



## 2026 Annual Conference Certification Classes

### Tuesday Morning, April 21, 2026 • 8:30 – 11:45 am

#### 190 | Performance Evaluations for Personnel

Learn how and when to evaluate employees, what documentation should be placed in the employee's file and what type of follow-up should be completed. Examine discipline, discharge, and the probationary employee terms. **Required: Chief Technology Officer, Facilities Director, Human Resource Specialist, and Operations Director** — Elective: all other tracks.

*Presenter(s): Kelly Powers, Muskegon Area ISD*

#### 191 | Effective Communications

Learn techniques and strategies to send clear messages, create credibility, and develop strategic communications programs that are effective for your school district. **Required: Business Office Manager, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Technology Officer, Child Nutrition Director, Facilities Director, Human Resource Specialist, Operations Director, Pupil Accounting Auditor, Pupil Accounting Specialist, School Purchasing Specialist, Specialist in Educational Data, and Transportation Director** — Elective: all other tracks.

*Presenter(s): Anita Banach, REMC*

#### 192 | How to Process and Evaluate Bids

Learn how sealed bids should be written and processed in order to minimize mistakes or bidder protests. Learn to write bid specifications, bid do's and don'ts, and to define a responsive and responsible bidder. **Required: School Purchasing Specialist** — Elective: all other tracks.

*Presenter(s): Dana L. Abrahams and Jeremy S. Motz, Clark Hill*

#### 193 | Food Service Program Accountability

Develop a comprehensive internal audit/evaluation system for reviewing all aspects of your food service program. Learn how to perform audits in all areas to ensure compliance of local, state, and federal regulations and guidelines, including policies and agreements that govern food service operations. **Required: Child Nutrition Director** — Elective: all other tracks.

*Presenter(s): Stacey Lamper-McFall, Emily Mattern, and Shanna Williams, MDE*

### Tuesday Afternoon, April 21, 2026 • 1:15 – 4:30 pm

#### 194 | Benefits/Retirement

Learn how to explain employee benefits, social security benefits and retirement to school district employees. Help administrators describe changes in health care costs and work with bargaining teams on total cost of compensation, as well as information on Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) benefits — when it must be offered and how it works. **Required: Human Resource Specialist** — Elective: all other tracks.

*Presenter(s): Leslie Cicalo, Mott Community College; Sara Rajter, Gallagher; and Sean Shearon, GLP Financial Group*

#### 195 | Bonding/Borrowing/Investing

Examine legal and practical issues relating to how school districts bond, borrow, and invest funds. Get an overview of cash flow analysis, arbitrage, and general borrowing and investing options. **Required: Chief Financial Officer** — Elective: all other tracks.

*Presenter(s): Michael Barry, MILAF+/PFM Asset Management, LLC; Christopher J. Iamarino, Thrun Law Firm, P.C.; Nate Watson, PFM Financial Advisors, LLC; and Jeffrey A. Zylstra, Stifel, Nicolaus & Company, Inc.*

## Tuesday Afternoon, April 21, 2026 • 1:15 – 4:30 pm (Continued)

### 196 | Data Quality II

The second in the Data Quality series focuses on data entry — getting things right at the source. The quality of data will improve when all staff understand how the data will be used and how data becomes information. Get information about coordinating data quality at the district level, identifying data flow and cycles, common data entry issues, the importance of communication, and the roles of various district staff in this process. **Required: Pupil Accounting Specialist and Specialist in Educational Data — Elective: all other tracks.**

*Presenter(s): Robert Dickinson, MPAAA*

### 197 | Principles of Education

Understand the educational process, culture of schools, major learning theories, teaching methodologies, school improvement, design of in-service programs, and the structure and function of the principalship. **Required: all tracks except Child Nutrition Director — Elective: Child Nutrition Director.**

*Presenter(s): Katherine Konon, L'Anse Creuse Public Schools and Karl D. Paulson, Lakeview Public Schools*

## Wednesday Morning, April 22, 2026 • 9:20 am – 12:20 pm

### A01 | Security/Disaster Recovery

An overview of security best practices at the network, server, and workstation levels will be discussed. The security practices covered can be applied to multiple types of network architectures including Windows, Linux, and others. Hear best practices on creating and implementing a disaster recovery plan. **Required: Chief Technology Officer — Elective: all other tracks.**

*Presenter(s): Christopher Gregory Nelson, Lenawee ISD*

### A02 | Human Resources for the Business Manager

Understand the basic concepts and major challenges today in the process of recruiting, onboarding, rewarding, and retaining your key staff members. Learn techniques and best practices you can apply to employment practices. Major employment laws and regulations such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), Equal Employment Opportunity Act (EEOA), Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) among others will be addressed. Learn the important skills to keep your school district in compliance. **Required: Chief Financial Officer — Elective: all other tracks.**

*Presenter(s): Mark Dobias, Todd Surline, and Riley Vlahakis, Hiring Solutions LLC*

## Thursday Morning, April 23, 2026 • 8:20 – 11:20 am

### D01 | Instructional Program Evaluation

Understand the components of instructional programs, learn how to develop procedures for evaluating and reporting cost-effectiveness, analyze economics, use evaluation data, and allocate resources to improve instructional programs.

**Required: Chief Financial Officer — Elective: all other tracks.**

*Presenter(s): Thomas S. Wall, Dearborn Public Schools and Gary A. Wood, Michigan ASCD*

### D02 | Utilities and Energy Efficiency

Understand gas and electric utilities services and how deregulation is impacting those services in school districts. Learn about energy conservation and options on financing district upgrades. **Required: Facilities Director — Elective: all other tracks.**

*Presenter(s): Andrew Hascher, Performance Services*