



*collaboratively present:*

# Districts in Distress: Preparing for the Worst

**Lansing Center, Lansing • Aug. 14, 2009 • 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

## **Agenda • Friday, Aug. 14**

- 8 – 9 a.m. Registration/Continental Breakfast**
- 9 – 9:10 a.m. Welcome/Opening Remarks/Updates**  
William Mayes, executive director  
Michigan Association of School Administrators
- 9:10 – 9:30 a.m. General Session**  
**Economic Update**  
David Martell, executive director  
Michigan School Business Officials
- 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. General Session**  
**Crisis Communications**  
John Gierack, attorney  
Clark Hill PLC  
  
Dr. Curt Bechler, associate professor  
Aquinas College and partner  
Venture International LLC
- 10:30 – 10:45 a.m. Break**
- 11 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Clinic Sessions**
- 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. Lunch**
- 1:45 – 2:45 p.m. General Session**  
**What We Learned When  
Things Went Wrong**  
Greg Baracy, superintendent  
Wayne-Westland Community Schools
- 3 – 4 p.m. Panel Discussion**  
**Tell Us Like It Is, The Media is the Story**  
Moderator: Tim Skubick, anchor and producer  
*Off the Record*
- 4 p.m. Wrap Up Session/Adjournment**  
Kathy Hayes, executive director  
Michigan Association of School Boards

**Learn from experts**

**Share results with other districts**

**Experienced board member**

**or novice, everyone welcome**



**Register online at [www.masb.org](http://www.masb.org)**

**Cost: \$95 per person.**

**Thank you to our sponsor MILAF+/PFM.**

# Friday, Aug. 14

## General Sessions

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9:10 – 9:30 a.m.

### Economic Update

David Martell, executive director, Michigan School Business Officials

It may not be good news, but you will get the latest information on the economic situation facing Michigan with a focus on state revenues and school aid and the results of an MSBO survey on how districts are responding to this challenging economic situation.

9:30 – 10:30 a.m.

### Crisis Communications

John Gierack, attorney, Clark Hill PLC and Dr. Curt Bechler, associate professor, Aquinas College and partner, Venture International LLC

When resources are tight, effective communication to parents, staff and union leaders is essential. If a union or other special interest group begin to attack during labor negotiations, you need to be prepared to explain complex financial information quickly in a simple, understandable way. The speakers will explain how to communicate proactively and effectively before, during and after negotiations. The presenters will also highlight how to use social media (i.e. the Internet) productively.

## Clinic Sessions

11 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

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### Dealing with Deficits

This session will cover the legal and practical implications of managing a deficit budget. You'll hear about the legal implications from experienced attorneys who will walk you through the legal process for declaring a deficit budget, up to and including the appointment of a financial manager. You'll get practical issues from a consultant/former business manager who has helped create and implement "turn around plans" for several districts and the MDE staff person responsible for working with deficit districts.

Presenters: Beverly Bonning, attorney, Thrun Law Firm, PC, Brad Banasik, legal counsel, Michigan Association of School Boards, Mike Dixon, president, Dixon Consulting LLC and Dan Hanrahan, director, State Aide Financial Office, Michigan Department of Education

### Impasse and Beyond

More districts than ever are looking at opening school without a contract. This session is taught by seasoned negotiators who've been there, done that! A portion of the session will be devoted to fact finding — explaining the process and how to develop exhibits. The second portion will cover impasses, how to know when you've reached one, and what to do next opening school and operating without a contract and unfair labor practices from both the management and union perspective.

Presenters: Kevin Harty, attorney, Thrun Law Firm, PC and Peter Silveri, consultant, Michigan Association of School Boards

1:45 – 2:45 p.m.

### What We Learned When Things Went Wrong

Greg Baracy, superintendent, Wayne-Westland Community Schools

Hear this compelling story of one district's experiences during an illegal strike. Find out what tactics were used and how the district responded. This should be a real eye-opener for all. Gain an understanding of what happened in order to avoid or defend against this occurring in your district.

3 – 4 p.m.

### Tell Us Like It Is, The Media is the Story Panel Discussion

Moderator: Tim Skubick, anchor and producer, Off the Record

Tim Skubick will lead and participate in this panel of reporters and media experts. They will talk about how labor issues are covered by the media and offer their advice on how school districts can be more effective working with the media and their communities. Get your chance to hear from veteran reporters, ask questions and share your point of view!

### Managing Conflict: When You're Against the Wall

The best defense is knowledge. And the best way to avoid labor disputes is to understand them. Most contracts are settled without a major dispute, but you need to understand what can happen and how to deal with these difficult situations. This session will prepare you for what you hope doesn't happen in your district. But if it does, it's vital that board members and administrators have an understanding of union tactics and how to prevent or counter them. Ms. Ruga is an attorney who has helped a number of school districts successfully navigate labor disputes. She will bring real life examples, legal perspectives and practical suggestions.

Presenter: Barbara A. Ruga, attorney, Clark Hill PLC

### Labor Relations Basics for New Board Members

If you are a new board member or administrator and you haven't had much experience with labor negotiations in schools, this session is for you. The session will cover basic bargaining concepts and processes including: the Public Employment Relations Act (PERA), explaining the "duty to bargain," communications before, during and after bargaining, definitions of terms, board and administrator roles and responsibilities and more.

Presenters: Dave Hershey and Tom White, consultants, Labor Relations, Michigan Association of School Boards



Register online at  
[www.masb.org](http://www.masb.org)



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**Cost: \$95 per person**  
**CEUs available**

Aug. 14, 2009 • 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
Lansing Center • Lansing, MI

## Registration

Board Member Name

Board Member Name

Board Member Name

Board Member Name

Superintendent

School District

Contact Name

Address

E-mail

Phone

Fax

<b>Online</b> 	<b>FAX</b> 	<b>Mail</b> 	<b>Questions?</b>
Visit our Web site at <a href="http://www.masb.org">www.masb.org</a>	Fax registration form to Cheryl Huffman at 517.327.0789	Mail registration form and payment to: MASB Business Office 1001 Centennial Way, Ste. 400 Lansing, MI 48917-8249	Registration questions contact Cheryl Huffman at 517.327.5915 or 1.800.968.4627, ext. 236
<b>Payment Information</b>			
Payment is appreciated at time of registration. A \$25 service fee will be added to any balance due after Aug. 14, 2009. NO REFUNDS after Aug. 7, 2009.			
<b>Credit Card</b>	<b>Invoice</b>	<b>Check</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VISA    • MASTERCARD    Exp. Date _____</li> <li>Account Number _____</li> <li>Signature _____</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invoice school district (A \$25 billing fee will be applied.)</li> <li>Attn: _____</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check enclosed made payable to MASB Check# _____</li> <li>• Check to follow—Registration faxed in advance</li> </ul>	

**Please register by Aug. 7, 2009**