

ICCTA

Illinois Community College Trustees Association

QUICK SURVEY RESULTS

Board Retreats

September 21, 2023

A total of 24 colleges/districts responded to ICCTA's Quick Survey on BOARD RETREATS.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ❖ 42% of responding colleges hold board retreats annually, while 12.5% hold retreats three or more times a year.
- ❖ The president participates in board retreats at nearly every college.
- ❖ Other retreat participants include the president's executive assistant, the board attorney, and top administrators.
- ❖ More than 70% of board retreats take place on campus.
- ❖ A majority of board retreats are facilitated by an outside consultant (most often ICCTA staff).

1. Does your college a board retreat? If YES, how often?

Once a year -- 10

- Elgin: Once a year for two days
- Heartland
- Illinois Valley
- Kankakee
- Kishwaukee
- Lake County
- Oakton
- Parkland
- South Suburban: Moving to annual retreat model
- Triton

Once to twice a year -- 3

- DuPage: At least once a year, sometimes more often
- Kaskaskia: Always at least once but some years we may have two
- Rock Valley

Twice a year -- 5

- Joliet, Lewis and Clark, Morton, Richland, Spoon River

Three times a year - 1

- Harper: Three times per year that are regularly scheduled

Quarterly -- 2

- Danville, Highland

Biennially -- 2

- Logan, Sauk Valley

Other -- 1

- Waubonsee: Waubonsee has not been holding board retreats on a regular basis. There was a board retreat that was held in two parts, in April and May of 2022 (the second date was a continuation of one of the topics, and discussed in greater detail); however, I don't recall any other board retreats prior to that date.

2. If YES to Question #1, who attends?

President -- 6

- Danville, Heartland, Kishwaukee, Morton, Oakton, South Suburban

Board attorney -- 1

- Triton

President / Executive assistant to the president -- 1

- Parkland

President / Board attorney -- 1

- Lake County

President / Executive assistant to the president / Board attorney -- 4

- DuPage, Illinois Valley, Joliet, Logan

President / Executive assistant to the president / Board attorney / Others -- 11

- Elgin: President, Sr. Exec Assist and Exec Assist from president's office. We have also had staff members attend to assist with specific procedures and /or departments
- Harper: President and Executive Cabinet (others based on discussion topics)
- Highland: President, Executive Assistant to the President/Board Secretary, and VPs
- Kankakee: President / Executive assistant / Board attorney and the President's Cabinet
- Kaskaskia: President, Board and Student Trustee and VP's when appropriate
- Lewis and Clark: President, Secretary to the Board, often ICCTA Exec Dir
- Richland: Cabinet
- Rock Valley: President, assistant to the president, board attorney, cabinet
- Sauk Valley: President's Cabinet + external guests, if needed as topic resource
- Spoon River: President; Assistant to the President; and President's Cabinet members
- Waubonsee: The Board of Trustees, President, and Facilitator attended our board retreat.

3. If YES to Question #1, where is it held?

On campus -- 17

- DuPage, Elgin, Harper, Heartland, Highland, Illinois Valley, Kankakee, Kishwaukee, Lewis and Clark, Oakton, Richland, Rock Valley, Sauk Valley, South Suburban, Spoon River, Triton, Waubonsee

