

West Virginia School Board Association Fall Conference



September 5-6, 2025
Town Center Marriott Hotel

Featured Speakers

Education Legal Team, Bowles Rice LLP
Lindsey McIntosh, Attorney Kanawha County Schools
Amy Carlson, Ed.D. CCC/SLP, WV Behavioral Mental Health TA Center
David Lee, Senior Impact Manager, Cook Center for Human Connection
Kim Kehrer, Director of Special Education, Pleasants County Schools
Jeff Kelley, Assistant State Superintendent of Schools, West Virginia Department of Education
Alexandra Criner, Director of the Office of Accountability, State Department of Education

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Friday, September 5, 2025

Pre-Conference Meeting

9:00 a.m. Executive Board Meeting in the Kanawha – Blue Ridge Conference Room

Light Luncheon Provided by the West Virginia School Board Association (11:00-12:00)

12:00 p.m. Welcome and Overview of Conference Program, _____, Executive Director

First General Session (4 Hours)

Presider / Introduction of Presenter: Pat Gray, President

12:15 p.m. Title: Strengthening Behavior Intervention and Safety in Elementary Classrooms

Presenter: Lindsey McIntosh, Attorney Kanawha County Schools

Session Description: This training session provides Board of Education members with a focused analysis of West Virginia Senate Bill 199; a pivotal piece of legislation designed to enhance behavioral supports and ensure safer learning environments in elementary schools. The session will break down the legislation's core components, including:

- Requirements for evidence-based behavior intervention plans for students demonstrating persistent challenging behaviors.
- Mandatory training for school personnel in trauma-informed practices, de-escalation techniques, and behavior management.
- Protocols for crisis response and restraint/seclusion use, including stricter limitations and mandatory documentation.
- District responsibilities for monitoring, data collection, and annual reporting on behavioral incidents and intervention strategies.
- Increased collaboration with mental health providers and integration of multi-tiered systems of support.
- The effects of this statute on child find and rights afforded to students with disabilities.

1:15 p.m. Title: From Red Flags to Resilience: Identifying and Responding to At-Risk Preschool Behavior

Presenter: Amy Carlson, Ed.D. CCC/SLP, WV Behavioral Mental Health TA Center

Session Description: This session provides Board of Education members with a comprehensive overview of at-risk behaviors in preschool-aged children, emphasizing the pivotal role early identification and intervention play in long-term student success. Participants will gain insight into common behavioral "red flags," the root causes of these challenges—including trauma, developmental delays, and environmental stressors—and the critical impact of supportive early learning environments. By the end of this session, Board members will be equipped to champion policies and allocate resources that promote early intervention and foster resilience, ensuring a strong foundation for all students.

2:15 p.m. Break

2:30 p.m. Title: Understanding Rights, Responsibilities, and Regulations: A Board Member's Guide to Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Policy 2419, and Special Education Compliance

Presenter: Kim Kehrer, Director of Special Education, Pleasants County Schools

Session Description: This statutorily required training provides Board of Education members with an awareness and understanding of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), applicable federal regulations, and West Virginia State Board of Education Policy 2419: Regulations for the Education of Students with Exceptionalities. The session is designed to ensure board members are fully informed of their legal obligations and best practices related to the education of students with exceptionalities.

Participants will explore:

- Maximum class size for instructional periods by programmatic level and level of service needs for students with disabilities.
- Extenuating circumstances for submitting a waiver request when student numbers exceed staffing ratios;
- Teacher's rights for advocating for students, procedural rights documentation, and all protections set forth under §18-20-1c;
- Classroom teachers' rights and protections that they may not be reprimanded for advocating for their student(s); and
- Information related to local advocacy agencies and local United States Department of Education funded advocacy agencies.
- The documentation process within a 45-day grading period for teachers;

This training equips board members with the knowledge and tools to support educators, protect student rights, and maintain compliance with both federal and state special education mandates.

3:30 p.m. Title: Stronger Together: Avenues for Mental Health Support

Presenter: David Lee, Senior Impact Manager, Cook Center for Human Connection – WV State Department of Education Partnership

Session Description: Human connection has proven to boost mental health and protect against depression, anxiety and uncertainty. In the company of loved ones, mentors, or trusted advisors, threats become smaller challenges, stigmas can be overcome, and painful shocks become manageable.

4:30 p.m. General Session Adjourns

Dinner Provided by the West Virginia School Board Association (5:00-6:00)

5:00 p.m. Presentation of the West Virginia School Board Association Member of the Year Award

Second General Session (2.25 Hours)

Presider / Introduction of Presenter: Dr. Torie Jackson, President Elect

6:00 p.m. Title: Staying Within the Lines: Legal Boundaries and Grievance Risks for Board of Education Members

Presenter: Bowles Rice LLP Legal Team

Session Description: As stewards of public education, Board of Education members must navigate a complex legal landscape that governs their roles, responsibilities, and public interactions. This session provides a focused overview of recent and relevant lawsuits and grievances stemming from board member actions or

inactions. Attendees will gain insights into the legal parameters that define appropriate conduct, understand the potential consequences of overstepping those bounds, and learn proactive strategies to avoid common pitfalls. Through real case examples and expert guidance, participants will leave better equipped to serve effectively and legally in their roles.

