to compelling catalysts that can help move us into the next generation of learning.



2:30pm - 3:45pm Breakout Session A

1. Holding Steady with Adaptive Capacity: The Trustee's Oxymoron with Harriette Thurber Rasmussen, HTRConsulting

The acronym is VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous) is used to describe the landscape leaders navigate in today's changing world. School trustees dance along this tightrope as they address the myriad of stakeholder demands from a balcony few others inhabit. They must justify the confidence placed in them to safeguard the school's most precious assets, while scanning the horizon to make sure students are well prepared for a future in continuous flux. An additional goal of leaders, then, is to be adaptive with increasing impact (Heifetz, 1998). In this workshop we will consider the meaning and relevance of adaptive work in independent schools from the perspective of the trustee. We'll examine the organizational characteristics of schools and how this categorization might help address the challenges independent school trustees face in today's VUCA climate. Finally, we'll consider the trustee role in the five levers that increase an organization's adaptive capacity (Eichholz, 2014).

2. Crafting Your Schools Financial Plan as a Reflection and Extension of Your Values and Priorities with Jim Nida, Board Chair, Bertschi School (Seattle, WA) and Mike Gardner, Chief Financial Officer Bertschi School (Seattle, WA)

Is your school contemplating a strategic planning process in the near future? Would you benefit from comparable feedback on strategic priorities from your key constituencies? Would your board appreciate more education on your school's primary financial levers? Bertschi School recently completed a strategic planning exercise using a tool the school developed specifically for this purpose. The foundation for this tool is an approach prescribed by John Littleford with Littleford & Associates that identifies 10 objectives "that all independent schools aspire to achieve, preserve, and enhance, and are often in conflict with each other." These include low class size, moderate tuition increases, high faculty salaries, and a strong financial aid program. How does a school evaluate the trade-offs between these goals to support the vision and mission of the organization, while also making appropriate financial management decisions focused on its long-term sustainability? We will introduce the concepts above as well as this tool at this workshop, and offer you an opportunity in small groups to experience it for yourself. We will also share some thoughts on how you could adapt this tool for use within your own school community, and even extend a version of this approach to solicit comparative feedback from additional constituencies such as teachers, administrative staff, students, alumni, and other community members.

3. Generative Governance: the path to greater board engagement and effectiveness with Liz Heath, Principal, Sound Nonprofits

This session will cover the principles of Generative Governance, the model introduced in the book *Governance as Leadership*. Boards who incorporate Generative Governance into their work become more focused, energized and productive in leading their organizations.

4. Measuring Your Strategic Plan with Elizabeth Welch, Principal, Welch Consulting

The word "Metric" is a charged word in an academic setting, beset as we are with discussions of performance expectations that are/are not reflected in student test scores. (And FYI, this talk is NOT about that kind of measurement.) The appetite for performance-based measurement, however, also plays an important role in strategic planning. Picking the right kinds of measurements that shine a light on institutional strengths or weaknesses is a blend of art and science. We will discuss the kinds of metrics that yield the important conversations within a school community, and how your strategic planning process can be enhanced by a few, well-chosen, measurement tools.

4:00pm - 5:15pm Breakout Session B

1. Strategic Board Recruiting: building your board's ability to achieve your strategic plan with Liz Heath, Principal, Sound Nonprofits

All too often board recruiting can be a "let's ask my friend" process. Yet today's governance demands diversity in all its forms ranging from personal background to knowledge and experience. Strategic Board Recruiting is a process that enables your board to expand beyond its "inner circle" to expand the capacity of the board to lead effectively.

2. Fulfilling Your Fiduciary Duty with Mark Eshman, ClearRock Capital

The main responsibilities of a nonprofit board are often summarized by the "three Ds": duty of care, duty of loyalty and duty of obedience. In addition to these legal responsibilities, the board of a non-profit acts as a fiduciary in maintaining the organization's finances. Join ClearRock and NWAIS as we discuss what it means to be a fiduciary for a non-profit organization, the common mistakes boards make with regards to maintaining and sustaining their organization's assets, and steps you and your board can take now to strengthen your fiduciary duty.

3. Finding Strategic Alignment Between Your Investment in Technology and Your School's Mission with Gabe Lucas, co-founder of ATLIS, the Association of Technology Leaders in Independent Schools

For independent schools, the lightning-speed technology evolution is both exciting and daunting. No sooner do we get our heads and budgets wrapped halfway around each allegedly indispensable new development, than a new invention or innovation emerges. The key question that boards and senior leadership should be asking themselves is not what technologies are we using, but rather how is our technology program aligned with the strategic mission of the school? In this presentation, we will discuss emerging trends and best practices with respect to a number of mission-critical technology topics, including: professional development, curricular integration, finance, staffing, online/blended learning, ed tech, IT, training, and management. We will focus on several recent case studies of schools that have struggled with their technology programs, and offer insights for heads of school, trustees, and other school leaders to adapt for rethinking and revamping their school's overall educational technology strategy and philosophy.

4. Speed-Reading Financial Statements: Efficient Financial Statement Review Practices for Non-Financial Executives, with Howard Donkin, CPA of Jacobson Jarvis & Co. CPA's

Financial statements and tax returns can be intimidating, yet they contain enormously valuable information. External decision-makers who hold your financial wellbeing in their hands use them. This workshop teaches financial statement speed-reading tips and tricks that will help you spot potential issues before they catch the attention of external users. More importantly, you will learn about what those numbers mean and how your school can improve them. Every board Treasurer should attend this presentation. Each participant will receive a free booklet "What Board Members Need to Know About Not-For-Profit Finance and Accounting" and "What You Need to Know About Not-For-Profit Tax Compliance".

