

# Illinois SCHOOL BOARD Newsbulletin

January 2008 / Issue No. 669

## Twenty-nine districts to hold February finance referendums

A total of 29 school districts have placed school finance referendum questions on the Feb. 5 primary election ballot, including 12 tax increase propositions and 17 building bond issues.

Placing tax increase proposals before voters are: **Ashton-Franklin Center CUSD 275**; **Cass District 63**, Darien; **Community Consolidated School District 180**, Burr Ridge; **Cook County SD 104**, Summit; **Elementary School District 159**, Matteson; **Germantown District 60**; **Marengo-Union Elementary CSD 165**; **Normal CUSD 5**; **Quincy District 172**; **Ridgeland District 122**, Oak Lawn; **Ridgewood Community High School District 234**, Norridge; and **Schiller Park SD 81**. All appear to be education fund increases, although details are not yet available in some cases.

The 17 building bond issues on the ballot include two propositions in **Mundelein Elementary District 75**: one to air condition all the school buildings in the district, and one to repair buildings. Other bond issues

for February are: **Chaney-Monge SD 88**, Crest Hill; **DeKalb CUSD 428**; **Glen Ellyn CCSD 89**; **Granite City CUSD 9**; **Grant Community High School District 124**, Fox Lake; **Homer CCSD 33C**, Homer Glen; **Kaneland CUSD 302**, Maple Park; **Lockport Township High School District 205**; **Minooka CCSD 201**; **Naperville CUSD 203**; **Normal CUSD 5**; **Peotone CUSD 207 U**; **Rochester CUSD 3A**; **Rock Island SD 41**; and **Wheaton CUSD 200**.

In addition to the referendum questions on the primary election ballot, a school board election for one board member, Martha Ross, the board's vice president, is to be decided in **Peoria SD 150** under Article 33 of the Illinois School Code.

Only Peoria SD 150 is currently covered by Article 33 of the School Code, and only school districts having a population of between 100,000 and 500,000 people are eligible to adopt Article 33.

See the March *Newsbulletin* for coverage of February referendum results.

## Budget implementation bill enacted just in time to avoid deep damage

Also provides for teachers to be paid for performance

The long delay is over. Effective Jan. 10, schools were told they would soon begin to receive state funds appropriated two months earlier. Districts began seeing the increase with their next general state aid payment, dated Jan. 20.

In the meantime many school districts had been losing hundreds of thousands of dollars per month in state aid because an old number was being used in the school funding formula. For various reasons the governor waited fully two months to act on the state "budget implementation" bill through an amendatory veto. In contrast, after they received the changes lawmakers took just two days to approve the new version of the bill, a technical piece of legislation that must be enacted in order to allow the state to release the money allocated by the state budget.

On Jan. 4, Gov. Rod Blagojevich finally used his amendatory veto to change the budget implementation

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**ISBE releases FY 08  
charter school grant RFP**

The Illinois State Board of Education was successful again this past summer in obtaining a Federal Charter School Start Up grant, making Illinois one of only 10 states receiving the funding for this year. The FY08 Federal Charter School Start Up grant "request for proposals" is available at <http://www.isbe.net/grants/html/RFP.htm>.

Three kinds of charter grants are available: 1) a Pre-charter Planning grant; 2) a Charter Planning grant; and 3) a Charter School Implementation grant.

Deadlines for such grants are closing on Feb. 29 and April 30.

Grant application forms may be obtained from Richard Loman in ISBE's Accountability Division. Contact Loman at 217/782-2948 or [rloman@isbe.net](mailto:rloman@isbe.net).

**State's minimum wage  
to increase again on July 1**

The state minimum wage requirement already exceeds the federal standard and will increase on July 1 by 25 cents per hour.

Illinois law guarantees a minimum wage of \$7.50 per hour for workers 18 and older; workers under 18 may be paid \$.50 per hour less than adults. Effective July 1, the state's hourly minimum wage will be \$7.75. The minimum wage will increase by 25 cents in each of the following two years on July 1.

School districts are subject to the requirements of hourly minimum wage laws in paying support staff, although the laws do not apply to teachers. Additional information is available from the Illinois Dept. of Labor, at <http://www.state.il.us/agency/idol/Facts/MW.HTM>.

