

# Guide to iASA Services

ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

**OUR MISSION:** TO SUPPORT  
SCHOOL LEADERS IN THE  
PURSUIT OF EDUCATIONAL  
EXCELLENCE THROUGH  
CONTINUED SCHOOL  
IMPROVEMENT.

**OUR VISION:** MAXIMUM  
EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS  
FOR ALL STUDENTS.



“”

IASA is the premiere superintendent association in the country. What happens in Illinois is second to none.

—Dr. Nick Polyak, Leyden CHSD #212

## Introduction to IASA

Through legal support, networking opportunities, mentoring services, professional development, communications assistance, advocacy and resources, the Illinois Association of School Administrators is here to support you every step of the way.

IASA is the state's premier advocacy and professional development organization for public school superintendents and school administrators with nearly 1,750 members. The association is led by Dr. Brent Clark and a Board of Directors composed of IASA's 21 regions and one at-large member.

Our staff includes trained professionals and former superintendents who specialize in practical support and personalized professional development. The association also serves as a united voice for school administrators in the Illinois General Assembly and has a full-time attorney on staff that provides legal services to superintendents for employment-related matters as part of membership dues.

Want to learn more? Please review this Guide to better understand all of the different ways IASA can support you.

## Information You Will Find Inside



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# IASA Department/Staff Information



**Dr. Brent Clark**  
**IASA Executive Director**

Dr. Clark was hired as Executive Director by the IASA Board of Directors in November 2005. He previously was a teacher and principal before becoming a superintendent in the Thompsonville, Benton and Belleville school districts. During his tenure at IASA, Dr. Clark has been instrumental in expanding support for members and strengthening the voice of superintendents at the Illinois statehouse.



**Chad Watkins**  
**Associate Director/General Counsel**

Mr. Watkins joined IASA in 2019. He previously represented Illinois school districts on student, personnel and board governance matters.

[cwatkins@iasaedu.org](mailto:cwatkins@iasaedu.org)

## Legal Services and Support

At no additional cost, member superintendents can contact IASA's in-house general counsel for legal consultation regarding contracts and assistance in job-related legal actions or proceedings.



“““

“IASA’s legal counsel looks out for my best interest and ensures that my contract protects my rights as a superintendent.”

—Dr. Terri Bresnahan, CCSD #59, Cook North



**Dr. Courtney Orzel**  
**Associate Director of Professional Development**

Dr. Orzel joined IASA in 2020. She previously served as superintendent of Lemont-Bromberek SD #113A for six years. She oversees all IASA Professional Development opportunities.

[corzel@iasaedu.org](mailto:corzel@iasaedu.org)

## Professional Development

IASA is committed to strengthening the work of school administrators. [We offer](#) a full slate of leadership academies, evaluator academies, administrator academies, cohort learning models, financial workshops and engaging learning experiences. In addition, IASA offers personalized and on-demand professional development for school districts.



View PD Offerings



**Emily Warnecke**  
**Chief of Staff**

Mrs. Warnecke joined IASA in 2022. She previously served as superintendent of East Alton SD #13 for four years.

[ewarnecke@iasaedu.org](mailto:ewarnecke@iasaedu.org)

“““

“The IASA staff works with ISBE, members of the General Assembly, the Governor’s office and special interest groups to assure that newly introduced bills do not negatively impact our districts.”

—Lance Landeck, Oakland CUSD #5, Illini



**Madeline McCune**  
**Director of Gov. Relations**

Ms. McCune joined IASA in 2021. She previously served as a Research and Budget Analyst for the Illinois House of Representatives.

[mmcune@iasaedu.org](mailto:mmcune@iasaedu.org)

### Legislative Advocacy

IASA works tirelessly to advocate for legislation that will improve education in our state and benefit our members. IASA's legislative team provides members with updates and analysis regarding legislative proposals via Capitol Watch. Legislative updates are also given at region meetings.

School administrators can contribute to the Illinois School Administrators Political Action Committee. [IPAC](#) is an essential tool to get legislators to listen to our challenges and support our mission.



