

# Illinois SCHOOL BOARD Newsbulletin

January 2014 / Issue No. 739

## Schools pinning hopes on sales tax referenda

A total of 16 counties in Illinois are voting on county school sales tax questions for school facilities in the March 18 general primary election.

A total of 18 counties in the state already have adopted a countywide sales tax benefitting school facilities, seven of which were adopted within the past two years.

The 16 counties voting on a county sales tax for schools are: Carroll, Coles, DeWitt, Effingham, Fulton, Gallatin, Hamilton, Mason, McLean, Peoria, Pike, Randolph, Rock Island, Shelby, Stephenson, and Whiteside.

Sometimes referred to as the “Wal-

Illinois County School Facility Tax Act: Election Results and Future Votes

● Counties where the CSFT has passed (18)

Counties where the CSFT failed in the November 2008 (X), April 2009 (X), February 2010 (X), November 2010 (X), April 2011 (X) Elections, March 2012 (X) Elections, November 2012 (X) Elections and (X)2013 Elections (41)

✓ Counties where the CSFT election is being voted for March 2014



STIFEL

Mart” tax, the sales tax referendum, when adopted, imposes up to a 1 percent sales tax on everything the county taxes, but does not impose any tax on goods or services that are not

See **SALES TAX** on page 6

## Panel proposals for 2014 conference due by Feb. 14

The Illinois Association of School Boards is seeking proposals for “Share the Success” panel sessions at the 2014 Joint Annual Conference.

School districts and other organizations are invited to submit specific proposals for these 90-minute

See **PROPOSALS** on page 8

## Lawsuits challenge pension law

Several groups of retired Illinois workers and other organizations have filed lawsuits challenging the new law (PA 98-0599, effective June 4, 2014) designed to gradually eliminate the state’s public pension shortfall.

The Illinois State Employees Association Retirees sued on Jan. 2 in Sangamon County Circuit Court. The Retired State Employees Association had filed a similar lawsuit earlier that day.

The groups were only the latest to argue that the plan violates a provision of the Illinois Constitution that states pension benefits may not be diminished.

Lawmakers in December approved legislation to reduce the state’s \$100 billion unfunded liability, largely by cutting benefits.

The major components of the bill for participants of the Teachers’ Retirement System (TRS) include a reduction in the amount of the annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for both current TRS annuitants and current employees participating in TRS; a suspension of the COLA in varying degrees for current employees upon their retirement; a gradual increase in the retirement age for current employees under the age of 46; and a pen-

See **LAWSUITS** on page 12

## Breakfast program grants

ISBE has released a request for proposals for School Breakfast Program Expansion Grants. ISBE will award up to \$187,000 (\$10,000 per district with at least one qualifying school) for the purpose of increasing school breakfast participation. A “qualifying school(s)” is a school participating in National School Lunch Program that served 40 percent or more of its lunches to students eligible for free or reduced price in school year 2011-2012. The expansion grant request is posted at [http://www.isbe.net/funding\\_opps/htmls/rfp.htm](http://www.isbe.net/funding_opps/htmls/rfp.htm) and the deadline to apply is Feb.14. For information, contact Shawn Backs at [sbacks@isbe.net](mailto:sbacks@isbe.net) or 217/782-2491.

## Severe influenza seen

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently issued a health advisory on reports of a severe strain of influenza (pH1N1) in young and middle aged adults, with multiple associated hospitalizations. Many of the hospitalized patients required intensive care. Some fatalities have been reported. Influenza activity is expected to increase during the next few weeks. All vaccine formulations this season contain a pH1N1 component. CDC recommends annual influenza vaccination for everyone six months and older.

## Vaccination rules to change

The Illinois Department of Public Health recently issued a notice with information and clarification about the new meningococcal vaccine requirements expected to start in the 2015-16 school year. Visit [http://www.isbe.net/pdf/school\\_health/idph-menin-imm-start-memo1213.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/pdf/school_health/idph-menin-imm-start-memo1213.pdf) to read the memorandum from IDPH.