**Leaders to lobby in DC  
at 35th FRN conference**

This year's National School Boards Association's Federal Relations Network (FRN) lobbying effort by school board leaders, known as the 35th Annual FRN Conference, will be held in Washington, D.C., on Feb. 3-5.

Conference participants will join with colleagues from across the nation to obtain congressional support for developing practical solutions to school concerns, and strengthening public education for all students.

Last year more than 900 school board members, superintendents and state association staff, representing 48 states and the Virgin Islands, asked that appropriation levels come closer to matching authorized spending levels for the two federal programs that have the greatest impact on school budgets — Title I and IDEA.

"School boards welcome increased accountability for student achievement," said Reginald Felton, NSBA director, federal relations, during an issues briefing at the 2007 conference. But, he added, "If Congress does not address needed changes, both the credibility of the NCLB law and the public confidence in our schools will erode."

Key aims for FRN this year include:

- Incorporating NSBA's recommendations in the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and advocating for NCLB's reauthorization immediately in the second session of the 110th Congress (2008)
- Increasing the federal investment in education to reflect growing student enrollments and increased costs in educating all children
- Improving federal programs aimed at teacher quality, ensuring school-based Medicaid reimbursements, and pursuing a greater emphasis on preschool education

Attending the conference this year from Illinois are three IASB officers and two other school board members, plus five Association staff members: IASB President Mark C. Metzger, Vice President Joseph T. Alesandrini, Past President Marie Slater, **East Maine District 63** board vice president John C. Jekot, and former IASB President Christy Coleman, a board member from **Geneseo CUSD 228**; IASB Executive Director Michael D. Johnson, Deputy Executive Director Michael Bartlett, Associate Executive Director of Governmental Relations Ben Schwarm, Director of Editorial Services Linda Dawson, and Assistant Director of Governmental Relations Susan Hilton.

The FRN conference annually involves local school board members from every congressional district in grassroots advocacy in support of public education.


For more information about the FRN event in February, visit: <http://www.nsba.org/site/docs/41900/41818.pdf>.

*Illinois*  
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**Illinois Association  
of School Boards**

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**ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION  
OF SCHOOL BOARDS**

## STATE BUDGET *from page 1*

bill, SB 783. The bill became law six days later, putting into effect a \$560 million funding increase for state schools that was adopted in the state budget for fiscal year 2008.

For the rest of the current fiscal year, the state will be distributing its promised increase in the minimum amount of money – called the foundation level – that school districts receive for each student. The budget called for adding \$400 to the foundation level, increasing it to \$5,734 per student from \$5,334.

The delay in releasing this money caused concerns for school districts that had waited more than two months for their increased funding while the cost of salaries, fuel and insurance continued to rise.

Most did not report significant problems due to the delays, but if the issue had not been resolved, those problems were coming. Short term, the delay was not a pressing concern for those school districts that were able to take advantage of emergency financing. But districts were forced to borrow against themselves for the interim, said **Plainfield CCSD 2** spokesman Tom Hernandez.

“We were not at a crisis stage, but we were certainly anxious. We were planning for any kind of contingency,” he said.

Besides increasing general state aid levels by \$400 per student, the approval of the final bill also increases funding for special education by an additional \$1,000 (a boost from \$8,000 to \$9,000) for each special education teacher and \$700 (a boost from \$2,800 to \$3,500) for each special education teaching assistant.

### Other provisions


Other provisions would authorize:

- the School Safety and Educational Improvement Block Grant funds, “ADA block grant,” to non-public schools;
- adding provisions from SB 194 (Sieben) regarding the reorganization of the Paw Paw and Franklin Center school districts;