Support 



**Jason Nevel**  
**Director of Social Media and Publications**

Mr. Nevel joined IASA in 2018 and currently oversees written, audio and video communications. He previously served as a reporter for The State Journal-Register.

[jnevel@iasaedu.org](mailto:jnevel@iasaedu.org)

### Communications Support

IASA employs a communications specialist to market programs, oversee IASA publications, manage social media and help superintendents craft [messages](#) to parents and community members during times of crisis. IASA communications is also available to assist members with media relations.



View Template Letters

“““

In a few crisis situations this year, I was able to count on IASA to make sure my words to the community were being delivered clearly. It did not matter that it was early in the morning or late at night.

—Nathaniel Wilson, Herrin CUSD #4, Shawnee



**Cherry Middleton**  
**Director of Operations and Facilities**

Mrs. Middleton joined IASA in 1993. She oversees day-to-day operations and assists with finances and human resources. She is also the liaison to the IASA Board of Directors, oversees the Corporate Partner Program and helps plan the Annual Conference.

[cmiddleton@iasaedu.org](mailto:cmiddleton@iasaedu.org)

### Operations

IASA's staff is always available to assist you. In addition to our leadership team and Field Services Directors, we employ a graphic designer and office assistants in the following departments: Administration, Membership, Governmental Relations and Professional Development.

“““

IASA provides superintendents with a much needed and timely support system to navigate current issues and trends in education without fear and hesitancy. IASA is by far the most outstanding leadership support system.

—Dr. Gabrielle Schwemmer, Sparta CUSD #140, Southwestern



# Mentoring Program

IASA employs a group of highly qualified, retired superintendents who serve as Field Services Directors and are mentors to first, second and third-year superintendents. IASA is divided into 21 regions and each new superintendent is paired with a Field Services Director from the same area. You can call or email your Field Services Director with any questions that arise. They are available 24/7 to assist you!

In addition, the Field Services Directors may organize in person or Zoom weekly, bi-weekly or monthly meetings to provide timely information to mentees. The meetings are also the perfect networking opportunity for you to collaborate with peers. If there are topics that you feel your region would benefit from discussing, always let your FSD know and he or she will organize an opportunity to connect.

“““

The mentoring program offered through IASA taught me that I was not alone in my worries, frustrations and concerns. Knowing that my mentor was only a text, email or a phone call away provided me with resources, support and understanding that I needed during uncharted times.

—Dr. Erika Millhouse-Pettis, Sunnybrook SD #171, Cook South

“““

If you think you can do this job on your own, do so at your own risk. Navigating your first year as a superintendent without participating in the mentoring program is like driving in the dark without any lights.

—Dr. Benjamin Lee, Metamora CCSD #1, Central Illinois Valley



## Assistance Offered

Being a retired superintendent, each FSD has extensive experience and knowledge. One key area of support IASA offers is school board relations. Our staff can help you develop relationships and improve communications with your Board of Education. The mentors also provide assistance on other aspects of the job, including:

- Budgeting
- Filing the Tax Levy
- Personnel Issues
- Capital Improvement Projects
- Strategic Planning
- Securing Grants

“““

I became a first year superintendent six months prior to the pandemic. From our first meeting, my Field Services Director made me feel comfortable reaching out with questions and was a trusted confidante when I needed to vent. I continue to lean on her as a trusted guide and mentor.

—Mary Henderson, Roselle SD #12, DuPage



### Field Services Directors



**Ralph Grimm** has more than 20 years of experience as an Illinois superintendent. He held the top role in Carthage, Canton, Biggsville and Galesburg. Mr. Grimm joined IASA in 2017 and has also worked with ISBE as interim Chief Academic Officer.



**Dr. Gary Kelly** joined IASA in 2019 after retiring as superintendent of DuQuoin CUSD #300. He served as superintendent in DuQuoin for 22 years and was named the 2019 Illinois Superintendent of the Year. Dr. Kelly is a former IASA President and AASA Executive Committee member.



**Diane Robertson** has 22 years of successful superintendent experience, including 19 years as superintendent of Mendon Community Unit School District #4. She was one of only five female superintendents in Illinois when first hired. Mrs. Robertson joined IASA in 2018.



