THURSDAY, AUGUST 26, 2021
New Trustee Orientation
MARY MENACHO, ISACS
New trustees are eager to add value to their school and to their trusteeship. Both board leadership and new trustees have important roles to play in this process. This session explores how new trustees can be well prepared for full and meaningful engagement in the work of their schools’ board.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2021
Effective Structures, Processes & Practices for Board Success
LYNN WENDELL, INDEPENDENT SCHOOL GOVERNANCE EXPERT
You understand the important governance role the board plays in providing effective school leadership, but do your existing board structures, processes, and practices support your work as well as they could? We will discuss how boards can be sure that they are set-up for success. Topics will include: setting annual board and committee goals, the important roles of board committees and committee chairs, the role of the board’s executive committee, the annual board calendar, and more. Bring your questions.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 2022
Critical Perspectives on Institutional Sustainability
JOHN GULLA, EE FORD FOUNDATION & WILLIAM KUMMEL, RATIONAL PARTNERS
What actions can you take in the next five years to ensure your school’s sustainability? Gulla will: examine the culture and indicia of sustainable and unsustainable schools; demonstrate how using depth, data, and honesty can create a reasonable expectation for long-term economic sustainability; and explore how heads and boards can operate as long-term owners of their institutions. Kummel will provide an integrated quantitative model to assess and manage institutional strategy and economics and examine 10 vital signs of an independent school’s health and how these offer insight and opportunities for change along with strategies to improve long-term economic sustainability. Opportunities for Q&A and financial sustainability analytics for 900 independent schools, including 100 ISACS members will be provided. A head/trustee panel will share challenges and opportunities in crafting a sustainable economic model for their schools — and all schools. This webinar will be 2 hours, 3:00 - 5:00 pm central/4:00 - 6:00 pm eastern.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2022
What’s Ahead: Trends & Data for Your Board
DONNA OREM, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS (NAIS)
What is the national landscape for independent schools? Orem will examine national trends and data to support your board’s strategic thinking for short and longer terms.

THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 2022
NAIS Legal Updates for Boards
MEGAN MANN, NAIS
National Association of Independent Schools’ Legal Counsel Megan Mann will cover the latest trends and issues facing independent schools across the nation.

THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 2022
Unlocking the Promise of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: The Role of the Board
VALAIDA WISE, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY
Many independent schools across the country have placed a renewed focus on the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in light of a global pandemic, political crisis, racial upheaval, and climate change. The success of any DEI plan requires the thoughtful and purposeful engagement of the board, who is uniquely positioned to advance DEI efforts. This webinar will examine the critical function of trustees in the successful implementation of DEI work and answer questions such as: how to start the work: what the board should know about the school’s DEI efforts; how the board launches a DEI Committee (and should it?); the relationship between the board and the DEI director; and how boards can ward off fatigue. Leave with strategies to implement immediately that will positively alter the trajectory of all students, particularly those from marginalized groups.

THURSDAY, MAY 19, 2022
Leadership Succession Planning in a Time of Uncertainty
ROBERT FRICKER, CARNEY, SANDOE & ASSOCIATES
Although the importance of the leadership provided by the board and the head has never been more critical, few schools give succession planning the systematic time and attention that is commonly accorded to a school’s facilities or finances. This webinar will provide board members with a review of the environment, why succession planning is so essential, and practical approaches to help with succession planning.

THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 2022
The Essential Partnership: Board Chair & Head of School
LYNN WENDELL, INDEPENDENT SCHOOL GOVERNANCE EXPERT
We hear it again and again: The relationship between the head of school and the board chair is critical for school success. This session will take a closer look at this relationship and ways to build and strengthen it. Establishing mutual trust is a fundamental first step. We also will examine some real-world examples of times when chairs and heads did NOT agree, and how those situations were resolved. This webinar is designed for heads and chairs (incoming and current) and we hope both partners will be able to attend. If not, please come anyway: the information will be available to you after the session. The recording of this webinar will be available until August 31, 2022.
DONNA OREM was named president of NAIS in November 2016 after serving as interim president since November 2015. Before becoming NAIS president, Orem served as the NAIS Chief Operating Officer for 11 years. She joined NAIS as the vice president for educational leadership, later becoming the vice president for strategic initiatives and association director. A certified leadership coach, Orem holds an MA from Santa Clara University and a BA from University of Oregon. She has served independent school boards as trustee and board chair and speaks and writes on leadership and best practices in independent schools.

