



## FOR YOUR *information*

A MONTHLY UPDATE ON  
STATE BOARD PROCEEDINGS,  
ASSOCIATION NEWS &  
K-12 TOPICS

June 12, 2026

### **SBOE Advances Teacher Certification Reforms, Reviews Increased RAISE Act Funding**



The State Board of Education approved a significant overhaul of Alabama's teacher certification rules during its June meeting, updating requirements to align with recent legislation, streamlining administrative code provisions and providing additional flexibility for educators and school systems. The changes remove outdated and repetitive language, aligning certification requirements with the state's

new educator preparation framework and updating renewal requirements for certificate holders.

The board also reviewed increased funding allocations under the RAISE Act for the 2026-27 school year. School systems statewide will receive a share of \$191 million in student-weighted funding, a \$25 million increase over the previous year, while also preparing to meet new annual accountability reporting requirements tied to RAISE Act expenditures and student outcomes.

Additionally, board members approved updates to Business Software Applications I standards to incorporate required financial literacy instruction, appointed the 2026-27 State Textbook Committee for Digital Literacy and Computer Science and modified select Praxis assessment requirements to align with national recommendations.

[Read Full Story](#)

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**Register Now: New Board Member Orientations**



# NEW BOARD MEMBER ORIENTATIONS

FRIDAY, JULY 17 & SATURDAY, JULY 18



Registration for AASB's New Board Member Orientations remains open. This training is packed with invaluable insights designed to empower both new and veteran board members to master their roles, embrace their responsibilities and build the connections that ignite effective governance.

## **Roles & Responsibilities - July 17 | 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

Part I of AASB's school board member orientation covers the role of the board and the superintendent, the Open Meetings Act, the ethics law, and much more.

## **Effective Boards & Relationships - July 18 | 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

Part II takes an in-depth look at effective school board leadership, stakeholder engagement, working with your superintendent and board attorney, and the art of advocacy.

## **Cost: FREE**

*This new benefit reflects our commitment to supporting board members from day one of their service.*

## **Did You Know?**

- **Incoming Board Members:** Even if they have not yet taken office, incoming board members already are eligible to participate in board member training.

*The School Board Governance Improvement Act requires all new board members to complete an Orientation on required topics within one year from July 1 after taking office.*

[Contact Your Board Secretary Or AASB To Sign Up](#)

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# 2026

- August 17: District 4
- August 20: District 7
- August 25: District 2
- August 27: District 3
- September 1: District 8
- September 3: District 6
- September 8: District 9
- September 10: District 5
- September 14: District 1



## AASB Hires New Director of Public Relations

We're thrilled to welcome Rebecca Thomas as our new Director of Public Relations! Rebecca brings a wealth of experience in strategic communications and public education advocacy. Most notably, she established the communications office for Autauga County Schools, serving as a trusted advisor to district leadership through some of its most critical initiatives.

[Read More](#)

### WEBINAR

#### Financial Fraud in School Districts: Red Flags & Board Safeguards

Thursday, July 16 | Noon to 1 p.m.

## Webinar: Financial Fraud in School Districts

Financial fraud in school districts is more common than many board members realize, and when it occurs, the consequences can be devastating. Misused public funds mean fewer resources for students, damaged community trust, and serious legal and financial liability for the district. Join us on July 16 from noon to 1 p.m. to understand how fraud happens and what safeguards to put in place.

[Registration Coming Soon](#)



## Leadership Lens: Responsibility vs Accountability?

Sometimes these words are used interchangeably in our work as board members. We say there's a responsibility to ensure our students receive quality education. Sometimes our constituents say we are responsible for the tasks carried out by school officials. However, as board members, our role is accountability. What does that even mean? Here are a few key points to consider:

- Accountability means that we set the standards of expectation. We establish clear, expected behaviors and performance criteria. We must begin with the end in mind so that those responsible will know the expectations.
- Accountability means we ask questions about those expectations to determine if goals are met and the progress being made. We must inspect what we expect.
- Accountability fosters transparency and builds trust among the team.

Accountability is the bread that holds the sandwich together. The foundation of accountability is the vision set forth – the expectations and standards that build it. The top piece of the sandwich is the follow-up of asking questions and ensuring those stated goals are being met. The “meat” of the sandwich itself is the responsibility of the superintendent and staff members, and it represents the tasks that must be completed to accomplish the goals of the system. Before we cast stones about responsibilities not being met, let's ensure we have done our part to specifically establish the vision and expectations.

Partnering responsibility and accountability creates a robust and forward-moving school system that benefits students and the community.

[Read Previous Leadership Lens Editions](#)



## SUBSCRIBERS-ONLY WEBINAR

July 13 | 10 - 11 a.m. CDT

AASB's Policy Pipeline delivers the latest education policy developments, while the companion webinars provide deeper analysis and real-time discussion of the issues affecting Alabama schools, helping school board members understand what's happening, why it matters, and what comes next.



# ASK AASB

### Vendor Dinners

**Q**

**Dear AASB:** Our board attends AASB's Summer Conference and other events throughout the year. Sometimes vendors will invite our entire board to dinner after the conference. Can we go?

**A**

Yes. Board members may accept off-site meal invitations from vendors, whether as a group or individually and whether family members are included or not. The key is that the gathering must remain strictly social. The vendor should not use the dinner/occasion to pitch their products or services to the board. If you receive an invitation from a vendor, remember that there can't be any quid pro quo, meaning they can't ask and you can't offer to give them business based on the meal.

# 2026 All-State School Board Award

*Nominations Due  
August 15*

*Announcement emails were sent to board secretaries, superintendents  
and board presidents. A hard copy will arrive by June 30.*



## **Time is Ticking! 2025-2026 Training Hours Due by June 30**

Short of your state-mandated individual training hours for the 2025-26 training year? AASB's online learning portal, School Board U, offers a convenient way to earn hours from the comfort of home!

School Board U features all eight of AASB's core courses in the School Board Member Academy, including new board member orientation courses. Recorded webinars as well as informational and elective courses also are available, and several courses are free.

**Complete Training Hours Soon**

# BOARD MEMBER

Spotlight

## Meet Katrina Collier-Long

Phenix City Board of Education

**Q:** What excites you the most about being a school board member?

**A:** “ \_\_\_\_\_  
The opportunity to help shape the future of our students and community excites me the most. I enjoy working collaboratively with fellow board members and district leaders to make decisions that positively impact student success.

”



## Board Member Spotlight: Katrina Collier-Long

Katrina Collier-Long has been a dedicated advocate for public education and student success throughout her career. Since joining the Phenix City school board in 2020, she has combined her passion for learning, commitment to service, and student-centered approach to help shape opportunities for children and families across her community.

[Read More](#)



## Limited-Time Opportunity: Free Poverty-Informed Training for Your Staff

School systems across Alabama are seeing shifts in student needs and community demographics, and those changes show up in classrooms every day. The question isn't if we respond, but how well we equip our staff to do it.

AASB is expanding access to its highly regarded poverty-informed training to support school teams in understanding and responding to the realities many students face. This training is practical, interactive and designed specifically for staff, giving them tools and resources they can use immediately to better support student learning and engagement.

Right now, AASB has a **limited number of FREE training slots remaining between now and October** (systems cover travel expenses only):

- 2 Poverty-Informed Training sessions (90–120 minutes, staff-focused professional development)

AASB will work directly with your system to schedule a time that fits your calendar.

Availability is **first come, first served**, and if your system schedules more than one session, the first presentation remains free.

If your goal is to spend more time on learning and less time addressing barriers, this is a smart, no-cost step in the right direction.

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