**Victoria Tabbert** joined IASA in 2018 after serving as superintendent of Queen Bee SD #16 for a decade. She also held the roles of associate superintendent of instructional services and assistant superintendent of special education in Queen Bee SD #16.



**Dr. Gary Zabilka** has more than 40 years of experience in public education. He joined IASA in 2012 after retiring as superintendent of Morton Grove School District 70. He also served as superintendent of Puffer-Hefty School District 69 in Downers Grove.

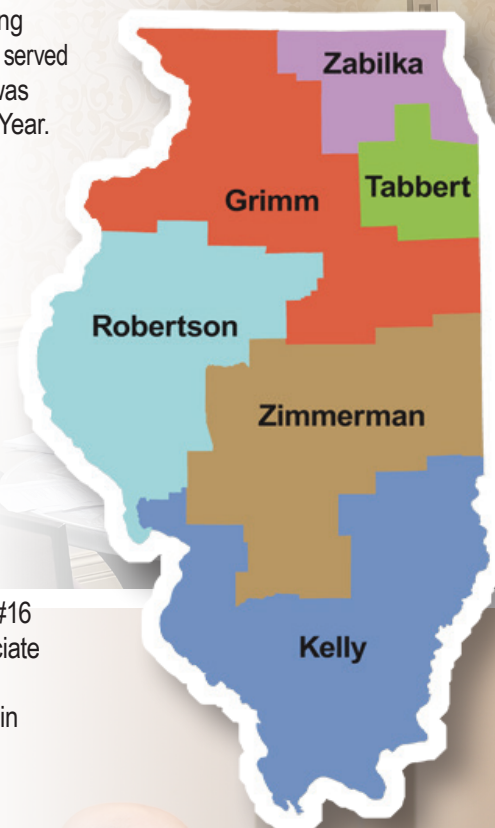


**Dr. Victor Zimmerman** joined IASA in 2022 after retiring from Monticello CUSD #25, where he served as superintendent for 15 years. He previously served as superintendent of St. Joseph Ogden CHSD #305. Dr. Zimmerman is a former IASA President.

“““

My IASA mentor is there to support, reassure and guide my thoughts/ideas and center me back to what I wanted to accomplish. This has kept me focused with practical perspectives and has helped me grow in every aspect of my daily responsibilities. Get connected with an IASA mentor and Lead On!!!

—Travis Wyatt, North Clay CUSD #25, Wabash Valley



“““

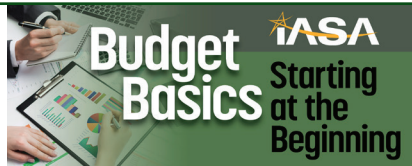
IASA's proactive approach of regular conversations, paired with timely and specific coaching, gave me a predictable and reliable resource for ensuring that there wasn't anything I was 'missing.'

—Dr. Lisa Leali, Lake Bluff ESD #65, Lake



# Professional Development Opportunities

## Workshops:



### Budgeting Basics

Offered in July, this workshop walks participants through the budget process from development of the tentative budget through adoption of the final budget.



### Preparing and Filing the Tax Levy Certificate

Offered in October, this workshop helps administrators better understand how to file the tax levy certificate.



### Bonds 101

Offered in the fall, this workshop for early-career superintendents provides information on various short-term and long-term finance bonding options available to school districts.



### Spring Budget Amendment

Offered in the spring, this workshop provides information to administrators and bookkeepers on the required steps and timelines to complete the budget amendment process.



### Finding Your Way Around IWAS

Offered in early summer, this workshop helps new administrators navigate the ISBE Web Application Security (IWAS).



### PERA, Evaluations and SB 7/RIF: Putting it All Together

Offered in January, this workshop is intended to help administrators with evaluation, retention and dismissal of your staff.



### IASA Legal Workshops

Offered throughout the year, IASA partners with school law firms to help superintendents deepen their knowledge and understanding of pertinent legal matters.