- “Transitional Assistance” to ensure that no school district will receive less state funding in Fiscal Year 2008 than in FY '07;
- Lincoln’s Challenge Academy to conduct a study to consider the need for an expansion of this program for dropouts;
- “pay for performance” teacher compensation – beginning with all newly negotiated collective bargaining agreements entered into after the date this bill becomes law. Thus the school board and the teachers’ union may agree to include a performance-based compensation plan that would allow for increased teacher pay above a teacher’s base salary if certain criteria are met;
- “Severely Overcrowded Schools” Grants by creating a grant program to relieve overcrowding in schools as defined in the bill;
- reporting of contracts, requiring school boards to list on the school district’s website all contracts over \$25,000 and all collective bargaining contracts. The report must include the total number of contracts awarded by the school district, the total value of all contracts awarded, the number of contracts awarded to minority owned businesses, female owned businesses, businesses owned by a person with a disability and locally owned businesses;
- “Poverty Grants” – continuing the “hold harmless” provision for districts getting funds for supplemental general state aid based on Low Income Concentration Levels; and
- “Hard-to-Staff Schools” by creating a salary incentive program for teachers and administrators who are employed by such schools (\$3,000 for teachers and \$5,000 for principals). The ISBE would allocate and distribute these funds to “qualifying schools.”

For a copy of the final bill, visit the Illinois General Assembly’s bill text site at: <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/default.asp> .

## President Bush signs FY 2008 budget bill, hold on school-based Medicaid cuts for now

resident Bush signed the consolidated appropriations bill for FY 2008 on December 26, 2007. The federal funding bill (H.R. 2764) provides increases for key programs, including Title I, IDEA, and teacher quality grants.

Specifically, the bill provides approximately \$14 billion for Title I grants, which reflects an increase of about \$1.2 billion. Title I School Improvement grants will be funded at \$491 million – an increase of \$366 million from FY 2007. The funding level for IDEA Part B grants (special education) is roughly \$11 billion, which includes a \$259 million increase. The measure provides an increase of about \$73 million for Teacher quality grants; total funding is \$2.96 billion. Funding for education technology grants is also continued at \$267.5 million.

### School-based Medicaid cuts

President Bush also recently signed S. 2499, The Medicare, Medicaid and SCHIP Extension Act of 2007, which includes a six-month moratorium provision that would prevent the Secretary of Health and Human Services from taking any action to limit Medicaid reimbursements to schools for administration and transportation services to students.

According to school lobbyists, this action constitutes a significant win for school board members and others in the education community who have been pushing hard to prevent the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services from finalizing a proposed rule (CMS-2287-P) that would eliminate federal payments to schools for administration and transportation services provided to low-income students and students with disabilities.

The bill imposes a six-month delay on such payments.

# IASB directors meet, adopt new assignments

**I**ASB Board of Directors elected a new treasurer for the Association and approved board committee assignments for 2008 at its Nov. 18, 2007 meeting.

Carolynne Brooks was elected IASB treasurer. She will serve a two-year term for the 2008 and 2009 calendar years. Brooks has been an officer of the Wabash Valley Division of IASB for more than five years, and she currently serves as board secretary of the **West Richland CUSD 2** Board of Education.

Four current directors were elected to serve on the 2008 Executive



Carolynne Brooks

Committee: Roger Edgecombe, **Warrensburg-Latham CUSD 11**; Joanne Osmond, **Lake Villa CCSD 41**; Roger Pfister, **Carbondale ESD 95**; and Michelle Skinlo, **Mattoon CUSD 2**.

The following appointments were also made:

- Nominating Committee: chair, Marie Slater; members, Cyndi Dahl, Dale Hansen, Karen Fisher, and Helen McClelland; alternates, Ben Andersen and Sue McCance
- Audit Committee: chair: Carolynne Brooks; members, David Barton, Carol Farnum, Barbara Somogyi, and Dane Tippett; alternates, John Metzger and Joanne Zendol
- Resolutions Committee: chair, Joseph Alesandrini. Members/alternates are elected by the 21 Asso-

ciation divisions

- Illinois High School Association representative: Mark Harms
- 2008 Joint Annual Conference committee: co-chairs, Felton Jose and Joanne Osmond
- NSBA Delegate Assembly appointments: delegates, Mark C. Metzger, Joseph Alesandrini, Marie Slater, and Tariq Butt; alternates, Barbara Somogyi, Michelle Skinlo, and Carol Farnum
- NSBA Credentials Committee nominee: Barbara Somogyi

The next meeting of the IASB Board of Directors will be held in conjunction with IASB's 2008 Leadership Conference on March 1 at the Hyatt Regency Chicago.

