



DECEMBER 2021

# e-Dition

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## Association Year in Review — That’s a wrap on 2021!

By **Terry Spradlin**, Executive Director, [tspradlin@isba-ind.org](mailto:tspradlin@isba-ind.org)



**Holiday greetings** from the Indiana School Boards Association (ISBA) Board of Directors and staff!

As both the fall semester and calendar year close, I want to take a moment to review ISBA achievements and look ahead to 2022. However, while we have worked hard on your behalf, the focus and applause should be on the **heroic efforts** of school officials, teachers, and staff to deliver high-quality instruction to students over the now 21 arduous months of the relentless Coronavirus pandemic.

We thank you for all you have done as a school board member under difficult circumstances and for being a part of ISBA this year. You deserve continued gratitude and appreciation!

### 2021 Highlights

Overall, ISBA hosted **36 events** this year, including, most notably, the 72nd Annual ISBA-IAPSS Fall Conference, which resumed in-person attendance after a virtual event in 2020. While the ISBA Spring Regional Meeting had to be held via webinar, we were delighted to be able to see so many of you (nearly 800!) in-person at our Fall Regional Meetings.

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Over the course of the three dozen events put on by ISBA this year, members had access to 130 EGA points and 73 total hours of professional development.

### Events, Communications, and Outreach

- Held 30 presidents' roundtables, providing a virtual forum for school board presidents in each region to engage in lively discussion of school governance issues
- More than 95,000 page visits at [www.isba-ind.org](http://www.isba-ind.org)
- 8 e-Dition newsletters, 4 quarterly issues of The Journal, 400,000+ Twitter views, and 135,000+ Facebook views
- 245 earned media articles across print, television, radio, and online news publications

### Board Services

- 245 school board members participated in the 16 learning modules that make up the "New Board Member Academy"
- Facilitated a record-high 8 superintendent searches
- 24 school board training consultations conducted on-site or virtually

### Legal Services

- Provided legal advice via 2,900 calls and emails answered
- Issued more than 20 Coronavirus Resource Updates
- Hosted 2 School Law Seminars, 1 Bargaining Seminar, and 1 Workshop on employee discharge

### Policy Services

- Answered more than 350 requests for policy assistance
- Created and distributed sample school board policies
- 30 school corporations subscribe to CPMS (Comprehensive Policy Management Services)
- Published the quarterly Policy Advisor

### Advocacy Services

- Distributed the 4th annual Grassroots Advocacy Guide
- Legislative Action Network – Provided 19 Legislative Updates and 8 Call-to-Action Alerts
- Convened the 3rd annual State House Day

### 2022 Event and Program Preview

- Registration for the **School Board Leadership Seminars** is now live. The three-part series will be held via webinar January 25, January 27, and February 2.
- The 4th Annual **State House Day** will take place February 15 at the Indianapolis Downtown Marriott. Stay tuned for more details to come during the first week of January.
- Mark your calendar for the 73rd Annual ISBA-IAPSS **Fall Conference** on October 3-4.
- For more on these and other events, bookmark ISBA's Events page at [web.isba-ind.org/events](http://web.isba-ind.org/events).

On behalf of the ISBA Board of Directors and staff, thank you for your participation in our programs and offerings, giving us valuable feedback and sharing your local perspectives, and thank you for your service and leadership as a school board member in your respective communities.

Together let's accomplish more great things for K-12 public education in 2022, but first, **have a happy holiday season!**

# Please engage in grassroots advocacy in 2022 — your voice matters!



By **Terry Spradlin**, Executive Director, [tspradlin@isba-ind.org](mailto:tspradlin@isba-ind.org)

The second regular session of the 122nd Indiana General Assembly will commence a few weeks from now on January 4, 2022. Like all even-numbered years, 2022 will be a “short session.” By law, state legislators must conclude their deliberations and adjourn by March 14, but don’t be surprised if they end a week or so early.

We anticipate that K-12 education policy will remain a hot topic on the annual legislative agenda.

At the outset of the budget session of 2021, we identified 179 bills with language impacting K-12 schools. Overall, there are likely to be about 800-1,000 bills introduced during the short session, of which about 20% will pertain to K-12 education policy, or child-related legislation. Thus, ISBA will potentially track 150-200 bills yet again. No small task!

A total of 157 new education laws have been passed in just the last four years!