7:00 p.m.

Break

7:15 p.m.

Title: Legislative Oversight and Local Impact: Understanding HB2548 and HB2755 and their Effect on Public Education Governance

Presenters: Bowles Rice LLP Legal Team

Session Description: This session provides Board of Education members with a critical overview of two significant pieces of legislation—House Bill 2548 and House Bill 2755—that reshape the governance structure of public education in West Virginia by introducing new layers of legislative oversight and altering the rulemaking authority of the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) and the West Virginia Board of Education.

Key topics include:

- HB2548: Shifting the WVDE under the rulemaking review of the West Virginia Legislature, requiring greater legislative scrutiny of rules and policies that impact public education.
- HB2755: Allowing the West Virginia Board of Education to propose rules or policies that must now be submitted to the Legislature for approval or modification.
- How the intersection of these bills represents a shift toward increased legislative involvement in what has traditionally been the purview of the State Board of Education.

Board members will leave with a deeper understanding of how these legislative changes affect state-local relationships, policy implementation, and their own role in navigating this new governance landscape.

8:30 p.m.

General Session Adjourns

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Saturday, September 6, 2025

Buffet Breakfast Provided by the West Virginia School Board Association (7:00-9:00)

Pre-Conference Meetings

8:00 a.m. Delegate Assembly Meeting in the Kanawha - Blue Ridge Conference Room

Third General Session (2 Hours)

Presider / Introduction of Presenter: Dr. Kenna Seal, Vice-President

9:00 a.m. Title: Decorum and Effective Governance: Fostering Respect, Professionalism, and Collaboration

Presenter: Jeff Kelley, Assistant State Superintendent of Schools, West Virginia Department of Education

Session Description: This training session is designed to reinforce the importance of decorum, professionalism, and respectful conduct in Board of Education meetings and official functions. As public officials, board members set the tone for the district's leadership culture and play a key role in modeling civil discourse and constructive engagement.

Participants will explore:

- The role of decorum in building public trust and promoting productive dialogue.
- Expectations for board member conduct under Robert's Rules of Order, local board policy, and state code.
- Best practices for handling disagreement, navigating difficult conversations, and maintaining focus on student-centered decision-making.
- Strategies to support collaboration between board members, superintendents, staff, and the community.
- The impact of board behavior on school climate, superintendent relationships, and community perception.

Whether newly elected or experienced, this session empowers board members to uphold the highest standards of leadership by fostering a culture of mutual respect, transparency, and ethical responsibility.

10:00 a.m. Title: Best and Worst Practices and Pitfalls for Productive Board of Education Meetings

Presenter: Alexandra Criner, Director of the Office of Accountability, State Department of Education

Session Description: Effective governance begins with effective conduct. This training session is designed to help Board of Education members understand the impact of their behavior during meetings—both the positive and the negative. Through real-world examples, interactive discussions, and practical guidance, participants will explore the traits of effective board members, identify common missteps that hinder collaboration and decision-making, and learn strategies to foster respectful, transparent, and results-driven meetings. Whether you're a new or veteran board member, this session offers valuable insights to elevate the professionalism and productivity of your board presence.

11:00 a.m. Conference Adjournment

CONFERENCE ROSTER OF PRESENTERS

The following persons are presenting, presiding, or facilitating in various capacities during the conference. All biographical information was provided by each individual listed. Some edits were made for style and other considerations.

Howard Seufer, Bowles Rice LLP

Howard Seufer brings a wealth of experience to a range of legal matters for school districts. Having advised and represented all 55 of West Virginia's county boards of education over the last 40 years, his work in public education has made a lasting impact in the areas of school board governance, board/superintendent relations, business and finance, human resources and student rights and responsibilities.



Kimberly Croyle, Bowles Rice LLP

Kimberly Croyle provides assistance and advice to clients throughout the state on education law issues such as policy formation; Title IX; bullying and harassment; and disability discrimination and accommodation issues, including 504 accommodations, personnel matters, FERPA, Title VII and the ADA. She represents clients before the West Virginia Public Employees Grievance Board; at due process hearings and mediations; in state and federal court; and before the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia.



Rick Boothby, Bowles Rice LLP Educational Legal Team

Richard Boothby advises and represents K-12 school districts throughout West Virginia on special education, personnel, and other school law matters. Assisting school districts with complex special education issues and special education litigation comprises much of Rick's practice. He is a former public-school teacher and currently serves as chairman of the West Virginia State Bar Association's Education Law Committee.



