

**February 17,
2026**

WI Leadership Center
4797 Hayes Road
Madison WI
(608) 241-0300



Aspiring Superintendent Workshop

**Connecting
Supporting
Developing**

**Tomorrow's
Superintendents**



Sponsored by:

The Association of Wisconsin School Administrators
The Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators



SCHEDULE

| | |
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| 7:30-8:00 | Registration and Coffee Service |
| 8:00-8:45 | Welcome/Envision Yourself in the Role Dr. Joe Schroeder, AWSA Associate Executive Director |
| 8:45-9:30 | The Wisconsin Landscape for Superintendents Dr. Jon Bales, WASDA Executive Director Dr. Bales will discuss the political, social, economic, practical and professional landscape for education professionals entering the superintendency. Participants will gain an understanding of the important aspects of the superintendent and things to think about when facing challenges inherent in the job. Jon will also discuss important considerations in the process of looking for the first superintendency and managing the transition into the role. |
| 9:30-10:15 | A Superintendent's Inbox Activity Dr. Joe Schroeder, AWSA Associate Executive Director Superintendents generally weigh out several factors to wisely respond to a host of issues that cross their desks. This segment will help you refine some of those considerations from the superintendent's perspective, as well as provide some opportunity to engage in a regular component of the selection process. |
| 10:15-10:30 | Break |
| 10:30-12:00 | Panel of Superintendents, Within Their First Few Years in the Role <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tonya Olson, Lake Mills SD District Administrator – Developing a Strategic Vision/Plan• Mark Holzman, Janesville SD Superintendent – Communications and Community Building• Dr. Heidi Eliopoulos – Managing a System• Followed with Q&A. |
| 12:00-12:45 | Lunch and Networking |
| 12:45-2:00 | Presentation/Q&A with Superintendent Search Firm Consultant Damian LaCroix, Incoming Executive Director, WASDA <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Superintendent Search Process: An Overview• Tips for the Applicant: Do's and Dont's• Determining Fit: What District is Right for Me?• General Q&A |
| 2:00-2:15 | Break |
| 2:15-2:45 | Entry Plans - Your First 100 Days |

Dr. Joe Schroeder, AWSA Associate Executive Director

The interview process is complete and the position is yours. Now what? This segment will review what to expect and how to approach the job during the critical first months of a superintendency.

2:45-3:00 Potential Next Steps/Check-in and Debrief

Dr. Joe Schroeder, AWSA Associate Executive Director

Before leaving for the day, we will synthesize essential concepts, highlight available resources, and assist you in identifying next steps in the process that are right for you.

3:00 Adjourn

Facilitators

Dr. Jon Bales
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Dr. Heidi Eliopoulos
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Mark Holzman
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Damian LaCroix
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Dr. Tonya Olson
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Dr. Joe Schroeder
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Aspiring Superintendent Resources

1. Go to the AWSA website: www.awsa.org
2. Click Professional Learning tab
3. Click Upcoming Events
4. Click Aspiring Superintendents Workshop
5. Scroll down to Resources

Questions:

Contact Joe Schroeder
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IS THIS FOR ME?

- Deciding the Profile of the School District to Consider
- The Right Stuff for Leadership Success
- Assessing and Presenting What You Have to Offer
- Creating a Professional Profile that Will Land You Your First Superintendency
- Do You Have a Ph.D or Ed.D?
- How to Know if You Are Ready
- Ten Reasons to Become a Superintendent
- Transferring Your Current Skill Set to the Superintendency

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

- Getting There From the Inside
- Six Types of Questions to Expect in the First Interview
- Good Interviewing is Relationship Building
- Eight Strategies that will Help You Determine the Financial Fitness of a School District
- Learning from Challenging Interviews
- Managing a "Blemish" on Your Record
- Rejection Does Not Have to Mean Dejection
- Ten of the Most Common Superintendent Interviewing Mistakes
- Ten Secrets for Preparing Yourself for a Great Interview
- Working Effectively with a Search Consultant

SCHOOL BOARDS

- Researching the School Board
- Negotiating Your First Contract
- Key Messages Board Members Want to Hear

STARTING OUT

- Three Things that Can "Bite You" in Your First Year
- Five Expectations to Clarify with Your New Board
- Coping Strategies to Keep You Sane
- Dealing with what Your Predecessor Leaves Behind
- Focus Your Team
- Making the Transition
- Selecting and Working with a Mentor
- Start By Building a Strong Relationship
- Taming the Political Animal
- Thinking Within the Role