# ISBE, ROEs reviewing survey results from superintendents

Results of the Service Evaluation Survey recently sent by the lieutenant governor’s office to Illinois school district superintendents, show 65 percent of respondents believe state funding to schools is poor or needs improvement.

The Illinois School Code requires the lieutenant governor to convene a Service Evaluation Committee to annually evaluate the importance and quality of the services furnished to school districts by ISBE and the Regional Offices of Education throughout the state.

IASB Director of Governmental Relations Susan Hilton served as the chairman of the committee this year.

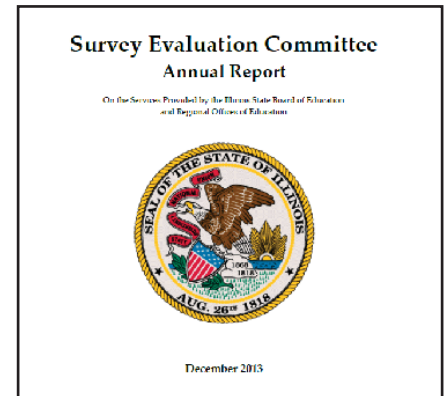
The survey asks superintendents to evaluate the Illinois State Board of Education and the Regional Offices of Education. This year, 355 school districts participated in the survey, with 277 completing the Service Evaluation portion and 100 finishing a portion with questions written by Illinois State University researchers.

The survey found 65 percent of the respondents supported an increase in income tax with or without a corresponding decrease in property tax, 75 percent supported a local sales tax for the education fund that would be voted on by a district referendum, and more than 90 percent supported a two-year state budget to improve fiscal planning.

State funding shortfalls, pension cost shifts and inflexible mandates continue to cause concern, survey results indicate.

Although state services got good marks overall, respondents said more support is needed for Common Core implementation, professional development, testing technology, and educator evaluations.

The survey was completed in



mid December and officials said they will examine it more closely and use it to help guide them in their future decision making.

“It is not a scientific survey, but does provide us with data to help us see where improvements may be necessary,” said Chris Koch, the state superintendent.

The data collected is intended to inform policymakers and is sent to the General Assembly to help plan state and local educational improvements.

To see a copy of the report visit: <http://1.usa.gov/IH1aNX>.

*Illinois*  
**SCHOOL BOARD**  
*Newsbulletin*

**Illinois Association  
of School Boards**

This newsletter is published monthly by the Illinois Association of School Boards for member boards of education and their superintendents. The Illinois Association of School Boards, an Illinois not-for-profit corporation, is a voluntary association of local boards of education and is not affiliated with any branch of government.

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**ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION  
OF SCHOOL BOARDS**

# ISBE preparing to submit state budget recommendations

The Illinois State Board of Education has finished gathering budgetary input for its upcoming recommended state budget for elementary and secondary education for FY 2015.

At the board's recent meeting in December the members were reminded that approximately 66 percent of the \$6.69 billion budget for last year (FY2014) ISBE State General Funds is distributed through the GSA Formula.

In FY2014, the state board was told, the school funding Foundation Level remained at \$6,119 per pupil, but the state's appropriation was approximately \$562 million less than what was required to fund GSA at the Foundation Level set by statute.

As a result, it was necessary to prorate all GSA claims by 88.7 percent. The GSA claim had been prorated at 89 percent the prior year, FY 2013.

"The goal has to be to fully fund General State Aid and to end this cycle of perennial proration. If proration continues, the Illinois legislature must relieve local school districts of some of the stringent requirements and unfunded mandates that are currently in place," said Ben Schwarm, the association's deputy executive director. "Continued budget cutting while adding

## Illinois State Board of Education BUDGET HEARING

Monday  
Governors State University  
Engbretson Hall: 4:00 - 8:30 p.m.

to the workload of teachers, principals, and superintendents cannot continue," Schwarm added.

The state board, the Illinois Statewide School Management Alliance, and others have successfully advocated for more education funding in recent years.