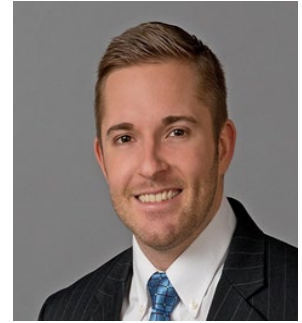
Trey Morrone, Bowles Rice LLP

Trey Morrone joined Bowles Rice in January 2020, bringing nearly 30 years of experience in the areas of education law, municipal law and governmental representation and administration to the firm's Education Law Group. This varied background provides Trey a unique perspective when providing counsel to state boards of education, school districts and their employees.



Joshua Cottle, Bowles Rice LLP

Josh Cottle focuses his practice on circuit court appeals and appeals before the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia on behalf of education clients. He also provides counsel regarding employee grievances, such as complex excess levy and personnel issues. In addition to administrative litigation, Josh represents school boards in cases involving violations of the Open Governmental Proceedings Act and the Freedom of Information Act.



Kayla Cook, Bowles Rice LLP

Kayla Cook is an experienced and versatile attorney who represents an extremely diverse clientele. In her education law practice, she regularly assists clients with a range of personnel and human resources matters, including Title IX policy review and compliance, employee lawsuits and grievances, wrongful terminations and more. Kayla has represented education clients in administrative proceedings, mediations/arbitrations and circuit court hearings.



Leigh Anne Wilson, Bowles Rice LLP Educational Legal Team

Leigh Anne Wilson focuses her work primarily on issues related to labor and employment and higher education. She has assisted in the defense of employers against claims for discrimination, harassment, wrongful discharge, and retaliation, as well as claims brought under family and medical leave and disability accommodation laws. She is a former National Board-Certified teacher.



Jeffrey Kelley, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, State Department of Education

Jeffrey Kelley earned a bachelor's degree in English Education from West Virginia State University and a master's degree in Educational Leadership Studies from West Virginia University. He spent seven years in the field as a teacher and assistant principal prior to being named the Principal at St. Albans High School in October of 2010. During his tenure, Red Dragon students consistently ranked among the top West Virginia high schools in academic achievement while also improving graduation rates. He was twice recognized as the Mountain State Athletic Conference Principal of the Year. Kelley was selected Superintendent of Lincoln County Schools in July of 2020. He was tasked with COVID re-entry and navigating the county out of a State of Emergency, which included 199 findings by the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE). He proved successful in both while also shifting the county's focus to academic achievement. In March of 2023, Kelley accepted a position with the WVDE of as the Officer of Accountability, Assessment and Leadership.



Amy Carlson, Ed.D. CCC/SLP, WV Behavioral Mental Health TA Center

Amy Carlson is the Early Childhood Behavior Support Specialist Coordinator for the West Virginia Behavior/Mental Health Technical Assistance Center. Amy Carlson, Ed.D. CCC-SLP, graduated with her Bachelors of Science and Masters of Science degrees in Communication Disorders from Marshall University. She worked for twelve years as a speech-language pathologist in clinical, home health, and educational settings serving patients of all ages. She graduated with her doctoral degree in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in teaching and higher education leadership from Marshall University. She works in collaboration with the West Virginia Autism Training Center and the West Virginia Department of Education Office of Special Education as the Early Childhood Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (ECPBIS) Coordinator for the state of West Virginia.



Alexandra Criner, Director Office of Accountability, State Department of Education

Alexandra Criner is the Director of Accountability for the West Virginia Department of Education. Before joining the Office of Accountability, she served to support both principals and low-performing schools in the WVDE Office of Leadership and System Support. Her areas of expertise include the WV Standards for Effective Schools and Local School Improvement Councils. She holds a bachelor's degree in education from West Virginia State University and a master's degree in educational leadership from Wheeling University. Her experience as an educator includes over a decade serving students at the intermediate and secondary levels as both a classroom teacher and a school leader. In addition to supporting West Virginia students by ensuring an efficient and effective education, Alexandra enjoys reading, traveling, and spending time with family and friends.



Kim Kehrer, Director of Special Education, Pleasants County Schools

Kimberly D. Kehrer has dedicated over 40 years to the field of special education, serving as the Director of Special Programs for Pleasants County Schools since 2010. She holds a Bachelor's degree from West Liberty State College and a Master's degree from West Virginia University, along with advanced certification in Educational Leadership from Salem University. Kimberly's passion for supporting individuals with special needs began early in her life and has been the driving force throughout her career. She firmly believes that educators have the unique power to impact children in ways that no one else can. This belief has guided her work and inspired her to create the N-ABLE program (Navigating and Building Life Experience) in Pleasants County. This community-based work experience program is designed for students with moderate to severe disabilities, helping them build essential life skills. In addition to her role in Pleasants County, Kimberly serves on the executive board of the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) and has been an active member for 15 years. Kimberly has been married to Randy for 36 years, and together they have three children and three grandchildren, who lovingly call her Mimi.



