



NEW MEXICO SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

47th Annual School Law Conference

June 4 – June 6, 2026

Embassy Suites Hotel

1000 Woodward Place NE, Albuquerque, NM

DRAFT CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Thursday, June 4, 2026

10:00 – 11:30 a.m.	NMSBA Executive Board Meeting	
12:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Early Registration	<i>Conference Lobby</i>
1:00 – 3:00 p.m.	NMSBA/CES Veteran Board Member Training	
1:00 – 5:00 p.m.	NMSBA/CES New Board Member Training	
3:00 – 5:00 p.m.	NMSBA Board of Directors Meeting	
3:00 – 5:00 p.m.	Exhibitor Set-Up	<i>Conference Lobby</i>

Friday, June 5, 2026

7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration	<i>Conference Lobby</i>
7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Exhibit Area Open	<i>Conference Lobby</i>
7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.	Breakfast	<i>Sandia V-VIII</i>

Sponsors:

GENERAL SESSION

Sandia Ballroom

8:00 – 8:30 a.m.	Call to Order	Marvyn Jaramillo NMSBA President
	Presentation of Colors	Santa Fe High School NJROTC
	Pledge of Allegiance	Terry O’Brain NMSBA President-Elect
	Salute to the New Mexico Flag	Toby Willis NMSBA Vice-President
	Welcome and Introductions	Marvyn Jaramillo NMSBA President
	Region Meeting Attendance Awards	
	Master Board Member Inductions	

Category 1- Laws & Policies

8:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Legislative, Judicial & Regulatory Update	
9:30 – 10:30 a.m.	The Honorable Raul Torrez, New Mexico Attorney General	
10:30 – 10:45 a.m.	Break	
	<i>Sponsors:</i>	
10:45 – 11:15 a.m.	Meta Litigation / IPRA Litigation	
11:15 – 12:00 p.m.	Martinez Yazzie Lawsuit Update	
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	NMSBA Scholarship Announcement Luncheon	<i>Sandia V-VIII</i>
	<i>Sponsors:</i>	

BREAK-OUT SESSIONS I

1:30 – 2:30 p.m.	I. Board/Superintendent Relations: Fostering a Productive Relationship	
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- II. School Budgeting Issues: Navigating restrictions on Capital Expenditures
- III. Employee Discipline: Top to Bottom/Minor to Major
- IV. New Mexico Athletics: District Role and Relationship with NMAA

2:30 – 2:45 p.m.

Break
Sponsors:

Conference Lobby

BREAK-OUT SESSIONS II

2:45 – 3:45 p.m.

- V. Taskforce Update: Anticipating Changes to Public Disclosure Obligations
- VI. Monopoly – Buy, Lease, Exchange and Sell Real Property
- VII. From Planning to Post Issuance: Who Does What in a Bond Program
- VIII. From Vision to Delivery: Strategic Structuring of District Finance Projects

BREAK-OUT SESSIONS III

4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

- IX. FRAUD IN THE SCHOOLS: What Went Wrong and How Can It Be Avoided
- X. Policy Update
- XI. Navigating the FMLA Maze: Key Concepts for Public School Districts
- XII. Case Study on Reasonable Accommodations Under the Americans with Disabilities Act

5:00 6:30 p.m.

School Law Conference Reception
*Sponsors: New Mexico School Board Association
Cuddy & McCarthy Law Firm*

Sandia V-VIII

Saturday, June 6, 2026

7:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Registration
Exhibit Area Open

Conference Lobby

7:00 – Noon

7:00 – 8:30 a.m.

Breakfast
Sponsor:

Sandia V-VIII

BREAK-OUT SESSIONS I

8:30 – 9:30 a.m.

- XIII. Anatomy of an Insurance Claim: A Roadmap for School Districts
- XIV. Practical Parliamentary Procedure for Productive Efficient, and Open, Board and Committee Meetings
- XV. Sunshine Laws in Practice: Keeping School Boards Transparent, Compliant, and out of Trouble

9:30 – 9:45 p.m.

Break
Sponsor:

Conference Lobby

BREAK-OUT SESSIONS II

9:45 – 10:45 a.m.