Your voice will be important to influence the outcomes on key legislation. ISBA will be sending out call-to-action alerts at pivotal moments throughout the session asking you to contact your local legislators about specific issues. Year after year, lawmakers tell us that school board members who engage in grassroots advocacy make a real difference.

Please take the time to make your voice heard in 2022. As champions of public education, we need to help inform, influence, and shape sound policy to support public education and the more than 1 million students in our schools.

## Legislative Action Network

While your ISBA lobby team strives to be in the right place at the right time, our voices are more effective when our efforts are complemented by a troop of school board members participating in the Legislative Action Network, ISBA’s formal grassroots advocacy program.

Our nationally recognized Legislative Action Network is designed to unify and mobilize “the voice” of school board members and increase State House visibility. Through this program, ISBA provides school boards with the information, resources, strategies, and guidance to engage in the grassroots advocacy process.

Each school board should designate a Legislative Liaison to lead the localized Statehouse advocacy efforts in coordination with the statewide Legislative Action Network, although we encourage all school board members to engage in grassroots advocacy.

To designate your school board’s Legislative Liaison, please send the name and preferred email address to Talia Bynm at [tbynm@isba-ind.org](mailto:tbynm@isba-ind.org).

Essential information and resources to help you track the 2022 session of the Indiana General Assembly are posted on ISBA’s Legislative Services page at <https://www.isba-ind.org/legislative.html>.

# ISBA Legislative Action Network — Top 10 Tips of Effective Grassroots Advocacy

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- Tip #1:** Research your legislators’ backgrounds, committee assignments and voting records on education issues. The best source for this information is the Indiana General Assembly website and reading the pages and biographies of the individual members found on the caucus webpages.
- Tip #2:** Develop relationships with your legislators by routinely visiting, writing and calling. Let them know you are a constituent. Take notes to assist you with future conversations with them.
- Tip #3:** Don’t overdo your lobbying. Use ISBA talking points. Clearly and quickly explain your opposition or support for the issue you are contacting them about.
- Tip #4:** Show respect. Be positive. Thank legislators for pro-public education votes and support of the ISBA legislative priorities. Conclude each communication with an expression of gratitude for their time.
- Tip #5:** Lobby with your real-life experience. It’s your most persuasive tool; use local examples.
- Tip #6:** Set priorities. When everything is important, nothing is important. Know your “ask” and focus your conversation around it.
- Tip #7:** Shore up lobbying allies from your community to demonstrate broad support; collaborate with others.
- Tip #8:** Don’t forget the media. Getting your message out to the press – letters-to-the editor, news releases, etc. – can influence your legislators and public opinion.
- Tip #9:** Be sensitive to partisan politics, but always try to come across as nonpartisan. In politics, there are no permanent allies and no permanent adversaries.
- Tip #10:** Be reasonable and consider compromise on contentious issues. Remember, more than 1,000 bills are introduced each session, and everyone thinks their issues are most important—many people and issues vie for the attention of legislators. Sometimes, simply informing legislators on your position will pay long-term dividends whether you immediately persuade them to change their position or not.
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ISBA Executive Director Terry Spradlin joined House Education Committee Chair Rep. Bob Behning and Greater Jasper Superintendent Dr. Tracy Lorey as the featured panelists for a discussion about K-12 education at **The Legislative Conference** held December 15 at the Indiana Convention Center.

## New Region 10 Director Appointed

The Indiana School Boards Association (ISBA) Board of Directors has selected Lee Ann Wiseheart as the new Director of Region 10.

Wiseheart is currently serving in her third term on the school board of the New Albany-Floyd County Consolidated School Corporation (2006-2010, 2014-2018, 2018-current).



She replaces Bill Wilson, who stepped down from the ISBA Board of Directors in December due to health reasons. She will fill the remainder of his three-year term, which expires in September 2023.

The ISBA Board of Directors is comprised of four officers and the directors of each of the 10 ISBA regions.

Wiseheart, a probation officer and victim assistance coordinator, is recognized locally as being available and accessible to parents and other constituents. She publishes her personal email address and cell phone number online and regularly posts assorted content to Facebook, including video updates, school board agendas, district news, and media coverage. One of the core principles guiding her school board service is never voting for something simply because that's the way it has always been done.