Lindsey McIntosh, Attorney Kanawha County Schools

Lindsey McIntosh is a native of Morgantown, West Virginia. She graduated from West Virginia University in 2009 with a BS in Business & Marketing and from the West Virginia University College of Law in 2012. During law school Lindsey was a member of the Student Bar Association, served as the Secretary for the University Student Code of Conduct Board, and clerked for Bowles Rice LLP as a summer intern. Upon graduation, Lindsey moved to Charleston to join the Bowles Rice Employment Litigation practice group. In 2014, Lindsey left private practice for the public sector, serving as Assistant General Counsel to the Cabinet Secretary of the Department of Health & Human Resources. She remained in that position until 2018, when she left to become the General Counsel for the Kanawha County Board of Education. As General Counsel for the KCBOE, she has focused improving Board policies, assisting in the drafting of legislation beneficial to educators, and training staff to avoid legal issues.



David Lee, Senior Impact Manager, Cook Center for Human Connection

With 47 years of experience in education, I have dedicated my career to fostering student growth and well-being. My roles have included teaching, serving as a principal, working as the Director of Student Support and Well-Being at the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE), and currently the Senior Impact Manager for WV with the Cook Center for Human Connection. I am also an adjunct professor at the University of Virginia College of Wise, teaching Classroom Behavior and Management. I am passionate about creating positive learning environments that support the diverse needs of caregivers and students to promote their overall success. I have been married to my lovely wife, Gina Lee, for thirty years. I have two children, Aaron Sturgill and Dr. Chelsea Lee. I also have an adorable grandson, Jack.

CONFERENCE ROSTER OF PRESIDERS

Pat Gray, President of the West Virginia School Board Association

James P. Gray (Pat) is president of the Fayette County Board of Education and will begin his 4th term serving the citizens of Fayette County as a Board of Education member. He currently is serving an appointment by the State Board of Education on the WV Commission for Professional Teaching Standards and serves as the Preparation Committee Chair. He has worked for AT&T for 30 years with experience in corporate education and customer experience and holds a Project Manager Professional credential. He and his wife Meredith have 4 children and 3 grandchildren. Pat is a lifelong learner and believes all students have the chance to grow if given the right support and direction.



Dr. Torie Jackson, President Elect of the West Virginia School Board Association

Dr. Torie Jackson is the president of WVU Parkersburg. A first-generation college student, Dr. Jackson is WVU Parkersburg Proud, earning an associate degree in Journalism from the institution. She continued her education at WVU to receive a bachelor's degree in Journalism, a master's degree in Organizational Communication and a doctoral degree in Higher Education Administration. Additionally, she holds a Certificate of Advanced Studies in Educational Leadership from Salem International University. Her most recent educational credential is a Certificate of Current Affairs Fundraising in Crisis Leadership from the prestigious Indiana University Lilly School of Philanthropy. Before being named interim president, Dr. Jackson served in various roles at WVU Parkersburg, including Chief Operating Officer, Executive Vice President for Institutional Advancement, President and CEO of the WVU at Parkersburg Foundation and Associate Professor of Communication. Under Dr. Jackson's leadership, the marketing division at WVU Parkersburg has won 23 national marketing awards in the past three years, the most of any college or university in West Virginia. Due to her many achievements, WV Executive magazine selected her as one of West Virginia's Young Guns Class of 2021 members. Her peers also recognized her with the WVU Parkersburg Bernard P. McDonough Faculty of the Year Award in 2015 and as the WVU Parkersburg Employee of the Year in 2014.



Kenna Seal, Vice-President of the West Virginia School Board Association

Kenna R. Seal is a retired educator who lives in Sutton with his wife Paula. He attended grade school at Cedar Creek School at Exchange and graduated from Gassaway High School. Kenna has two degrees from WVU and a doctorate from the University of Kentucky. Kenna taught Vocational Agricultural at Clay County High School for four years. In 1970, Kenna was a Graduate Teaching Assistant at WVU. For three years Kenna was an EPDA Fellow at the University of Kentucky and completed an internship with the Kentucky Department of Education. Kenna returned to West Virginia in 1974 as the Assistant County Superintendent of Schools in Calhoun County. He became Braxton County Superintendent of Schools in 1976 until 1998 when he began working for the WV State Board of Education as Director of the Office of Education Performance Audits. Kenna was elected to the Braxton County Board of Education in 2020 and was reelected in 2024. Kenna is a Rotarian and serves on the Braxton County Development Authority.