- XVI. McKinny-Vento Act: Education for Homeless Children and Youth- What are Your Obligations

XVII. From the Chatbot to the Courthouse:
Developments in Artificial Intelligence in the
Context of School Law

XVIII. Meta Litigation

BREAK-OUT SESSIONS III

11:00 – 12 Noon

XIX. Stump the Lawyers

Sandia I-IV

12:00 Noon

School Law Conference Adjourns

**47th Annual
2026 School Law Conference**

Breakout Session Grid

Friday – June 5, 2026

Embassy Suites Hotel, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Room	<u>Session I</u> 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM	<u>Session II</u> 2:45 PM – 3:45 PM	<u>Session III</u> 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM
Sandia II/III (Seats 160)	Board/Superintendent Relations: Fostering a Productive Relationship I	Taskforce Update: Anticipating Changes to Public Disclosure Obligations V	FRAUD IN THE SCHOOLS: What Went Wrong and How Can It Be Avoided IX
Sierra III (Seats 80)	School Budgeting Issues: Navigating restrictions on Capital Expenditures II	Monopoly – Buy, Lease, Exchange and Sell Real Property VI	Policy Update X
Ocotillo I (Seats 65)	Employee Discipline: Top to Bottom/Minor to Major III	From Planning to Post Issuance: Who Does What in a Bond Program VII	Navigating the FMLA Maze: Key Concepts for Public School Districts XI
Sierra I/II (Seats 160)	New Mexico Athletics: District Role and Relationship with NMAA IV	From Vision to Delivery: Strategic Structuring of District Finance Projects VIII	Case Study on Reasonable Accommodations Under the Americans with Disabilities Act XII

**47th Annual
2026 School Law Conference**

Breakout Session Grid
Saturday – June 6, 2026
Embassy Suites Hotel, Albuquerque, New Mexico

ROOM	Session I 8:30 AM – 9:30 AM	Session II 9:45 AM – 10:45 AM	Session III 11:00AM – 12 Noon
Sierra I/II (Seats 160)	Anatomy of an Insurance Claim: A Roadmap for School Districts XIII	McKinny-Vento Act: Education for Homeless Children and Youth- What are Your Obligations XVI	Stump The Lawyer All Cuddy Lawyers XIX Sandia IV Category: A - Laws, Policies, Ethics, Personnel
Sierra III (Seats 80)	Practical Parliamentary Procedure for Productive Efficient, and Open, Board and Committee Meetings XIV	From the Chatbot to the Courthouse: Developments in Artificial Intelligence in the Context of School Law XVII	
Ocotillo II (Seats 85)	Sunshine Laws in Practice: Keeping School Boards Transparent, Compliant, and out of Trouble XV	Meta Litigation XVIII	

SCHOOL LAW CONFERENCE BREAK-OUT SESSION DESCRIPTIONS
June 4 – June 6, 2026

PRE-CONFERENCE BREAKOUT SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Veteran Board Member Training

Effective Governance and Supporting Superintendents

Ocotillo I/II – Thursday, June 4, 2026, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Presenter: Dr. Kurt Steinhaus, CES Consultant

Student growth starts with data-informed governance and caring support. This essential training is designed for school board members committed to excellence, collaboration, and impactful leadership. In this dynamic and interactive session, participants will explore proven strategies for building a high-functioning board-superintendent team, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and aligning governance practices with student success. What You'll Gain:

- Additional understanding of governance roles compared to management roles
- Practical frameworks for supporting superintendents

- Tools to strengthen communication, trust, and accountability
- Real-world scenarios and strategies that drive student outcomes

This is an opportunity to elevate your governance skills and make a lasting impact on your school community.

Category: 4 Governance and Support

New Board Member Training

Building Strong Board-Superintendent Relations

Sandia I/II – Thursday, June 4, 2026, 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Presenter: LeAnn Gandy, Director of Leadership Development, CES

Effective governance starts with a strong, collaborative relationship between the school board and the superintendent. This training is designed specifically for new school board members to establish a foundation of trust, clarity, and shared purpose with their superintendent. Participants will explore roles and responsibilities, communication protocols, and best practices for navigating challenges while maintaining a unified focus on student achievement and district success. Through interactive discussion and real-world scenarios, board members will gain tools to build and sustain a high-functioning governance team that leads with transparency, mutual respect, and strategic alignment.

