

West Virginia School Board Association November Statewide Training Session



Roanoke Event Center at Stonewall Resort
Saturday, November 15, 2025
(6.75 Training Hours – Includes Pre-Conference Readings)

Featured Speakers

Wayne Ryan, WVSSAC Executive Director
Christine Davies, Deputy Secretary for Economic Development & Workforce Participation, West Virginia Department of Commerce
Kim Croyle, Esq., Bowles Rice LLP
Leigh Ann Wilson, Esq., Bowles Rice LLP
Alexandra Criner, WVDE Office of Accreditation
Uriah Cummings, School Financial Operations Officer
J. P. Mowery, CFO/Treasurer, Pendleton County Schools

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Buffet Breakfast Provided by the West Virginia School Board Association (8:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m.)

Welcome and Overview, James (Pat) Gray (Fayette), President

Presider: President Gray

Introduction of Presenter: Jared Billings (Mason), Immediate Past President

Training Segment 1 (.75 Hours)

9:00 a.m. Title: West Virginia Secondary Schools Activities Commission (WVSSAC) Matters of Interest to County Boards of Education

Presenter: Wayne Ryan, WVSSAC Executive Director

Session Description: WVSSAC County Board update. Mr. Ryan will discuss WVSSAC matters of interest to county boards of education in terms of board governance, including WVSSAC rules and regulations and the interpretation of such at the school district site and/or district levels. **Format: 30 minutes for presenters to engage in dialogue with conference participants relating to pre-conference readings, handouts, and documents as may be aided by Power Point presentation or other training approaches as determined by presenters with 15 minutes for comments, questions, and wrap-up.**

Training Segment 2 (.75 Hours)

Introduction of Presenter: Torie Jackson, EdD (Ritchie), President-Elect

9:45 a.m. Title: County Board Role in Economic Development

Presenter: Christine Davies, Deputy Secretary for Economic Development & Workforce Participation of the West Virginia Department of Commerce

Session Description: Impact of public educational systems in terms of economic development. Ms. Davies will discuss the role of county school districts in terms of promotion of economic development in West Virginia. **Format: 30 minutes for presenters to engage in dialogue with conference participants relating to pre-conference readings, handouts, and documents as may be aided by Power Point presentation or other training approaches as determined by presenters with 15 minutes for comments, questions, and wrap-up.**

Training Segment 3 (1.00 Hours)

Introduction of Presenter: President Gray

10:45 a.m. Title: County Board Fiduciary Responsibilities

Presenters: Kim Croyle, Esq., and Leigh Ann Wilson, Esq., Bowles Rice LLP

Session Description: Constitutional and legal foundations relating to the fiduciary or chief financial role of county boards of education. Presenters: Kim Croyle, Esq., Leigh Ann Wilson, Esq. (Bowles Rice LLP) present. **Format: 50 minutes for presenters to engage in dialogue with conference participants relating to pre-conference readings, handouts, and documents as may be aided by Power Point presentation or other training approaches as determined by presenters with 10 minutes for comments, questions, and wrap-up.**

11:45 a.m. General Session Adjourns

Lunch Provided by the West Virginia School Board Association (12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m.)

Training Segment 4 (1.00 Hours)

Introduction of Presenter: Jim Crawford Sr. (Kanawha), Financial Officer

1:00 p.m. Title: West Virginia Board of Education Rule-Making Relating to County Boards of Education Fiscal and Fiduciary Accountability

Presenters: Alexandra Criner, WVDE Office of Accreditation and Uriah Cummings, School Financial Operations Officer

Session Description: West Virginia Department of Education presenters will discuss monitoring and oversight procedures county boards of education may develop to ensure fulfillment of fiscal responsibilities as outlined in law and corresponding state Board of Education rules. Note: May include input provided by Ms. Croyle and Ms. Wilson as determined by WVDE presenters. **Format: 50 minutes for presenters to engage in dialogue with conference participants relating to pre-conference readings, handouts, and documents as may be aided by Power Point presentation or other training approaches as determined by presenters with 10 minutes for comments, questions, and wrap-up.**

Training Segment 5 (1.50 Hours)

Introduction of Presenter: Kenna Seal, EdD (Braxton), Vice-President

2:00 p.m. Title: Strategies for County Board Receptiveness and Responsiveness to Ensuring School District Governance, Fiscal and Financial Accountabilities

Presenter: J. P. Mowery, CFO/Treasurer Pendleton County Schools

Session Description: Mr. Mowery's presentation is based in part on quantified findings relating to West Virginia Board of Education emergency circumstance reviews and/or WVBE school district interventions. Mr. Mowery will discuss how county boards of education, working with county superintendents and school district chief financial officers, can maximize their effectiveness in terms of school district fiscal and financial accountability and related requirements through best practices, policy development, and policy governance monitoring and oversight. Lastly, the presentation includes participation by table groups, including brief reportage and determination of session takeaways. **Format: 50 minutes for presenters to engage in dialogue with conference participants relating to pre-conference readings, handouts, and documents as may be aided by Power Point presentation or other training approaches as determined by presenters; with 10 minutes for comments, questions, and wrap-up. 15 minutes conference participants' table work, including follow up questions for presenters and/or school district treasurers/CFOs, and related reportage; 15 minutes for comments or questions, "take-aways," and future training and development.**

3:30 p.m. Concluding Comments/Announcements/Good of the Order – President Gray

CONFERENCE 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.