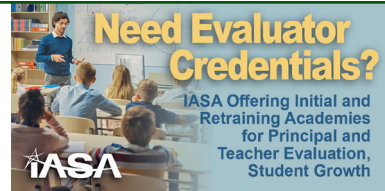
## Professional Development...cont'd.

### Academies:



#### Leadership Strand

Offered throughout the year, these academies are focused on improving your leadership skills. Recent offerings include: Why Your Why Matters, Unfinished Leader, Power of Positive Teams, Power of Positive Leadership, Women in Leadership and Adaptive Leadership.

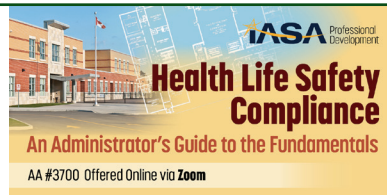


#### Evaluator Academies

Offered throughout the year, IASA hosts Evaluator Retraining Academies, Principal Evaluator Initial Training Academies and Teacher Evaluation Initial Training Academies.

#### Board–Superintendent Relationships

This **new** IASA academy, taught by former superintendents, is intended to help early-career superintendents improve relationships and communications with members of their school board. Coming Soon!



#### Health Life Safety Compliance

Offered in the fall and spring, this academy provides administrators an in-depth look at, and discovery into, topics related to Health Life Safety and Compliance.



#### Collective Bargaining

Offered in the winter, this academy provides an in-depth overview of the concepts included in the Interest-Based Bargaining method that can be used as problem-solving techniques as well.



#### Safety Site Assessment

This new academy focuses on how districts can take an annual standards-based approach to assessing the security of school buildings, grounds and policies by teaching the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) framework.

### Learning Cohorts:



#### IASA School for Advanced Leadership

This two-year cohort integrates personal and professional growth plans with the cultivation of lifelong relationships. Each [ISAL](#) participant is paired with a leadership coach, who serves as a trusted mentor.



## Professional Development...cont'd.

### Learning Cohorts...cont'd.



#### Elevate IASA Superwomen

The [two-year cohort](#) brings female superintendents together from across the state for engaging, fun and thought-provoking sessions. The goal is to boost confidence, develop relationships and grow your leadership skills.



#### Level Up Leadership

This two-year cohort is for assistant superintendents and central office administrators. The unique learning and networking opportunity is the [first statewide cohort](#) of its kind in Illinois. Participants engage in conversations on timely topics and walk away with practical ideas.

#### Reimagining Rural Leadership

IASA is launching a new cohort for school administrators in Fall 2023. The cohort will help rural administrators address unique challenges and advance a 21st century model of schooling while maintaining community support.



#### Reimagining Rural Leadership

### Other PD Opportunities

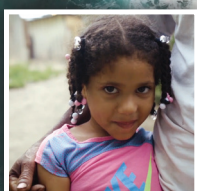
#### IASA Aspiring Superintendent Academy



An immersive learning experience to prepare you for the superintendency

#### IASA Aspiring Superintendent Academy

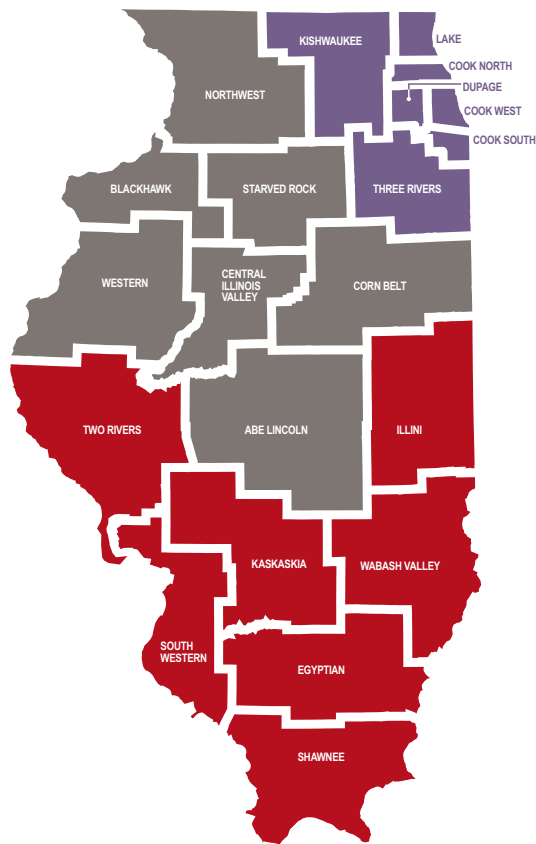
IASA's Aspiring Superintendent Academy is a four-day [immersive learning experience](#) like no other in the state for educators considering the superintendency. Participants engage in active learning experiences and gain insights from respected practitioners about how to be an effective leader and leverage the position to change the lives of students.