Category: 4 Governance and Support

CONFERENCE BREAKOUT SESSIONS

I. Board/Superintendent Relations: Fostering a Productive Relationship

Sandia II/III – Friday, June 5, 2026, 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Presenters: Carlos J. Padilla

This presentation explores the critical partnership between school boards and superintendents, emphasizing how strong, collaborative relationships lead to effective governance and improved student outcomes. Participants will examine the distinct roles and responsibilities of each, common challenges that can strain communication, and practical strategies for building trust, clarity, and alignment. Through real-world examples and actionable insights, the session highlights how fostering mutual respect and open dialogue can create a productive working relationship that supports the success of the entire school district.

Category: D - Governance & Superintendent Supervision

Presentation of special interest to: District Administrators and School Board Members

II. School Budgeting Issues: Navigating restrictions on Capital Expenditures

Sierra III – Friday, June 5, 2026, 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Presenters: Carlos J. Padilla

This presentation examines the complexities of school budgeting with a focus on the limitations surrounding capital expenditures. Participants will gain a clearer understanding of funding categories, legal and policy constraints, and the distinctions between operational and capital spending. The session also explores common challenges districts face when addressing infrastructure needs within restricted budgets, along with practical strategies for prioritizing projects, maximizing available resources, and maintaining transparency. Attendees will leave with actionable insights to navigate capital expenditure restrictions while supporting long-term district goals.

Category: B - Finance, Budgeting and Fiduciary Responsibilities

Presentation of special interest to: District Administrators and School Board Members

III. Employee Discipline: Top to Bottom/Minor to Major

Ocotillo I – Friday, June 5, 2026, 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Presenters: Carlos J. Padilla

This presentation provides a comprehensive overview of employee discipline in educational settings, addressing the full spectrum from minor infractions to serious misconduct. Participants will explore progressive discipline models, legal and policy considerations, and the importance of consistency and

documentation. The session also highlights best practices for addressing issues at all levels of an organization—from frontline staff to leadership—while maintaining fairness, due process, and a positive workplace culture. Attendees will gain practical tools to respond effectively to disciplinary situations and support organizational accountability.

Category: A - Laws, Policies, Ethics, Personnel

Presentation of special interest to: District Administrators and School Board Members

IV. New Mexico Athletics: The District's Role and Relationship with NMAA

Sierra I/II – Friday, June 5, 2026, 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Presenters: Carlos J. Padilla

This presentation explores the relationship between school districts and the New Mexico Activities Association (NMAA), highlighting the district's role in supporting and overseeing interscholastic athletics. Participants will gain an understanding of the NMAA's governance structure, rules, and eligibility requirements, as well as the responsibilities of districts in ensuring compliance and promoting student success. The session also addresses common challenges, communication strategies, and best practices for maintaining a strong, collaborative partnership that upholds both educational priorities and athletic excellence across New Mexico schools.

Category: E - Student Achievement and Safe Learning Environments

Presentation of special interest to: Site-Level & District Administrators and School Board Members

V. Taskforce Update: Anticipating Changes to Public Disclosure Obligations

Sandia II/III – Friday, June 5, 2026, 2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Presenters: Carl J. Waldhart

The New Mexico Legislature has unanimously recognized the need to address the current state of the New Mexico Inspection of Public Records Act. A newly-created taskforce of legislators, agency representatives, and stakeholders are now working to address what every school administrator already knows: that New Mexico's public records system is under strain and needs to be recalibrated. This session will focus on the status of IPRA reform, areas where gaps in the statute can lead to unexpected legal issues, and ways to be ahead of changes to the law.

Categories: A - Laws, Policies, Ethics, Personnel; B - Finance, Budgeting & Fiduciary Responsibilities; C - Legal Concepts

Presentation of special interest to: Site-Level & District Administrators and School Board Members

VI. Monopoly: Purchase, Sale, Exchange and Lease of Real Estate

Sierra III – Friday, June 5, 2026, 2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Presenters: Heather Travis Boone

Interactive training and discussion of the process and considerations for the purchase, sale, exchange and lease of real estate by School Districts. The session will discuss the legal requirements for real estate transactions as well as practical considerations utilizing a presentation and discussion format.

