

Session Descriptions

2025 School HR Winter Boot Camp
January 30-31, 2025 – Westin Anaheim Hotel
Anaheim, CA

Building a Comprehensive Professional Learning Plan for All Employee Groups

Experience Management, Talent Development, Training & Development

Presented by Tamara Speidel, Senior Officer of Talent Management and Brenda Smith, Chief Human Resource Officer, Cherry Creek Schools, Greenwood Village, CO

Discover how Cherry Creek Schools is creating a unified and equitable professional learning framework for all employees, rooted in the belief that every role significantly impacts student success. This session will explore our collaborative process for designing responsive, high-quality, and personalized professional development opportunities.

Building a Diverse Workforce: Lessons from the Hermiston School District

Strategy, Talent Acquisition, Recruitment

Presented by Jake Bacon, Assistant Superintendent, Kelly Payan, Licensed HR Specialist & Adrian Rodarte, Classified HR Specialist, Hermiston School District, Hermiston, OR

Over the past decade, the Hermiston School District has experienced a significant demographic shift, transitioning from a population that was 60% white and 40% Hispanic to one that is now 60% Hispanic and 38% white. As a rural community in Eastern Oregon, the district faces unique challenges in attracting diverse applicants, particularly candidates of color. In response, the district has strategically invested in a "grow your own" program, cultivating talent from within the community. Remarkably, nearly 40% of the district's staff are former Hermiston students—a testament to the program's long-term vision and impact.

Join Assistant Superintendent Jake Bacon and the Hermiston human resources team as they share actionable strategies for increasing staff retention and hiring professionals who reflect the students they serve. Discover the steps the district has taken to build a workforce that fosters connection, representation, and success in a rapidly changing educational landscape.

Building Bridges: Strategies for Recruiting, Retention & Cultivating Positive Culture in Education

Strategy, Talent Acquisition, Recruitment

Presented by Debra Craddock, Associate Superintendent of HR & Rick Crosby, Assistant Superintendent of Personnel, La Canada Unified School District, La Canada, CA

This session will explore innovative strategies for recruiting and retaining top talent in education while fostering a supportive and inclusive workplace culture. Beyond traditional platforms like Edjoin, participants will learn how to expand recruitment efforts through social media, community partnerships and outreach to diverse candidate pools. We will discuss ways to support new teachers through robust onboarding programs, mentoring opportunities, and personalized professional development, while also designing wellness initiatives that address mental health and work-life balance for all employees. Finally, the session will highlight methods to help new teachers establish deep connections within the district, building a sense of belonging and commitment that encourages them to stay and grow their careers long-term.

Complying with Facility Equity Requirements

Risk Management, Talent Development, Training & Development

Presented by Stephen McLouglin, Partner, Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo, Cerritos, CA

Schools must ensure their facilities create an equal-opportunity educational environment for all students. To meet this requirement, schools must comply with several federal and state civil rights laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, Unruh Civil Rights Act, Title IX, the Civic Center Act, and the School and the Success and Opportunity Act. At the same time, school districts must also take into consideration other rights and concerns, including privacy rights, safety considerations, free speech rights, and providing facilities that are conducive to the education of all students. Some of these laws create tension with other district responsibilities. For example, while the ADA requires schools to ensure equal access for students with disabilities, schools must also ensure their facilities limit access to address safety concerns. Further, schools must balance the gender identity rights of students with privacy concerns. Because these requirements come from both California and federal law, school districts lack clear guidelines that incorporate these many requirements while considering potentially conflicting interests.

This presentation will provide a summary of the civil rights applicable to school facilities and real-world suggestions on how school districts can ensure their facilities comply with the various applicable laws while considering the concerns of parents, students, and staff to provide facilities that create an environment that supports and protects the education of all students.

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Evaluating Psychological Fitness for Duty in School Employees

Risk Management, Talent Development, Performance Management

Presented by John Yeh, Partner, Burke, Williams & Sorensen, San Jose, CA

This session is designed to help school districts navigate the laws and procedures that govern psychological/mental-health fitness for duty evaluations for certificated and non-certificated employees. We will discuss common pitfalls and mistakes, including the often-overlooked Education Code Section 44942, and highlight the difference in procedures for certificated and non-certificated employees.