Wayne Ryan, WVSSAC Executive Director

Wayne Ryan was named the Executive Director in May of 2025 and assumed the role on July 1, 2025, following nearly a decade of work on the WVSSAC staff. Ryan served as Associate Executive Director of the WVSSAC and previously held the role of Assistant Director from 2016 to 2023. In these positions, he has overseen multiple sports—football, basketball, baseball, wrestling, and track—and played a key role in structural improvements to sport administration and tournament processes. His responsibilities have also included sanctioning, ticketing, academic scholarships, awards, hotels, and school reimbursements. Throughout his career, Ryan has served in various leadership capacities, including president of the West Virginia Athletic Directors Association and member of the WVSSAC Board of Directors. He also contributed to the WVSSAC Basketball Coaches Advisory Committee, Basketball Restructuring Committee, and Technology Committee, and he served on the NFHS Officials Advisory Committee. A 1982 graduate of Hinton High School, Ryan was a standout multi-sport athlete and is a member of the Bobcat Hall of Fame. He played collegiate baseball at Alderson Broaddus, where he received the Phi Epsilon Outstanding Student Award in 1986. He later earned a master's degree in communications from West Virginia University and a professional administration certification in educational leadership from Salem International University. He is also a Certified Athletic Administrator through the NIAAA. Ryan spent 30 years in the Summers County school system as a teacher, coach, athletic director, and assistant principal. As head coach of the Summers County girls' basketball program, he led the team to six state championships—including five consecutive Class AA titles from 2007 to 2011—and a state-record 105-game winning streak. He was named the West Virginia State Coach of the Year by the West Virginia Sports Writers Association in 2010 and the West Virginia Athletic Director of the Year in 2015.



Christine Davies, Deputy Secretary for Economic Development and Workforce Participation, West Virginia Department of Commerce

Christine Davies joined the West Virginia Department of Commerce as Deputy Secretary for Economic Development and Workforce Participation after spending twenty-five years at the intersection of business, technology, policy, and entrepreneurship. Christine most recently served as a Founder and CEO of Poligage, the first on-demand government and public-affairs expert marketplace, where from 2018 through 2024 she built a network of more than 250 firms with public policy, regulatory, and public affairs expertise who served clients ranging from startups to Fortune 500 companies and trade associations. Previously, Christine served as Vice President of Global Partnerships at Asia Society, a global non-profit founded to build strong relations between the United States and the nations of Asia, which was founded by John D. Rockefeller, III. Christine managed the Asia Society's global fundraising network to negotiate millions of dollars in strategic partnerships with companies, foundations, and government agencies while also helping to launch the Asia Society Policy Institute, a now top globally ranked think tank. Earlier in her career, Christine served as a Solution Specialist at Microsoft, working to develop and harvest repeatable digital solutions for public sector organizations across the United States and around the world that generated hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue. Christine began her career at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative and the U.S. Department of State, where she supported international economic policy initiatives and advanced U.S. trade and diplomatic priorities around the world. Christine holds an MBA from the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business and a BA in Politics and Communications from the University of Maryland. Christine is also a descendant of the Jett family on her maternal side, who settled across Appalachia through the 19th century -- including in West Virginia in Barbour, Kanawha, Ritchie, and Roane Counties. And while Christine was born and raised in Maryland, she and her family spent significant time in West Virginia -- from frequent trips to Harpers Ferry to family cross country ski trips in Canaan Valley to relaxing weekends in Berkeley Springs.



Kimberly Croyle, Bowles Rice LLP Educational Legal Team

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.



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.



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.



Uriah Cummings, School Finance Operations Officer

Uriah Cummings, CPA, WVDE School Financial Operations Officer; Uriah Cummings is the School Financial Operations Officer with the West Virginia Department of Education. Uriah holds a Masters of Professional Accountancy degree from WVU and is a CPA. Uriah has worked in School Finance for 8 years in various capacities while holding his current role as the School Financial Operations Officer for two years. Prior to joining public education, Uriah worked for 3 years as a staff accountant with the WV Property Tax Division of the State Tax Department.



J. P. Mowery, CFO/Treasurer Pendleton County Schools

J. P. Mowery, CPA, is a Pendleton County native and graduate of Franklin High School. He has served for 30 years as the Director of Finance/Treasurer of Pendleton County Board of Education, and he also serves as Adjunct Faculty at James Madison University (JMU), College of Business, School Of Accounting. He received his BBA in Accounting and MBA degrees from JMU. Mr. Mowery received the outstanding CPA in Government Award from West Virginia Society of CPAs in July 2013. He is also a member of the Board of Directors of West Virginia Association of School Business Officials (WVASBO) and serves on the Accounting Procedures Committee. He has worked with various state educational and legislative leaders to help reform the state school funding formula from 2002 to present. Mr. Mowery is also a member of the West Virginia Association of School Administrators, West Virginia Society of Certified Public Accountants, and the International Association of School Business Officials. In Pendleton County, he is secretary/treasurer of the Pendleton County Economic Development Authority

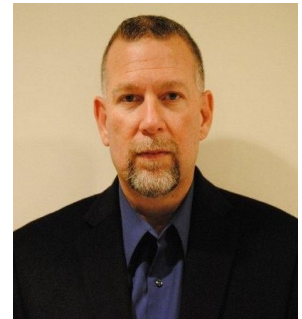


Pendleton County Economic Development Authority

CONFERENCE 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.