Category: A - Laws, Policies, Ethics, Personnel

Presentation of special interest to: Site-Level & District Administrators and School Board Members

VII. From Planning to Post Issuance: Who Does What in a Bond Program

Ocotillo I – Friday, June 5, 2026, 2:45 p.m.-3:45 p.m.

Presenters: Heather Travis Boone, TBD

This presentation outlines the full lifecycle of a school district bond—from early facility planning and community engagement through election, financing, project implementation, distribution of funds, and ongoing IRS compliance. It defines the duties of key participants, including the board, superintendent, business office, bond counsel, financial advisor, and escrow agent. Emphasis is placed on decision making checkpoints, documentation standards, and maintaining proper use of bond proceeds throughout the life of the bonds.

Categories: A - Laws, Policies, Ethics, Personnel; B - Finance, Budgeting & Fiduciary Responsibilities; C - Legal Concepts; D – Governance & Superintendent Supervision

Presentation of special interest to: School Board Members, Administrators and School Board Officials

VIII. From Vision to Delivery: Strategic Structuring of District Finance Projects

Sierra I/II – Friday, June 5, 2026, 2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Presenters: Heather Travis Boone, TBD

This presentation provides a practical, overview of how school districts structure capital projects to align educational priorities, financial capacity, and legal requirements. It explains how districts match facility needs with appropriate financing tools. This session will discuss the rules and restrictions on the different types of funds. The session highlights the roles of the Board, district leadership, finance staff, legal counsel, and financial advisors in shaping a compliant and financially sustainable project plan.

Categories: A - Laws, Policies, Ethics, Personnel; B - Finance, Budgeting & Fiduciary Responsibilities; C - Legal Concepts

Presentation of special interest to: Site-Level & District Administrators and School Board Members

IX. FRAUD IN THE SCHOOLS: What Went Wrong and How Can It Be Avoided

Sandia II/III – Friday, June 5, 2026, 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Presenters: Heather Travis Boone, Audrey J. Jaramillo

Fraud can cause significant damages to school districts through monetary loss, reputational damage, civil and criminal liability for the wrongdoers, and resources directed at remedying process, compliance and audit failures. This session will analyze cases throughout the US, focusing on the actions, failures, and consequences that led to the fraud as well as a discussion of practical methods to avoid fraud in your district.

Categories: A - Laws, Policies, Ethics, Personnel; B - Finance, Budgeting & Fiduciary Responsibilities; C - Legal Concepts; D – Governance & Superintendent Supervision

Presentation of special interest to: Site-Level & District Administrators and School Board Members

X. Policy Update

Sierra III – Friday, June 5, 2026, 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Presenters:

Category:

Presentation of special interest to: School Board Members, Administrators and School Business Officials

XI. Navigating the FMLA Maze: Key Concepts for Public School Districts

Ocotillo I – Friday, June 5, 2026, 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Presenters: Elizabeth A. Heaphy

The complexities of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) present challenges for many employers. Handling FMLA requests in a public school setting presents unique hurdles, including applying the special rules applicable to the "instructional employees." This session provides a comprehensive roadmap for managing FMLA requests with an eye toward both legal compliance and empathy. Attendees will be provided a legal primer on FMLA principles and an opportunity to discuss real-world scenarios where FMLA questions commonly arise.

Category: A - Laws, Policies, Ethics, Personnel

Presentation of special interest to: Site-Level Administrators, Superintendents and School Board Members

XII. Case Study on Reasonable Accommodations Under the Americans with Disabilities Act

Sierra I/II – Friday, June 5, 2026, 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Presenters: M. Karen Kilgore and Kathryn Grusauskas

Compare two employees with the same disability in two different school districts, one very large and one very small, and how the size of the school district may be a factor in determining whether the requested accommodation is reasonable or not.