## Panel proposals now being sought for 2008 Joint Annual Conference

**T**he Illinois Association of School Boards is seeking proposals for "Share the Success" panel sessions at the 2008 Joint Annual Conference. School districts and other organizations are invited to submit specific proposals for these 90-minute panel presentations — presented by the board members, administrators and other school or community members who were involved in the particular programs showcased — based on actual school system experiences.

Presenters give insight and practical information on how to solve common problems. They share discoveries and innovations from programs succeeding in their school districts. They also provide tips on how school boards can achieve such successes in their own school districts.

IASB seeks panel suggestions in any of the following eight categories:

- Governance/Leadership
- Finance and Funding
- Current Issues
- Community Relations and Communications
- School Law
- Facilities/Transportation/Technology
- Best Practices
- Governmental Relations

The 2008 Joint Annual Conference is set for Nov. 21-23 in Chicago. Proposals for Share the Success panels must be received in the IASB Springfield office no later than Feb. 15.

To obtain detailed information (including selection criteria) and the forms necessary to submit proposals, visit: <http://www.iasb.com/jac/CallforProposals08.pdf>.

## NSBA Announces speakers for its 2008 conference in Orlando, opening March 29

**R**etired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, TV newsman and author Jim Lehrer, Academy Award-winning actor Sidney Poitier, and radio host Garrison Keillor are scheduled to address more than 10,000 school board members at the National School Boards Association's Annual Conference in Orlando, Fla., March 29-April 1, 2008. Organizers say the conference is the largest gathering of public officials in the nation. It showcases world and national leaders who offer encouragement and insights to school leaders.

The conference will also feature current national topics affecting education leaders in their local districts and one of the largest expositions of education products and services in the country. For more information or to register, visit the online registration at <http://www.nsba.org/conference/register/index.cfm>. Housing registration for the event is now open.

# 2007 Joint Annual Conference photos available via website

Members and guests who attended the 2007 Joint Annual Conference now have access online to more than 600 images taken at the event.

From Friday's pre-conference workshops to the final general session on Sunday, these photos are posted on a secured third-party website. There is no fee for this member service; however, you will need a password to log into the site.

To access the gallery, type in your email, event name and password. The event name is iasb4. The password is chicago. The web site address is: <http://momentshare.com/levyphoto/>.

The images will appear in a low-resolution, "thumbnail" format. Visitors will be able click on any photo

to see a larger image, or use the slide show button that automatically scrolls through the entire gallery. It is also possible to choose to view each image in color, black and white or sepia tone.

Those who wish also can order their own prints. They will be available in any size, from wallets to 11 by 14 inches. Cost range from \$1.50 to \$14.50.

The Joint Annual Conference was held Nov. 16-18, 2007, in downtown Chicago.

Representatives from 781 Illinois public school districts attended this latest Conference of the Illinois Association of School Boards, Illinois Association of School Administrators and the Illinois Association of School Business Officials.

## Rally for public education will feature NSBA executive Bryant

If you have not already registered, Rally for Public Education organizers say, don't wait any longer. The IASB Divisions located in the metropolitan Chicago area are hosting the upcoming Rally for Public Education on Feb. 27 at The Carlisle, Lombard.

The dinner meeting will feature National School Boards Association Executive Director Anne L. Bryant. Bryant will speak about school boards and the role they play in America's noble experiment – universal education for all, and democratically governed schools.

In addition, IASB President Mark C. Metzger, board president at **Indian Prairie CUSD 204**, will discuss the Association's commitments to, and programs for, public education. Executive Director Michael D. Johnson will set a context for Bryant's comments and share a bit about his own work on



Anne Bryant

the NSBA board. Staff members Dawn Miller and Jeffery Cohn will serve as hosts and will facilitate the event.

"Be sure to join school board members, superintendents and others from metropolitan districts and beyond as public schools celebrate their remarkable heritage and gather added strength as they go forward," said IASB's Cohn. Cohn added that the aim of the rally is based on the mission of the Illinois Association of School Boards, which is "excellence in local school governance and support of public education."

All Illinois school board members and superintendents are invited and encouraged to attend. The event will begin at 6 p.m., with dinner at 6:30 p.m., followed by the program. The cost to register is \$35 per person. For more information, check the website at <http://www.iasb.com/calendar/rallyforpubliceducation.pdf>.

To register, visit <https://www.iasb.com/calendar/register.cfm?ID=1320>.