By leading a comprehensive and coordinated campaign together to inform legislators, media and the public about the impact of more than \$850 million in cuts to the K-12 statewide education budget between Fiscal Year 2009 and 2013, school supporters advocated for a restoration of funding. The state board later agreed.

The General Assembly responded by increasing education funding for FY 2014 by \$137 million from FY13 appropriation levels. The majority of that increase went to General State Aid (GSA) for the state's 860 school districts.

Those who testified at the budget hearings advocated for fully funding the GSA claim this year and in favor of ending the policy of prora-

tion, which has meant paying only a portion of the GSA claim amounts, as appropriated funds allow.

ISBE staff members continue to develop the forecast for the FY 2015 GSA claim and the result of that forecast was included in the superintendent's budget recommendation in January, according to the agency.

A total of \$562 million in additional money over last year should be granted to fully fund GSA in the current fiscal year. Next year it is likely the cost of the GSA claim will increase again, the board learned, as property values continue to decline in many areas of the state and as the proportion and number of low-income students continue to increase.

ISBE's Finance and Audit Committee conducts public hearings annually to gather opinion about local school district education needs and priorities as they begin preparing the following year's education budget. The state board usually recommends an education budget in January, several months before the General Assembly takes any action on the next fiscal year's budget.

The state agency can only make a recommendation. The governor and legislators determine how to generate revenue and at what level to set the final budget.

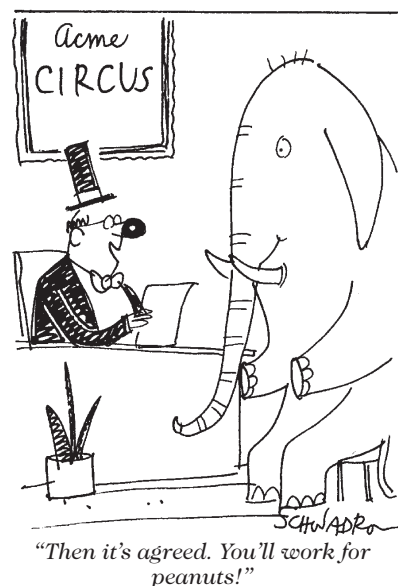
## Record number of Illinois students successful in AP exams

A record number of Illinois graduates are taking Advanced Placement (AP) exams and posting successful scores, according to State Superintendent Chris Koch.

The number of Illinois high school graduates who take AP exams during the school year has more than doubled in the past decade, Koch noted, with low-income and minority students continuing to make record gains toward closing the achievement gap on these tests.

Research shows that students who score a 3 or higher on AP exams typically experience greater academic success in college than otherwise comparable non-AP peers.

In 2012, the most recent year for which information is available, more than 26,400 Illinois graduates scored a 3 or higher on an AP exam, with 17.6 percent of these students coming from low-income backgrounds, according to the recently released ninth annual AP Report to the Nation.



# Report: students making strides in math and science scores

A recent report shows Illinois and most other states compare favorably to other countries in math and science.

Results from the study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) at the U.S. Department of Education have found that Illinois and the vast majority of other states score above the international average in 8th grade math and science.

Although U.S. eighth-graders compared relatively well to their peers in other countries in math, the comparison was even more favorable in science, where just three states scored below the international average.

Moreover, the average 8th-grader in Illinois and most other states has obtained a basic knowledge and understanding of both math and science and can demonstrate it in a variety of practical situations.

Here's what the study found:

## Mathematics

- In over two-thirds (36) of states, including Illinois, the average score was significantly above the international average of 500.
- Illinois (with a score of 517) was outperformed by just seven of 47 countries, namely: Korea (613),

Singapore (611), Taipei (609), Hong Kong (586), Japan (570), Russia (539), and Canada (532)

- Six states (West Virginia (492), Oklahoma (491), Tennessee (490), DC (481), Mississippi (476), and Alabama (466)) scored significantly below the international average. These scores are similar to those of New Zealand (488), Sweden (484) and Armenia (467) among others.
- Massachusetts was the highest scoring U.S. state (561 points) and outperformed all but five of 47 countries as well.
- Nearly two-thirds of states, including Illinois, performed as well or better than the traditionally high performing country of Finland (514).

