



National Association of  
State Boards of Education

## NASBE Annual Conference 2024: Call for Session Proposals

The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) is seeking conference session proposals to share and highlight the exemplary work by state boards on critical education issues at its Annual Conference, October 23-25, 2024, in Louisville, Kentucky.

A nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, NASBE elevates state board members' voices in national and state policymaking, facilitates the exchange of informed ideas, and supports members in advancing equity and excellence in public education for students of all races, genders, and circumstances. NASBE's mission, values, and theory of change reflect our steadfast commitment to empowering members with the services and tools they need to create the conditions for all students in their states to achieve excellence across multiple domains.

### What is the NASBE Annual Conference?

NASBE's Annual Conference empowers state board members to leverage their role as leaders for equity and excellence. Attended by state board members from across the nation, along with leading education experts, the NASBE Annual Conference is the only conference designed specifically *for* state board members. It typically draws about 150–200 attendees.

Annual Conference attendees will have the opportunity to

- learn from renowned subject-matter experts and reflect on how the information shared can help state boards lead during this pivotal time in public education,
- analyze research, evidence, and policy solutions that the state board can bring to bear on pressing challenges facing public education,
- gain insight into how state boards can leverage their role in the education ecosystem to lead for equity and excellence, and
- build relationships with peers in other states with whom they can share approaches for renewal and recovery of state education systems.

This year, the Annual Conference will be held *in-person only* in Louisville, Kentucky. Conference sessions will mostly be held during the day on Thursday, October 24 and Friday, October 25, 2024. NASBE's Annual Business meeting occurs on the late afternoon of October 25, 2024. Details about the conference (as they come) can be found here: <https://www.nasbe.org/event/annual-conference-2024/>.

## Who Attends the NASBE Annual Conference?

The audience will mostly consist of state board members. Other stakeholders who attend NASBE conferences include state education agency staff, advocates, researchers, policy experts, press, nonprofit representatives, and NASBE funders. The NASBE conference is a tremendous opportunity to connect with state education leaders, leading education experts, and practitioners sharing perspectives from the field.

State boards vary and have diverse policy authority. Some are [created](#) by the state constitution and others by statute. Some of their members are elected; some are appointed. In many states, the state board selects the state education chief. While each state board has a unique context of state governance and authority, the vast majority have influence or direct policy authority over statewide learning standards, graduation requirements, accountability and assessment programs, and teacher preparation standards and educator preparation program accreditation, as well as adopting a strategic plan and guiding mission for the state's education efforts. Board members are keenly interested in the "why" and "how" behind policy change. As such, board members appreciate state or district examples and process points.

## What Makes a Successful Conference Session?

NASBE conference evaluations consistently rate interactive, engaging sessions on a relevant topic or problem of practice the highest. Sessions that include policymakers, in particular state board members alongside researchers and practitioners, also receive consistently high ratings. Audience members appreciate learning from diverse perspectives on a topic, with lively debate among panelists that highlight both areas of common ground and areas of divergence. State board members favor sessions that focus not only on the "what" of a policy issue but also the "how" of implementing change. Sessions that are led by state board members and/or include state board members on a panel are consistently referenced during state board meetings and presentations that follow the NASBE Annual Conference.

## What Types of Sessions Are Offered at the Conference?

The NASBE Annual Conference aims to provide a variety of session formats to allow members to craft a conference experience that best aligns to their unique learning needs.

- **General sessions** offer an opportunity to address the full conference audience and typically follow the format of either a panel discussion or single keynote speaker. General session formats can include traditional length sessions (60–75 minutes), which are highly competitive for acceptance, or shorter "lightning round" sessions designed to rapidly build awareness and foundational knowledge of board members on specific topics (15–30 minutes). Lightning round general sessions may kick off lunch conversations; or occur immediately before networking breaks to promote subsequent peer-to-peer discussions.

- **Concurrent sessions** are an opportunity to interact directly with state board members in a small group setting. These sessions may be led by a single presenter, feature a panel discussion, and often highlight current research or explore problems of practice in states. Audience engagement is a critical component of these smaller sessions (50–75 minutes).
- **Workshop sessions** are longer sessions (90 minutes) that focus on interactive skill building or take a deeper dive into a topic. These sessions may coincide with, cross over, or extend beyond concurrent session blocks.
- **Exhibit Table at Showcase Event:** During the conference, NASBE will host a 75-minute showcase event where attendees can tour exhibits and visual presentations from state board members and partners. This format is designed to support informal networking and elevate the exemplary work of NASBE members in a more informal setting that supports peer learning and discussion. Presenters should be prepared to briefly summarize their work, with visual descriptions, handouts and/or QR codes for attendees to gather additional information. Each accepted submission will have an individual table set up for the showcase event.
- **Roundtable Discussions:** Exemplary facilitators are encouraged to submit proposals to lead a topical roundtable discussion. Topical roundtables will run concurrently during a 75-minute block during the conference. Proposals should identify the discussion topic and allocate the majority of the session time to encouraging audience engagement and facilitating peer-to-peer conversation. These sessions are designed to support state board members in sharing successful strategies, board initiatives, and lessons learned around key issues.