## NEWS FROM IASB

### IASB to offer 2008 job fair for teachers, administrators

The 13th annual IASB Job Fair for Teachers, Administrators and Education Majors will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Mar. 15, at Shannon Center, Saint Xavier University, Chicago. For more information visit: <http://www.iasb.com/jobfair08>.

### Two IASB divisions boast new directors on IASB board

Two IASB divisions recently selected new division directors to serve on the Association's board.

Jackie Mickley – **Geneseo CUSD 228** (Blackhawk). Mickley replaces Steven Hawk, who resigned from his local school board in Oct. 2007.



Jackie Mickley

Thomas Neeley – **Morton CUSD 709** (Central Illinois Valley). Neeley replaces new IASB Vice President Joseph Alessandrini. Because of his election as Vice President, Alessandrini could no longer serve as division director. Neeley previously was division chairman.



Thomas Neeley

### Current IASB Journal issue focuses on special education

Special education classrooms provide a backdrop for a discussion of finances, testing and expectations for students in the January/February 2008 issue of *The Illinois School Board Journal*.



Schools can expect some changes, as outlined in stories on Response to Intervention, new class size standards, and more.

# Court cases may guide school districts' tort levies



Kimberly A. Small is IASB's assistant general counsel.

Tax objection litigation under the Tort Immunity Act (745 ILCS 10/9-101 et seq.) has proliferated in Illinois. Many districts use tort levy funds, as they are uncapped, whenever legally possible. Three court decisions involving school districts' usage of tort levy funds occurred in different Illinois courts in 2007. They are (1) *In Re: Objections to Tax Levies of Freeport School District No. 145 for the Year 2000*, 865 N.E. 2d 361 (2nd Dist. 2007), (2) *In Re: Objection to Tax Levy of Quincy School District No. 172 for the Year 2003*, Case No. 04 TX-41 (8th Cir. Ill., July 6, 2007), and (3) *In Re: Objection to Tax Levy of Coal City Community Unit School District No. 1 for the Year 2003*, Case No. 04 TX 14 (13th Cir. Ill., November 13, 2007). Two more cases involving 2005 and 2006 tort levy funds are also pending against Coal City CUSD 1, as well as another recently filed case in Freeport again.

The Illinois General Assembly has stated that "it has become apparent that some units of local government are using [tort levy] tax revenue to fund expenses more properly paid from general operating funds [and] [t]hese uses of the revenue are inconsistent with the limited purpose of the tax authorization." 745 ILCS 10/9-101(a). Thus, the legislative purpose of a tort levy is to provide an "extraordinary tax" for a limited purpose; it is not to fund expenses more properly paid from general operating funds. 745 ILCS 10/9-107(a).

In *Freeport*, the Second District Appellate Court limited the expenses that school districts may fund through tort levies. First, the court examined the legislative purpose of the Tort Immu-

## DEVELOPMENTS IN SCHOOL LAW

nity Act and what expenses school districts may appropriately pay from tort levy funds. In examining the Tort Immunity Act, the court found the term "risk management" ambiguous. This finding allowed the Second District Appellate Court to consider the recorded expert testimony of the tax objector's and school district's experts regarding a definition for risk management. The court held that the opinion of the tax objector's expert about risk management practices best followed the Tort Immunity Act's legislative limitations and purpose. Following the tax objector's expert opinion, the *Freeport* case outlines a four-step "risk management" definition in its decision.

In light of the *Freeport* decision, districts must have a formal written and implemented risk management plan that contains four specific steps and a process that builds upon each step, repeats itself and is monitored. The four risk management process steps are:

1. identify and analyze loss exposures
2. select techniques for treating loss exposures
3. implement selected techniques
4. monitor and modify the risk man-

agement program

If the district pays employees from its tort levy funds, the employee's responsibilities must be new to the position, not ordinary. Lastly, school officials must determine what portion of the employee's salary is attributable to the new responsibilities under the risk management plan.