Category: A - Laws, Policies, Ethics, Personnel

Presentation of special interest to: Site-Level & District Administrators and School Board Members

XIII. Anatomy of an Insurance Claim: A Roadmap for School Districts

Sierra I/II – Saturday, June 6, 2026, 8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Presenters: Scott P. Hatcher and Carl J. Waldhart

This presentation walks school board employees through the full lifecycle of an insurance claim, from the initial incident and notice requirements under the New Mexico Tort Claims Act to resolution through defense, settlement, or judgment. Participants will gain insight into how insurers evaluate risk, assign counsel, and make decisions about settlement and trial. Topics include policy interpretation, defense obligations, settlement authority, and how policy limits and exclusions influence litigation strategy.

Categories: A – Laws, Policies, Ethics, Personnel; B - Finance, Budgeting & Fiduciary Responsibilities

Presentation of special interest to: School Board Members, Administrators and School Board Officials

XIV. Practical Parliamentary Procedure for Productive Efficient, and Open, Board and Committee Meetings

Sierra III – Saturday, June 6, 2026, 8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Presenters: M. Karen Kilgore, Amelia Adair

Fear and loathing of unproductive, divisive and overlong meetings is a common hazard for any Board. Learn to use parliamentary procedure and meeting management tools effectively, to plan and lead meetings that accomplish the objectives of the organization and leave meeting participants feeling positive and productive. We'll also cover how to comply with Open Meetings Act requirements

Categories:

Presentation of special interest to: District Administrators and School Board Members

XV. Sunshine Laws in Practice: Keeping School Boards Transparent, Compliant, and out of Trouble

Ocotillo II – Saturday, June 6, 2026, 8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Even well-intentioned board members can run afoul of New Mexico's complex transparency laws. This presentation explores the legal framework of IPRA and the Open Meetings Act, with a focus on identifying common compliance failures that lead to litigation, invalidated actions, or public scrutiny.

Attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of statutory requirements and practical tools to reduce risk while promoting openness and accountability.

Presenters: Carl J. Waldhart

Categories: A - Laws, Policies, Ethics, Personnel; B - Finance, Budgeting & Fiduciary Responsibilities; C - Legal Concepts

Presentation of special interest to: School Board Members, Administrators and School Board Officials

XVI. McKinney-Vento Act: Education for Homeless Children and Youth- What are Your Obligations

Sierra I/II – Saturday, June 6, 2026, 9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Presenters: Mary Bessone, Carlos J. Padilla

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is a federal law that ensures students experiencing homelessness have equal access to public education and promotes educational stability for vulnerable youth. This session will examine school districts' obligations under the Act, including their role in identifying and supporting students by removing barriers to enrollment, attendance, and academic success. We will also explore the Act's key protections, the rights afforded to eligible students, and the services and support school districts are obligated to provide.

Categories: A –Laws, Policies, Ethics, Personnel; E – Student Achievement & Safe Learning Environments

Presentation of special interest to: All School Administrators and School Board Members

XVII. From the Chatbot to the Courthouse: Developments in Artificial Intelligence in the Context of School Law

Sierra III – Saturday, June 6, 2026, 9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Presenters: Carl J. Waldhart

As students increasingly engage with AI tools, school districts are confronting new and complex legal questions. his session explores how AI is influencing student behavior and discipline, highlights key risks under evolving laws, including the Take It Down Act, and identifies common pitfalls in district responses. Attendees will leave with actionable strategies for developing clear, defensible policies that address AI use while safeguarding students and minimizing liability.

Categories: A - Laws, Policies, Ethics, Personnel; B - Finance, Budgeting & Fiduciary Responsibilities

Presentation of special interest to: Site-Level & District Administrators and School Board Members

XVIII. Meta Litigation

Sierra III – Saturday, June 6, 2026, 9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Presenters:

Category:

Presentation of special interest to: School Board Members, Administrators and School Business Officials

XIX. Stump the Lawyer

Sandia IV – Saturday, June 6, 2026, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 Noon

Presenters: All Cuddy & McCarthy Attorneys

Stump the lawyer description: In this session, school attorneys with the Cuddy & McCarthy law firm answer (or attempt to answer) legal questions on any school related topic raised by members of the audience. This is the opportunity to 1) get answers to legal questions you have been wanting to ask, regardless of whether they relate to the topics covered at the conference, or 2) “stump the lawyer.”

Category: A - Laws, Policies, Ethics, Personnel

Presentation of special interest to: All School Administrators and School Board Members