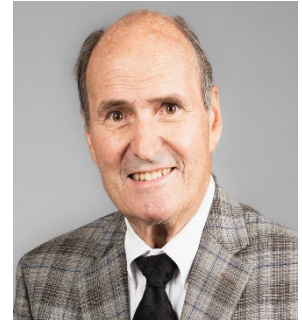
Torie Jackson, PhD, President-Elect of the West Virginia School Board Association

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.



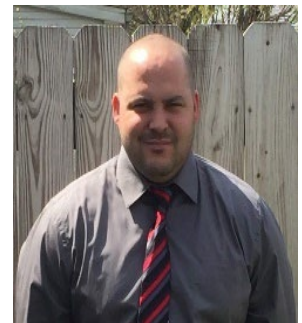
Jim Crawford Sr., Financial Officer of the West Virginia School Board Association

Jim Joseph Crawford was born and raised in Winfield. While playing Center for his football team under the direction of his mentor Coach Bob Anderson, the team placed second in the State in 1952. He was also an active member of the baseball and basketball teams. Jim earned a BS Degree in Physical Education and Social Studies from West Virginia State College while playing both football and golf. In 1973, Jim earned his Master's Degree in Education from West Virginia University. His first teaching position was in a one room school in Putnam County. In 1962, Jim was hired for a teaching position at St. Albans High School. Coach Sam LeRose gave him his start in his illustrious career as an Assistant Football Coach. While continuing his career at St. Albans, Jim coached Golf, Wrestling for 30 years and Girls Track. The St. Albans Girls Track Team won the State Championship in 1975. For many years, Jim also worked at St. Albans as the Athletic Director. Over the course of his career, Jim has officiated Football and Wrestling. For several years, he has been the Director of the Gazette Relays Track Meet held at Laidley Field in Charleston. In 1975, Jim was awarded *The West Virginia Sports Writers Association Recognition Award* for the 1975 Girls Track Champions. After retiring in 1999, Jim decided to run for the Kanawha County Board of Education. Having won in 2000, he has been and still is a member and has served as President on two occasions. Also Jim has served on the West Virginia Secondary Schools Activities Commission, been President of the West Virginia School Board Association, President of the national Federation of Secondary Schools Urban Districts and presently a member of the Board of Directors of the Childhood Language Disorders Center in Charleston, WV for Pre-School and Elementary Students. Jim is also a member of Chapter #58 Masonic Lodge, St. Albans and 33rd Degree Scottish Rite Freemason. Jim and his loving wife, Marilyn, reside in St. Albans. They are the proud parents of their son Jim and his wife, Heather.



Jared Billings, Immediate Past President of the West Virginia School Board Association

Jared Billings is a two-term member of the Mason County Board of Education, currently seeking his third term. He has served as President and Vice President of the local board. Jared is currently the financial officer of the WVSBA and has served as the Regional Co-Director of Region II. He is a graduate of Point Pleasant High School class of 2004, a graduate of Marshall University with an Associate Degree in Business Management in 2006, and also a graduate of the University of Rio Grande class of 2011 with an Associate Degree in Respiratory Therapy. Jared is employed at Cabell Huntington Hospital where he has been for nine years and also working PRN at Pleasant Valley Hospital. He is married to Sarah (Kinnard) Billings. They have two children, Makayla (11) and Jace (8) both attending the Point Pleasant Intermediate School. They reside in Gallipolis Ferry, WV. They attend and are members of the Henderson Church of Christ.



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Platinum Level



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new energy efficient building systems, where guaranteed savings from operation budgets pay for the capital improvements. From the initial energy audit through long-term measurement and verification of project savings, the ESG team will partner with you to design and construct solutions that fit the needs of your schools and result in significant cost savings while providing environmental and educational benefits. Let us take your schools to the head of the class! Contact Audra Blackwell at ablackwell@esg.email or visit energysystemsgroup.com to learn more.

Representative: Audra Blackwell, ESG Business Development Manager – West Virginia

Silver Level



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countryroadsleasing.com

Representative: Jeff Smell, Owner



Solar Holler is a full service solar installer in WV, VA, KY and OH. We are a rare breed – a fully licensed electrical contracting firm with policy and financing expertise, a finger on the pulse of cutting edge technology, and an absolute commitment to using the power of solar energy to revitalize Appalachian communities and schools. Since 2013 we've installed 2300 solar systems across our Appalachian region – that's about 38,000 kW of power.

Representative: Brad Hash, Solar Holler Representative