What does this all mean to school officials? Based upon the fact that the 8th Judicial Circuit Court applied the *Freeport* decision to the *Quincy* case and the 13th Judicial Circuit Court found in favor of Coal City CUSD 1, basing its decision upon the same expert's opinion on risk management in the *Freeport* case, school officials should familiarize themselves with the legislative purpose of the Tort Immunity Act and read and understand the *Freeport* case. Second, and of utmost importance, school officials must consult their attorneys and auditors to discuss how their specific risk management practices comport with the *Freeport* case's risk management definition. These discussions may just ensure that your district's current practices do not join in the proliferation of costly tort levy litigation.

## New laws cover topics ranging from county sales taxes to phys ed standards

Under a state law that became effective in October, school boards representing at least 51 percent of the student population of a county are allowed to pass resolutions to get a county sales tax question for school construction on the ballot. A local county board also can put the school construction sales tax to a vote.

Deanna Sullivan, director of governmental relations for the Illinois Association of School Boards, said the

countywide sales tax hike cannot exceed one percentage point. She said the school construction tax must be in quarter percentage-point increments.

School districts statewide have indicated strong interest in the tax since legislators in the state House and Senate overrode Gov. Rod Blagojevich's veto of the measure in early October. Supporters say the sales tax could be a good way to help fund new

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buildings, renovations, architects, land acquisition and other construction-related costs.

“I think when you’re talking about sales tax, in most communities, you’re spreading it among a much larger population (than with other revenue sources),” Sullivan said.

Regional school superintendents would distribute money from a special tax fund. The tax proceeds would be shipped to districts based on student enrollment, meaning more children in a school system would equal more cash.

If a school district’s slice of the pie isn’t enough to cover a construction project, a local property tax increase referendum could be sought to pay for the balance.

Another key change in Illinois law for 2008 is the so-called mandate waiver limit for physical education instruction. As of January the act, now Public Act 95-223, limits waivers from the state’s physical education mandate to two years, and it only allows the waivers to be renewed two times.

Because the amended state waiver law requires action by a school board in order to obtain a waiver from the state’s physical education mandate, IASB Policy Service (PRESS) has produced a helpful written guide to the process, Policy 2:20-AP, Exhibit – Waiver and Modification Request Process.

Sales taxes aside, legislators changed state laws on a number of topics relevant to schools, including driver education training enhancements (P.A. 95-310).

Some laws passed in 2007 will not take effect until June 1. One such law curbs advertising near schools of “alcopop,” certain flavored alcohol or malt beverages. That measure (P.A. 95-618) prohibits the advertising, promotion or marketing of such beverages to children, including prohibiting billboard ads within 500 feet of schools.

All new laws are available at: <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/default.asp>.

## NEWS HEADLINES

**Barrington** (Jan. 7, *The Daily Herald*) Boundary maps are soon to be unveiled in Barrington CUSD 220, along with final recommendations. The district’s enrollment monitoring committee will present its final proposal to the community during a public meeting. The attendance maps will be presented a little more than two months after the committee’s preliminary proposals were unveiled and after adjustments were made based on public feedback.

**Buffalo Grove** (Dec. 7, *The Telegraph*, Dixon) The American Civil Liberties Union can be a party to a lawsuit seeking to end the “moment of silence” mandated in Illinois schools, a judge decided Dec. 6. The lawsuit was filed in October by the 14-year-old daughter of a Buffalo Grove atheist against Northwest Suburban High School District 214. The 14-year-old student is a freshman at Buffalo Grove High School.

**Chicago** (Dec. 11, *Chicago Tribune*) Chicago schools are being asked by parents and teachers to limit military recruiters’ access to students. Comments were gathered in a forum held by the Chicago District 299 Board of Education to field public response to a proposed new policy. The proposed policy addresses rules for all recruiters, military or not, requiring them to get the permission of a principal no later than 48 hours before they wish come to a school, and to operate only in areas set by the principal.

**Freeport** (Dec. 28, *The Journal Standard*) A federal judge has thrown out part of a lawsuit filed by four Freeport District 145 special education teachers who sued the district in an effort to block the installation of monitor-

ing equipment inside district classrooms. The plaintiffs filed two claims alleging the board’s plan was a violation of their Fourth Amendment rights and the Illinois Eavesdropping Act. The teachers were not opposed to video recordings in their classrooms, but they did oppose the audio recording associated with it.