Off campus -- 1

- Lake County: Generally an off-site location; local university space

On and off campus -- 6

- Danville, Joliet, Kaskaskia, Logan, Morton, Parkland

4. If YES to Question #1, what topics are discussed?

- Danville: One focuses on finances, another features boardsmanship with a facilitator, a third one involves strategic planning, and the fourth annual retreat is dedicated to evaluating the president as well as the trustees evaluating their performance collectively as a board.
- DuPage: Board governance, updates on College initiatives that are too long to be done at a regular board meeting
- Elgin: Varies each year, depending on newly elected trustees; specific events such as accreditation and strategic plan preparation
- Harper: January - considered the Financial Workshop to begin discussions about tuition for the following year
March - a topic related to the Strategic Plan; we have been focusing on discussions about closing achievement gaps and the student experience
July - review of the final budget status for the previous fiscal year, risk management initiatives, technology, facility needs, Board and President's goals for the following year (topics vary based on current initiatives)
- Heartland: Strategic Planning, Goals, End Statements
- Highland: A wide variety of topics depending on upcoming items that will be before the board for action in the future that are not of a routine nature We also have a division report from one of our deans during each retreat and administrative updates from the VPs on items such as the budget, new legislation affecting community colleges, etc.
- Illinois Valley: This past one was my first--but I am seeing this as more of a conversation-based model, not action items. For the first one, we talked about the relationship between the Board and the President, I gave my VP's the chance to present, and had more of a conversation.
- Joliet: Board Development
- Kankakee: Strategic planning and annual review of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
- Kaskaskia: Year in review, strategic plan updates, ancillary plan updates, any restructure if necessary, and SWOT analysis
- Lake County: Board Governing Principles, Board efficiency and effectiveness, alignment and becoming a high performing board, issue discussion, president/board relations, role of president and role of board, policy governance
- Lewis and Clark: Budget planning; Preview of Strategic Plan; Board Survey; Board Governance, Goals, and Expectations; Board Advocacy
- Logan: We use ICCTA to guide the topics
- Morton: Institutional goals/strategic planning/board evaluation
- Oakton: Strategic priorities for the College; Board self assessment
- Parkland: Strengths, weaknesses, things to start, stop, and continue, goals, health of the board.
- Richland: Strategic Planning, Budgets, Community Events
- Rock Valley: Varies
- Sauk Valley: A bunch
- South Suburban: Board Responsibilities, ICCTA updates, HLC and specialized accreditation updates, capital improvement updates, other topics recommended by the Board to name a few topics.

- Spoon River: Standard topics for Board Retreats include updates from President's Cabinet members on: Facilities and Operations; Organizational Updates; Academics; Student Services; Finance; Board Policy review; and State law changes. Additional topics are addressed based on input from the Trustees when establishing and building the agenda for the Retreat.
- Triton: Board Self-Evaluation, current topics
- Waubonsee: Board Self-Evaluation; Presidential Transition/Presidential Search

5. If YES to Question #1, who facilitates?

In-house facilitator -- 11

- Harper: Joint facilitation between the Board Chair and President
- Highland: Board Chair
- Illinois Valley: President
- Kankakee: The President
- Kaskaskia: President and Board jointly - led by President
- Richland: The President
- Rock Valley: President and the Cabinet
- Sauk Valley: Board chair
- South Suburban: President and Chairman of Board co-facilitates
- Spoon River: The Board Chair and President co-facilitate the Board Retreat.
- Triton: Chairman and President

Outside facilitator -- 13

- Danville: The board brings in a facilitator for the "boardsmanship" retreat. This year's facilitator will be Jim Reed.
- DuPage: Board Chair, ICCTA rep, outside consultant, College staff, President. It depends on the topic
- Elgin: Our board has used the same facilitator for several years; member of ICCTA
- Heartland: ICCTA (Jim Reed)
- Joliet: Outside facilitator
- Kishwaukee: ICCTA Executive Director
- Lake County: ACCT or ICCTA facilitator
- Lewis and Clark: President and ICCTA Exec Director
- Logan: ICCTA
- Morton: ICCTA has for previous retreats
- Oakton: ICCTA has facilitated most of the Board Retreats
- Parkland: We've always used a facilitator, most recently Jim Reed.
- Waubonsee: Jim Reed facilitated our board retreat last year.

Additional comments:

- Danville: The four retreats typically correspond with the seasons, like Vivaldi -- finance in winter, boardsmanship in the fall, president/board evaluations in the spring, and strategic planning usually (but not always) in the summer.
- Harper: We refer to these sessions as workshops rather than retreats.
- Kaskaskia: In my experience, they have been an invaluable way to share information and to educate new BOT members on the processes of the College, as well as an opportunity to network outside of a regularly scheduled BOT meeting.
- Waubonsee: Our board retreat was held a couple hours before the start of a regular board meeting, during an executive session.

For more information, please contact:

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