Monday, November 7

8:00am - 9:00am Breakfast Session: Legal Update "Eliminating Educator Sexual Abuse in Our Schools"

9:15am - 10:30am Plenary Session – Jim Schwarz, Keynote and BoardSource Senior Governance Consultant

Governance in Four Stories. This lays out four critical elements of effective nonprofit governance. A memorable story illustrates each element.

Trustees and Heads will walk away inspired to:

- Effectively manage interpersonal dynamics.
- Get the right people in the right seats
- Align their work around the same focus while listening for the outstanding voice
- Not accept business as usual.



10:45am - 12:00pm Breakouts Session C

1. It All Comes Down to Trust: Building It Within the Board and Organization Jim Schwarz, Plenary Speaker and BoardSource Senior Governance Consultant

Board *dynamics* have greater impact on board performance than do most aspects of board *structure*.^{*} Trust or its absence can be the difference between a high functioning or a dysfunctional board. We are each aware of those we trust and those that we don't. Yet trust seems as slippery as mercury; hard to define, hard to analyze. As a governance leader you can assess a board's trust level just as you would other dynamics, and provide techniques to strengthen the trust. During this session, Jim Schwarz a BoardSource Senior Governance Consultant, will explore the issue of trust in the boardroom:

- The importance of trust to productive boards
- Defining trust and its components
- Identifying issues of trust among board members and Board and Staff
- Building trust in the organization

* 2013 ASAE Governance Study, published in *What Makes High Performing Boards*

2. Long Range Financial Planning Tools for Trustees and Heads of Schools with Palmer Ball, Palmer Ball Consulting, LLC

Accreditation and strategic planning are important processes (some might say necessary evils!) that require boards and school leadership to focus on the long term future and financial equilibrium of a school. This session will review a number of tools trustees and heads can use for financial planning in conjunction with future accreditation visits, strategic plans, etc. Sample tools will be reviewed and templates provided to participants, that can be implemented by their schools, including the NBOA Long Range Financial Model, long term financial aid model, 5 year NAIS DASL stats comparison, 5 year DASL stats comparison with benchmark schools, faculty salary analysis with public schools and benchmark schools, 1 page financial dashboard, etc. Questions will be identified that school leaders should be asking in relation to a school's financial health, its recent history and its future projections. Participants will leave with tools in hand that will assist their schools in obtaining the necessary data to make informed decisions and analyze and project the future impact of those decisions on their school's finances.

4. The Educational Paradigm Shift – A Joyful Future with Simon Jeynes, Senior Consultant, Independent School Management (ISM)

While some might think of today as a time of fear and concern, this presentation will paint a far different picture of hope and opportunity. While we can and should acknowledge our challenges in a competitive marketplace, those challenges are improving education for all children and the presentation encourages us to embrace the ways in which we can improve our children's futures. Come and take away key directions the independent school world has to consider in rethinking academics and strategic academic planning.

12:00pm - 1:00pm Lunch

1:15pm - 2:30pm Breakout Session D

1. Governance Responsibilities for Inclusion and Equity with Alison Park, Blink Consulting

What is a board's role in advancing equity and inclusion in school? In this working conversation for trustees and heads, participants will identify core governance responsibilities to lead and support the efforts of administrators, faculty and staff to help each and all students to thrive. From clarifying what we mean when we talk about equity and inclusion to articulating institutional

commitments and goals, governance teams have a critical role in advancing inclusion and equity for the good of all, not just some students, employees and families. Participants will gain a framework for inclusion and equity at the governance level and identify useful language, tools and resources for practicing, assessing and advancing inclusion and equity in their school communities.

2. Got Governance? How One School Increased Board Capacity with Mo Copeland, Head of School, Oregon Episcopal School (Portland, OR) and Kate B. Lieber (Portland, OR):

Get the most out of your volunteer board through structured, coordinated and mission focused bylaws, charters, workplans and agendas. See how one school, through great board-school partnership, transformed the quantity and quality of the work of the Board through refreshing these tools.

3. The Big Picture: Current Status of Female Leaders in Independent Schools Amada Torres, Vice President of Studies, Insights, and Research, National Association of Independent Schools

Independent school leaders recognize the benefits of having more women in headship positions, yet the gender gap persists in the top ranks of leadership and in wages. Currently, only one-third of school heads are women. This session will explore the current statistics on female leaders and the results of a recent NAIS study conducted to identify the root causes of the underrepresentation of women in headship roles, including understanding the dynamics in the recruiting process, independent school female administrators' career aspirations and interest in a headship position, barriers and motivators of the position, and steps that schools could take to address implicit bias in hiring.

4. Strategic vs. Operations: What Trustees Should and Should Not Do with Simon Jeynes, Senior Consultant, Independent School Management (ISM)

Trustees in the 21st century play a key role of leadership in the school. The 2016 school cannot be optimally successful without Trustees who exemplify strategic governance and who partner generatively with their operational leader, the School Head. Come and learn or deepen your learning about planning, strategic financial planning, and the specific and very few things that the Trustee must do brilliantly.

Conference Conclusion