#### IASA Global Service Project

The IASA Global Service Project is an opportunity for a superintendent and a school board member to travel to the Dominican Republic to engage in a [global service project](#) to benefit a local community. Past projects have been held in October.

# Networking Opportunities



## IASA Region Meetings

IASA membership gives you the opportunity to attend region meetings with your peers and network, collaborate and discuss pertinent issues. Meetings usually feature guest speakers that present on legislative, legal and other topics of interest.



## Celebrate IASA Women In Leadership

Throughout the year, IASA hosts various networking opportunities for female school administrators to support, share success stories and celebrate Women in Leadership.

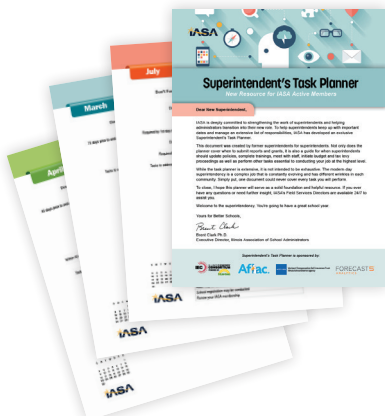


## Supt2Supt

These virtual meetings are the perfect opportunity to connect with other superintendents across the state to discuss complex topics in a safe environment.

# IASA Resources

## Superintendents' Task Planner



To help superintendents keep up with important dates to submit reports and manage an extensive list of responsibilities superintendents are faced with, IASA has developed a task [planner](#). This guide will help keep you on track and succeed in your superintendency.



View Planner



## Bill Tracker/Analysis Tools



IASA's Bill Tracker and Bill Analysis tools make it easier than ever to stay on top of legislation that impacts public education in Illinois. [Both tools](#) will be updated as new developments arise in the Illinois General Assembly.



View Bill Tracker



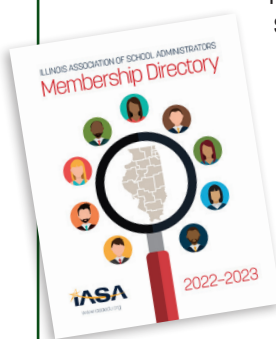
## Superintendent Job Transition Document



IASA mails a transition document to each new superintendent. This document outlines various transition activities that need to occur early in your first year.

## Membership Directory

IASA's Membership Directory includes contact information for school administrators across the state. The directory also features a list of School Service Members, retired members and professors who are IASA members. A printed version of the Membership Directory is mailed to members and a digital directory is posted on the IASA website.



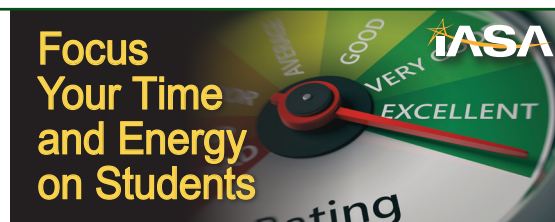
## Publications and IASA Podcast



IASA keeps you up-to-date and informed. We email members *Eye on Education*, a daily synopsis of Illinois education stories. We also publish the IASA [Podcast](#) and produce *Leadership Matters*, a monthly magazine that includes

stories about innovative programs throughout the state and issues important to public education.