Federal Employment Laws: What School HR Professionals Need to Know

Risk Management, Talent Development, Training & Development

Presented by Dr. Larry Reznicek, retired HR Director and former AASPA President.

This presentation will review the federal laws you and your district will encounter. Major categories include a review of discrimination laws, wage and benefit law, leaves of absences, and work place compliance laws. Discussion will include discrimination based on protected characteristics, minimum wage, overtime pay, reasonable accommodations, leave policies, and equal pay for equal work, while also outlining employer compliance requirements and potential legal consequences for violations.

Happy New Year! - Employee Discipline in the Sprint to the End of the School Year

Process Management, Talent Development, Performance Management

Presented by Carlos Villegas, Partner, F3 Law, Oakland, CA

As your school year enters the pivotal spring semester, join us for a session on employee discipline in school districts, led by seasoned Fagen Friedman & Fulfroost, LLP, education attorneys. This presentation will equip new and experienced administrators with essential protocols and practical strategies for handling employee discipline in an effective and uniform manner. Attendees will gain insights into best practices, recent legal developments, and how to navigate complex situations while maintaining a fair and consistent approach.

How To Hire A Teacher

Strategy, Talent Development, Training & Development

Presented by Andrew Chavez, Director of Human Resources & Ruby Acuna, HR Coordinator, Tolleson Union High School District, Tolleson, AZ

Hiring the right teacher is essential for the success of any educational institution. A great teacher not only imparts knowledge but also inspires and motivates students to achieve their full potential. The hiring process involves several key steps: defining the requirements, creating a job posting, screening and shortlisting candidates, conducting interviews, checking references and backgrounds, making the final decision, and onboarding the new teacher. Each step is crucial to ensure that the best candidate is selected. The impact of hiring the right teacher is profound, as they play a significant role in shaping the future of their students and the institution.

Attendees will:

- Learn about the systematic approach to hiring the best teacher, ensuring a thorough and effective process.
- Receive practical advice on crafting job descriptions, conducting interviews, and assessing candidates.
- Understand the importance of reference checks and background verification to ensure the credibility and reliability of candidates.
- Discover effective onboarding and integration strategies to support new teachers and help them succeed.
- Recognize the significant impact of hiring the right teacher on the success of students and the institution.

Attending this presentation will equip you with the knowledge and tools needed to hire exceptional teachers who can make a lasting positive impact on your educational institution.

HR 101: Roles, Responsibilities and Impact

Strategy, Talent Development, Training & Development

Presented by Cathie Abdel, Assistant Superintendent, Personnel, Fountain Valley School District, Fountain Valley, CA

Explore the essential functions and responsibilities of Human Resources and gain insights into how HR contributes to creating a positive work environment, ensures alignment with educational goals, and supports the success of both staff and students.

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Keynote: Train Your Brain For Success

Risk Management, Talent Development, Training & Development

Presented by Roger Seip, Keynote Speaker, Freedom Personal Development, Madison, WI

Your brain is the single biggest driver of your energy, your focus, and the results you get in every area of life. Your career, your finances, your physical health, your relationships- all of them are constantly created and influenced by your thinking. Unfortunately, your brain didn't come with an owner's manual ... until now. In Train Your Brain For Success, you will learn to harness the incredible creative capacity of your mind and achieve your personal best – professionally, financially and personally.

Through that process, we will cover:

- The ways in which your brain literally creates your experience — and your results. Every day, we're creating our lives with our mind — and it's enlightening to see how.
- Your brain's extremely UNhelpful “default settings” — We now know that all of us have brains that come “pre-programmed” with some really strong patterns that will actually hold you back — keep you stuck in place — if not understood and dealt with.
- How to overcome these default settings, and put you in charge of your brain and your results. The good news is that there are simple and effective strategies for making your brain work FOR you instead of AGAINST you.

So we'll wrap up our session by providing a game plan for ongoing improvement. Based on the best-selling book, *Train Your Brain For Success* is extremely interactive, incredibly eye-opening, and a lot of fun! Participants will definitely gain insights that will make them more effective immediately, and come away with a plan for making that improvement last.