### ISBA Board of Directors

President — Tom Simpson, Yorktown Community Schools

First Vice President — Rebecca Gardenour, New Albany-Floyd County Consolidated School Corporation

Second Vice President — Steve Corona, Fort Wayne Community Schools

Past President — Bob Stwalley, Lafayette School Corporation

Region 1 — Thomas Hoffman, Crown Point Community School Corporation

Region 2 — Becky Linnemeier, Wawasee Community School Corporation

Region 3 — Tim Ehlerding, North Adams Community Schools

Region 4 — Milt Hess, Logansport Community School Corporation

Region 5 — Layla Spanenberg, Carmel Clay Schools

Region 6 — Wade Beatty, Charles A. Beard Memorial School Corporation

Region 7 — John Preble, Linton-Stockton School Corporation

Region 8 — Jack Russell, Center Grove Community School Corporation

Region 9 — Travis Nolcox, North Gibson School Corporation

Region 10 — Lee Ann Wiseheart, New Albany-Floyd County Consolidated School Corporation

# Picking up the mantle

By **Steve Horton**, Director of Board Services, [shorton@isba-ind.org](mailto:shorton@isba-ind.org)



Getting started as the new Director of Board Services is both a challenge and very exciting. I am looking forward to getting to know board members and school administrators across Indiana.

Michael Adamson certainly leaves big shoes to fill as he enjoys retirement, but I am ready! You have high expectations, and well you should. Your job as a school board member is crucial to your community and one that carries great responsibility.

It is my hope that you embrace every opportunity to enhance your knowledge and understanding of school corporation governance, and I stand ready to assist you in that task.

As you look toward the new year, consider your board's needs. Where can ISBA be of the most service to you and your fellow board members? Perhaps it is with revisiting the roles, responsibilities, and ethics of strong board governance, or perhaps you are like many boards and would benefit most by spending time working on relationships and your team's communication.

Another consideration is looking at your corporation's most critical needs. Strategically planning your next steps is the most effective way to take your organization to the next level.

Maybe your immediate need is a search for a new superintendent or planning and implementing an effective superintendent evaluation. We can certainly help with that.

Many boards do not consider that completing a self-evaluation is an important part of their work. ISBA has a wonderful tool to help you look introspectively at the work you are doing. I embrace the opportunity to work through that process with you.

In the eight years I have spent working directly with school districts leadership teams in Ohio, I have learned that there are far more parallels than differences from board to board and state to state. Having said that, each of you serve on unique boards and you represent unique school corporations and communities.

I consider my work with each of you as individual governance teams both a privilege and an important responsibility. I look forward to the opportunity to work with your team in what ever area is most important to your success.

I invite you to visit the board services page on our website at <https://www.isba-ind.org/board.html>, and reach out to me at any time at [shorton@isba-ind.org](mailto:shorton@isba-ind.org). I am here to serve.

## FAST FACT:

88% of students in the 21st Century Scholars program enroll in college, compared to 59% of all Indiana high school graduates

## ISBA in the News

- » [How much politics in public education? - Terre Haute Tribune-Star](#)
- » [State Board approves indicators for School Performance Dashboard - WBIW](#)
- » [Northeast Indiana school districts struggle with subs - Fort Wayne Business Weekly](#)
- » [Indiana lawmakers want parents to review curriculum - Chalkbeat](#)
- » [Edinburgh schools move forward with referendum - Daily Journal \(Johnson County\)](#)

## ISBA 2022 Calendar of Events

January-February	School Board Leadership Seminars
February 15	State House Day (Indianapolis Marriott Downtown)
April 18-May 4	Spring Regional Meetings
June 8	School Law Seminar (Ivy Tech Conf Center)
June 15	Budget/Finance Seminar (Ivy Tech Conf Center)
August 19	Collective Bargaining Seminar (Ivy Tech Conf Center)
October 3-4	Fall Conference (Indiana Convention Center)
November 1-17	Fall Regional Meetings
December 7	School Law Seminar (Ivy Tech Conf Center)

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### Indiana School Boards Association staff:

Terry Spradlin - Executive Director  
 Lisa Tanselle, Esq. - General Counsel  
 Julie Slavens, Esq. - Dir. of Policy Services, Senior Counsel  
 Steve Horton - Director of Board Services  
 Adam VanOsdol - Communications Specialist/Content Strategist  
 Rae Anne Motsinger - Comptroller/Office Manager  
 Talia Bynm - Administrative Assistant



# SEASON'S GREETINGS

*In a year full of challenges, thank you  
for all you do for our public schools.*

*We wish you the happiest of holidays  
and look forward to seeing you  
in the New Year.*

FROM ALL OF US HERE AT  
THE INDIANA SCHOOL  
BOARDS ASSOCIATION