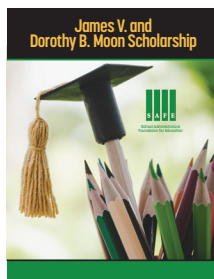
Focus  
Your Time  
and Energy  
on Students



## Senate Bill 7 Performance Rankings Tool

The [program](#) gives schools a method of managing district positions aligned to local qualifications, teacher's credentials and performance ratings. The program compiles this local data and creates reports needed to comply with Senate Bill 7 and related laws since the passage of SB7.

## James V. and Dorothy B. Moon Scholarship Program



IASA offers [scholarships](#) to offset the cost of pursuing an advanced degree in educational administration at an accredited college or university. The scholarships are awarded each year and are paid directly to the college or university to cover tuition, fees and/or textbook expenses.

## IASA Website

Visit [iasaedu.org](https://iasaedu.org) to access IASA's website. On the website, educators can find information about IASA services, professional development



opportunities, advocacy tools, a monthly calendar, template letters, legal resources and more!

## Twitter

Keep up with IASA on Twitter by following @IllinoisASA and staff member accounts:

- Executive Director @docclark05
- General Counsel @ChadPWatkins
- Professional Development @drorzal
- Government Relations @IllinoisASAGR @MadMcCune\_IL and @MrsWarnecke



## IASA Illinois Education JOB BANK<sup>SM</sup>

### IASA Illinois Education Job Bank<sup>SM</sup>

The IASA Illinois Education Job Bank<sup>SM</sup> is trusted by superintendents across the state and makes finding qualified applicants to fill permanent, interim, part or full-time vacancies easy. Avoid national sites that cost more and are not tailored to Illinois educators.

[Illinoiseducationjobbank.org](http://Illinoiseducationjobbank.org).



Learn more



## Membership Information

### 5 Facts About Active IASA Membership:



Over 97 percent of public school superintendents in Illinois are IASA members.



Assistant superintendents, central office staff, principals and regional superintendents are also IASA members.



Learn more



IASA membership is with the individual member and not the school district.



AASA membership dues can be paid through IASA.



IASA offers a Return Of Dues Program. A payment proportionate to the amount of dues paid during the past 10 consecutive years is made to a member's beneficiary upon an Active member's death.\*

- Active Membership is only one of the several types of IASA Membership. See them all [here](#).

\*Stipulations apply.



# Conferences



## Annual Conference

IASA's Annual Conference is designed by Illinois superintendents for Illinois superintendents. The conference features dynamic keynote speakers, engaging breakout sessions, Ignite presentations, Women in Leadership and other opportunities to connect and learn from your peers. The conference is held in the fall.

## Joint Annual Conference

Recognized as one of the nation's largest state education conferences, the Joint Annual Conference in Chicago is a premier training event for school board members, administrators, and business officials. The conference is held in November.

## New Superintendents Conference

IASA helps new superintendents hit the ground running in the superintendency by hosting a New Superintendents Conference every year. The two-day, in-person conference before the start of the school year covers a variety of topics including board relations, board meeting preparation, school finance, technology, media relations, school law and personal health.



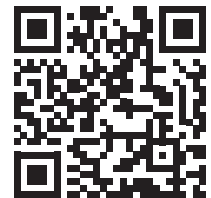
# Sponsored Programs/Corporate Partners



## Sponsored Programs

No matter what part of the state you live, every school leader is looking for ways to save money and keep dollars inside the classroom, where they can have the greatest impact on student growth. That's why IASA works together with like-minded organizations to offer essential services and assistance that can save schools money and maximize benefits to all members.

The [programs](#) available exclusively to IASA members can save money on energy costs, health insurance benefits, procurement and environmental issues. In addition, IASA sponsored programs help school leaders support student learning through innovative literacy and math tools, make their buildings safer, better analyze data and manage investments.

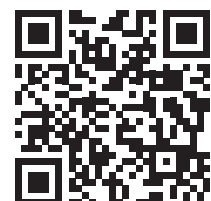


[Learn more](#)



## Corporate Partners

To further the mission of the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA), the [Corporate Partner Program](#) provides enhanced opportunities for businesses that supply schools with materials, equipment, programs and services to communicate and otherwise interact with the IASA and its members. View a list of Corporate Partners on the IASA website.



[Learn more](#)