Navigating Education Free Speech in Tense Political Climates: How School Districts Can Honor the Free Speech Rights of Students While Creating an Inclusive Environment

Risk Management, Talent Development, Training & Development

Presented by Stephen McLouglin, Partner, Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo, Cerritos, CA

Both California and Federal Law require schools to uphold and respect the free speech rights of students and staff. However, schools are also required to provide a safe environment for all students, free from harassment or speech that may harm student's ability to learn. This delicate balance is complicated by the current political environment where many people use free speech to challenge school district policies on a host of issues, including laws related to gender identity, parental rights, and religious expression. Neither California nor federal law provides clear guidelines to help schools establish this balance. Indeed, the hodgepodge of laws that potentially affect free speech rights in education established in both California and federal law make navigating free speech issues in education even more difficult.

This presentation summarizes how free speech rights play out in the education context. We will also discuss how school districts can address the conflicts that often arise between free speech and other legal requirements. This presentation will provide guidelines to enable school districts to both comply with applicable laws and create an educational environment where the rights of all students are upheld and protected.

Onboarding, Orientation & Anything HR

Experience Management, Talent Development, Orientation & Onboarding

Presented by Jake Bacon, Assistant Superintendent, Kelly Payan, Licensed HR Specialist & Adrian Rodarte, Classified HR Specialist, Hermiston School District, Hermiston, OR

The hiring season once was seasonal, and now, following COVID, is year-round. The Hermiston School District HR Team will review hiring from receiving the resignation or request for a new position to the onboarding process. Assistant Superintendent Jake Bacon and his team share their process and encourage you to share your experience in creating a session where we can learn from each other.

Retention

Strategy, Talent Acquisition, Recruitment

Presented by Andrew Chavez, Director of Human Resources, Tolleson Union High School District, Tolleson, AZ

Retention is vital for any successful organization. Retaining talented employees not only reduces turnover costs but also ensures high productivity and morale. Key factors influencing retention include creating a positive work environment, offering competitive compensation and benefits, providing growth and development opportunities, recognizing and rewarding employees, fostering strong

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leadership, and conducting exit interviews to analyze feedback. By focusing on these areas, organizations can develop effective retention strategies that lead to long-term success and stability.

Attendees will:

- Learn about the critical factors that influence employee retention and how to address them effectively.
- Receive actionable advice on creating a positive work environment, offering competitive compensation, and providing growth opportunities.
- Understand the importance of recognition and rewards, and how to implement effective programs.
- Discover how strong leadership and open communication can significantly impact employee satisfaction and retention.
- Learn how to use feedback from exit interviews to improve retention strategies and address underlying issues.

Attending this presentation will equip you with the knowledge and tools needed to retain top talent and ensure the long-term success of your organization.

The Family and Medical Leave Act: Legal Update and Best Practices in FMLA Administration

Risk Management, Talent Development, Performance Management

Presented by Scott Macdonald, Managing Director, Macdonald & Associates, Middletown, CT

This session reviews the latest legal landscape surrounding the Family and Medical Leave Act and provides attendees with useful, practical tips and tools to navigate and manage FMLA leaves, including how to handle excessive absenteeism, how to train administrators and supervisors about the do's and don'ts relating to FMLA and how to deal with complex FMLA issues.

Title IX Compliance

Risk Management, Talent Development, Training & Development

Presented by Anna Miller, Partner and Alexandria Davidson, Partner, Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo, Cerritos, CA

Title IX is the federal regulation that requires schools to protect against sex-based discrimination, including protections against sexual misconduct. In addition to the federal regulations related to Title IX, California law includes several laws that supplement and overlap the requirements established by Title IX. Collectively, these requirements require school districts to develop and implement a process to address sexual misconduct, that includes an intake process for reports of sexual misconduct, a grievance procedure to investigate reports, and a process to redress sexual misconduct.

Recent litigation, as well as the incoming new Presidential administration, has created changes in the Title IX regulations but have not yet affected California requirements. This presentation will summarize the current status of Title IX and provide practical guidance to help school districts ensure their current sexual misconduct process complies with current federal and California law.

Uncovering the Facts: Effective Investigation Practices for School District HR Teams

Risk Management, Talent Development, Performance Management

Presented by Diane Marshall-Freeman, Attorney & Nia Franklin, Attorney, F3 Law, Oakland, CA

Successful workplace investigations rely on clear processes, defensible documentation, and a methodical approach. This interactive session is designed to equip attendees with the tools to conduct thorough investigations, gather and assess evidence, and document findings effectively. Learn how to conduct workplace investigations that are objective, uphold fairness, and comply with school district policies.