## Science

- Nearly every state (a total of 47), including Illinois, performed above the international average of 500 while two states (Arizona and California) did not perform significantly different than the international average.
- Illinois (with a score of 522), was outscored by just nine of 47 countries
- Mississippi (486), Alabama (485)

and DC (453) scored significantly below the international average. These scores are similar to those of Kazakhstan (490), Turkey (483) and Iran (474), among others.

- Massachusetts (567) and Vermont (561) were the highest-scoring U.S. states and performed as well or better than every country except Singapore (590).
- Massachusetts and Vermont performed as well as Chinese Taipei (564), Korea (560), and Japan (558) and outperformed such countries as Finland (552), Hong Kong (535) and England (533).
- The District of Columbia was the only place where students' average scores did fall within the TIMSS Low benchmark (400-474), which indicates whether a student has a grasp of elementary knowledge of life, physical, and earth sciences.
- The top 43 states' average score fell within in Intermediate benchmark (475-549), indicating students have basic knowledge and understanding of practical situations in the sciences.

More information about the report is online at: [https://nces.ed.gov/nationalsreportcard/studies/naep\\_timss/](https://nces.ed.gov/nationalsreportcard/studies/naep_timss/).

## Board members gather for national advocacy conference in D.C.

Board members will join their peers from across the country at the National School Boards Association's (NSBA) National School Boards Advocacy Institute (formerly the Federal Relations Network Conference) in Washington, D.C., Feb. 2-4.

This event offers school board members a chance to meet with their congressional representatives to discuss federal education issues.

Programming will include nationally recognized speakers Bob Woodward, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author; and Bernice King, orator, author and daughter of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. New this year will be sessions with more interaction rather

than only lecture-style presentations, plus substantial programming for information and skill building around public advocacy.

As with the FRN Conference of past years, the institute will end with a day on Capitol Hill to lobby members of Congress.

Among highlights of the agenda this year:

- An opening day session unveiling NSBA's new public advocacy campaign, designed to be sustainable and national in scope
- A legal advocacy perspective on "federal overreach and the U.S. Department of Education"

Attending the conference this year from Illinois are three IASB offi-

cers and four other school board member, plus one association staff member: IASB President Karen Fisher, of **Ottawa THSD 140**; IASB Vice President Phil Pritzker, of **Wheeling CCSD 21**; and Past President Carolyn Brooks, of **West Richland CUSD 2**, Noble; plus **Aptakisis-Tripp CCSD 102** board member Scott Linn; **Carpentersville CUSD 300** board member Kathleen Burley; **Lake Forest CHSD 115** board secretary Nicole Snoblin; and **Waukegan CUSD 60** board president Anita Hanna; as well as IASB Director of Governmental Relations Susan Hilton.

For more information about the Advocacy Institute in February, visit: <http://www.nsba.org/>.

# Only one school strike to date in 2013-14 school year

To date there has been only one school strike in 2013-2014, in **Mt. Olive CUSD 5**; which is in stark contrast to the nine strikes encountered in the 2012-13 school year.

While there have been no other teacher strikes in Illinois this calendar year, one strike was averted Jan. 13 in **Mendota CCSD 289** where a walkout by about 60 teachers had been set for that day.

The Mendota dispute, over insurance and the definition of a work day, nearly led to a work stoppage at the grade schools. But weekend negotiations carved out a settlement, details of which are not yet available.

Federally mediated meetings finally resolved the Mendota dispute. According to superintendent Kristen School, teachers had elected to strike following a mediation session on Jan. 9.

The teachers had first voted their intent to strike in September 2013, but both sides continued negotiations through the end of the year and beyond.

As mentioned, a strike occurred in Mt. Olive CUSD 5. The walkout by the district's 39 teachers began there on Dec. 9 and lasted for five school days after an impasse developed over three big issues: salary increases, health insurance and retirement.