LYNN WENDELL has worked as a consultant at more than 70 independent schools and non-profits. She served as a trustee at three independent schools and as board chair at San Francisco University High School (CA). In addition, she has served on non-profit boards, board committees, and advisory councils.

ANNE-MARIE BALZANO, EdD is Mission and Data’s Senior Governance Strategist, where she designs learning opportunities for heads of school and boards and leads Mission and Data’s Board Chair Support Program. A former teacher, head of school, associate professor, and most recently, director of leadership and governance at the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), she possesses a unique and multi-leveled perspective of the educational landscape and the demands of supporting leadership and governance development. She facilitates board retreats and educates trustees on effective governance practices and trends, supports resilience in heads of school, and builds a positive board culture. Balzano also is the chief editor of The Board Chair Handbook and the host of NAIS’s governance podcast, The Trustee Table.

JOHN GULLA is in his ninth year as executive director of the EE Ford Foundation. Over the course of 60 years, the Foundation made 2,200+ grants to more than 900 schools totaling over $125 million. In his tenure at EEFord, Gulla reviewed the finances of over 400 independent schools. A former head of The Blake School (MN), he previously held administrative positions at Riverdale Country School (NY), Isidore Newman (LA), and Saint Ann’s (NY).

WILLIAM KUMMEL is a principal of Rational Partners, a New York-based management consultant in institutional economics to independent schools. The work measures and evaluates institutional market position, comparative advantage, and financial sustainability. Rational Partners maintains a proprietary dataset of institutional sustainability on 900+ independent schools, which includes more than 100 ISACS members.

MARY MENACHO was appointed ISACS executive director in 2020 and has served independent schools for over 40 years as teacher, middle school director, academic dean, head of school, and association director. A certified leadership coach, Menacho holds an MA from Santa Clara University and a BA from University of Oregon. She has served independent school boards as trustee and board chair and speaks and writes on leadership and best practices in independent schools.

MEGAN MANN is legal counsel and a vice-president at NAIS. In her role, Mann supports the organization’s legal and risk management needs; engages in advocacy efforts on behalf of NAIS schools; and provides legal education and support to member schools. Prior to joining NAIS, Mann was an employment and independent school attorney, acting as general counsel to independent schools across the country. She is a trustee for St. Michael’s Episcopal School (VA) and One Schoolhouse.

VALAIDA L. WISE, EdD is president and principal consultant of her firm, Dr. Valaida Wise Consulting, LLC. The firm supports schools and other organizations in areas of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), governance, and leadership. She also is a faculty member in the Graduate School of Education at Johns Hopkins University where she teaches about DEI and issues of social justice. An educator for more than 25 years, Wise has served as the head of school of several independent schools in the Washington DC region. She is the chair of the board at Creative Minds International Public Charter School (DC), chair of the board at McLean School (MD), and serves on the boards of several professional organizations.

LUCINDA LEE KATZ, PhD is a board governance consultant and executive coach. In 2018, she concluded a 14-year tenure as the head of school of Marin Country Day School (CA). Prior to MCD, she worked with Mayor Daley in Chicago as the chief education officer and served as head of school and principal at The University of Chicago Laboratory Schools (IL) from 1986 to 2002. Katz served on the NAIS Editorial Board, vice chair of NAIS, past president for the California Association of Independent Schools (CAIS), board chair for ISACS, and also served on three private school boards in CA. She has been a keynote and panelist speaker and has made guest appearances on Oprah.

IRVENIA WATERS, MBA is an executive coach, team performance coach, and consultant. She brings to her work nearly three decades of experience in management consulting, strategy planning and execution, leadership development, and group facilitation. She has worked with dozens of independent schools and nonprofits, and has been a leader on independent school and nonprofit boards.

ROBERT FRICKER is the practice leader for Carney Sandoe & Associates’ Domestic Head of School Practice. During his 15 years as a consultant, Fricker has worked on more than 120 head of school searches with schools ranging in size from 70 to over 1,500 students. Previously, Fricker served as a head of school, senior administrator, and teacher as well as the chief development officer for a boarding school, a K-12 day school, a research university, and an art college. He has chaired the boards of the Middlesex County Coalition Against Racism and the Center for Responsive Schools. Fricker also served on the boards of two independent schools and is a board member at Beijing City International School.