**Normal** (Jan. 5, *The Pantagraph*) The Normal city council has agreed to consider a formal resolution urging voter support of two Unit 5 referendums on the Feb. 5 ballot. Said Mayor Chris Koos: “The state’s not done its job (on school funding). ... The need is here. Unit 5 did significant analysis and they make a good case.”

**Orland Park** (Jan. 25, News Release) Jodee Blanco, a speaker at past IASB events, will be signing her new book, *Please Stop Laughing at Us*, Feb. 29, 7-9 p.m., at Borders Book Store in Orland Park.

**Plainfield** (Jan. 3, *Herald News*, Joliet) School board members in Plainfield CCSD 202 recently joined other school leaders in advocating for a change to NCLB, the 2002 federal act that Congress was to reauthorize in 2007 but did not. The board endorsed a “growth model” proposal that the National School Boards Association is backing.

**Statewide** (Dec. 11, *Northwest Indiana Times*) The Illinois State Board of Education announced recently that Illinois ranks fourth in the nation for having the highest number of teachers achieving National Board Certification this year. In 2007, a total of 511 Illinois teachers achieved National Board Certification, an 18.6 percent increase from 2006.

# Spring division meetings feature legislative updates

The IASB spring division dinner meetings will feature presentations on legislative issues by IASB governmental relations staff. The discussion will cover the latest information from the Capitol on school funding, key education initiatives, and other hot legislative issues.

Although some of the times and locations have yet to be determined, the first of the division meetings begin Feb. 26 in Two Rivers and Shawnee. The list is available online at: <https://www.iasb.com/calendar/calendar.cfm>.

Attendance at division meetings earns 5 credits in IASB's Master Board

Member program. Reservations can be made by mail, fax or online.

The first of the spring meetings are scheduled for late February, beginning with:

- February 26 Shawnee Division Spring Dinner Meeting, Century SD 100, Ullin, TBA
- February 26 Two Rivers Division Spring Dinner Meeting, Beardstown CUSD 15, 6 p.m.

For more information on these upcoming division meetings — and others planned for the spring — visit IASB at <http://www.iasb.com/calendar/>.

## IASB offers recognition for assistance to education via Seamon Award, others

IASB annually recognizes people and organizations whose actions have contributed to excellence in education producing an impact statewide. Recognition is provided through the Harold P. Seamon Award for Distinguished Service to public education. Nominations are sought from now through April 15.

Recipients must have: displayed exceptional service and commitment; provided innovative approaches to meeting school challenges; or enhanced

local governance by boards.

In addition, IASB Honorary Memberships for Exceptional Service are awarded for rendering great service to IASB or to public education.

Also the IASB Service Award rewards 25 years of service producing a positive impact through a close link with and direct service to schools.

Submit nominations to: IASB Awards Committee Liaison, 2921 Baker Drive, Springfield, IL 62703, phone IASB, ext. 1139, or fax 217/753-2485.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**February 27 - Rally for Public Education with NSBA Executive Director Dr. Anne L. Bryant**, The Carlisle, Lombard, 6 p.m. registration; 6:30 p.m. Dinner

**February 28 - Illini Division Spring Dinner Meeting**, Mahomet-Seymour CUSD 3, 6 p.m.

**February 29-March 1 - IASB Leadership Conference**, Hyatt Regency, Chicago

**March 1 - IASB Leadership Conference & Board of Directors meeting**, Hyatt Regency, Chicago

**March 4 - Kaskaskia Division Spring Dinner Meeting**, Breese SD 12, 6 p.m.

**March 4 - Wabash Valley Division Spring Dinner Meeting**, West Richland CUSD 2, 5:30 p.m.

**March 5 - Southwestern Division Spring Dinner Meeting**, Pontiac-Wm. Holliday SD 105, 6 p.m.

**March 5 - Central IL Valley Division Spring Dinner Meeting**, District 50 Schools, Washington, 6 p.m. - Dinner

**March 6 - Egyptian Division Spring Dinner Meeting**, Mt. Vernon THSD 201, 6 p.m.

**March 6 - Corn Belt Division Spring Dinner Meeting**, Heyworth CUSD 4, 6 p.m. - Dinner

**March 6 - Northwest Division Spring Dinner Meeting**, Candelight, 6 p.m

**March 6 - Abe Lincoln Division Spring Dinner Meeting**, Taylorville CUSD 3



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