## What Topics Are State Boards Eager to Learn About?

Each year, NASBE surveys state board members to identify the most pressing issues on state board agendas. These survey results help frame the Annual Conference agenda. Proposals should align with at least one of the following nine conference strands, which reflect broad state board priorities. Under each strand, illustrative topics prioritized by board members are listed for additional context. NASBE encourages the submission of proposals that address cross-cutting issues from multiple strands and topics. Proposals that do not address any of the nine conference strands will not be considered.

1. ***Metrics and Measures for Continuous School Improvement***
  - Defining, Measuring, and Reporting School Success
  - Rethinking and Redesigning Accountability Systems
  - Actionable, Relevant School Report Cards
2. ***Recruiting and Retaining High Quality Educators***
  - Elevating the Teaching Profession
  - Educator and Leader Preparation
  - Standards, Licensure, and Certification
3. ***Education Governance and Board Operations***

- Working with Governors, State Superintendents, and Legislators
  - Evidence-Based Policymaking
  - Strategic Planning
  - Engaging student, parent, and teacher voices on state boards
- 4. Mathematics Education**
- Better Understanding State Policy Actions that Advance Improvement in Math Instruction and Outcomes.
  - Math Interventions That Address Social, Attitudinal, and Motivational factors
- 5. High School Design for College and Career Success**
- Career and Technical Education and Work-based Learning Opportunities
  - Competency-based Education Approaches
  - Graduation Requirements and Graduate Profiles
- 6. Early Childhood and Elementary Education**
- Early Literacy
  - Supporting ECE Educators and Leaders
  - Meeting Multilingual Learners' Needs in ECE Settings
  - High-Quality Prekindergarten
- 7. Education Technology and Artificial Intelligence**
- Encouraging Collaboration among Stakeholders to Establish Best Practices.
- 8. Student Wellness**
- Addressing Chronic Absenteeism
  - Community Schools and Family Engagement
- 9. Curriculum and Instructional Materials**
- Strategies to Support Adoption of High-Quality Curriculum Materials.

Examples of cross-cutting session proposals might include expanding career and technical education programs to engage students and reduce absenteeism, leveraging AI resources in mathematics education, or assessments that support competency-based approaches.

### **What Are Proposer and Presenter Responsibilities?**

Proposers of an accepted session are required to register all individuals who are delivering the proposal for the NASBE Annual Conference. The cost associated with attending the conference, including registration, travel, lodging, and meals is the responsibility of the proposer for any and all session presenters. (Non-Member registration costs are as follows: Full Conference Early Bird: \$1,250; Regular: \$1,500; One-Day: \$650.) Presenters are not provided with honoraria. For special circumstances, NASBE may, at its sole discretion, waive or reduce registration fees for a presenter if the cost of attending creates a hardship for the proposer.

Presenters are expected to provide presentation materials in digital form, handouts, and/or follow-up materials for participants before, during, or after the event. If a session proposal is accepted, NASBE staff may edit session titles and descriptions for clarity. Proposers and

presenters will also work with an assigned NASBE staff member before the conference to refine the session and ensure its success.

## When Are Proposals Due?

NASBE welcomes session proposals from those interested in equipping state boards of education with the knowledge, skills, and strategies to lead for equity and excellence in public education. **Proposals must be submitted to [communications@nasbe.org](mailto:communications@nasbe.org) by June 21, 2024.** Proposers will be notified by August 16, 2024, if a presentation proposal is selected.

## How are Proposals Selected?

**The proposal selection process is highly competitive. Less than 35% of submitted proposals are selected for presentation.** NASBE selects only a limited number of proposals reflecting a mix of topics and formats. (Exemplary proposals have in the past become candidates for subsequent NASBE webinars or “office hour” events.) For 2024, there are approximately 15 to 20 available slots on the conference agenda. NASBE’s Conference Planning Committee and staff evaluate proposals based on following criteria:

- (1) relevance to priority strands that also feature the actual work of state boards of education;
- (2) qualifications of presenters and panelists;
- (3) collaboration among organizations to provide diverse perspectives across the practice, research, and policy, continuum; and
- (4) extent to which a session is designed to engage state board members and other audience participants in discussion.

NASBE values the Annual Conference’s role in facilitating productive exchange of diverse perspectives that can create lasting channels for sharing evidence-based strategies and solutions. Submitters are encouraged to collaborate with their partners and state leaders to develop proposals that include diverse presenters and leverage a range of policy, practice, and research expertise. Given the limited number of agenda slots, accepted sessions featuring a presenter or group of presenters from a single organization will be limited to **one per organization**. Find last year’s agenda and sessions [here](#).

## Want to Learn More?

**NASBE will host an informal Q&A with prospective submitters on Friday June 7, 2024, at 1 pm ET.** After a brief presentation on the call for proposals, we will answer questions, provide feedback on session ideas, and connect prospective submitters working on similar proposals. Register [here](#) to join the event.