The Mount Olive school board

and Mount Olive Education Association parties met December 14, in a good-faith effort to resolve their bargaining impasse and bring an end to the ongoing teachers strike.

Representatives of the two sides met for nearly five hours on a Saturday and at the end of the negotiations, the parties jointly announced they had reached a tentative agreement that would resolve the negotiations and end the strike. Terms of the tentative agreement were not announced.

Likewise, **Champaign CUSD 4** teachers had been set to strike in October 2013, just before a last-minute settlement was reached. The Champaign school district and union representing teachers worked out a tentative contract announced shortly before 1 a.m. on Oct. 8. The one-year agreement was finalized later that month.

That contract reportedly allowed for a 1.4 percent raise for teachers still receiving step increases, which are increases in pay for years of experi-



Pickers in the Mt. Olive strike were joined by these three retired coal miners.

ence and more education.

The contract also reportedly allowed for a 3 percent increase for teachers who are no longer on the salary schedule.

The school district also agreed to pay for teachers' individual health insurance and to make contributions to the Teachers Retirement System on the teachers' behalf.

Two additional school districts have settled recently, based on data provided by the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board:

- **Harlem SD 122** – Kishwaukee Division; Bargaining unit size: 534; Notice filed July 23, 2013; Settled Aug. 18, 2013.
- **DeKalb CUSD 428** – Kishwaukee Division; Bargaining unit size: 402 classroom teachers; Notice filed Aug. 8, 2013; Settled Aug. 27, 2013.

## Another round of mandatory training options in February

An upcoming workshop at different dates and locations in February will offer board members yet another opportunity to fulfill their state requirement for Professional Development Leadership Training for School Board Members (PDLT).

The workshop, which carries a \$150 fee that also covers materials and meals, satisfies the requirements for mandatory board training under Public Act 097-0008. The PDLT course counts as a Core Workshop in Leadership Academy and is good for 10

Master Board Member points.

Included are instructions in education and labor law, financial oversight and accountability and fiduciary responsibilities.

The workshop, which runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., will also fulfill the state requirement for Performance Evaluation Reform Act Training (PERA) for school board members.

Dates and locations are as follows.

- Feb. 1, Illinois Central College, East Peoria
- Feb. 8, NIU, Naperville

- Feb. 15, Holiday Day Inn, Carbondale
- Feb. 22, Prairie State College, Chicago Heights

Advance registration is required at least two days prior to each workshop. Registration can be done online, or by mail or fax.

More information about the workshops can be found at: <http://www.iasb.com/calendar/PDLTwinterworkshop2013.pdf>.

Professional Development Leadership Training is also available on the IASB's Online Learning Center.

## Member Turnover on Illinois School Boards At Biennial Elections

	1991	1993	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013
IASB Member Boards	870	858	859	863	868	866	865	852	855	855	851	852
Total Members	6,093	6,005	6,013	6,041	6,076	6,062	6,050	5,964	5,971	5,967	5,931	5,932
Terms Expiring	3,199	2,852	3,157	3,145	2,931	3,131	2,921	3,080	2,882	3,059	3,087	3,233
<b>New Members</b>												
Elected	1,542	1,543	1,370	1,489	1,335	1,352	1,457	1,369	1,364	1,297	1,288	1,383
Percentage	.482	.541	.434	.473	.455	.432	.498	.444	.508	.424	.417	.428
<b>Incumbents</b>												
Re-elected	1,658	1,309	1,753	1,656	1,596	1,779	1,464	1,711	1,625	1,762	1,799	1,850
Percentage	.518	.459	.566	.526	.544	.568	.502	.556	.526	.576	.583	.572
Net Turnover	.253	.257	.228	.246	.220	.223	.241	.230	.245	.217	.217	.233

## Board member turnover rate highest since 2007 election

The turnover rate of Illinois school board members in 2013 elections was 23.3 percent. The net turnover rate in the 2013 election was much higher than in the 2011 election and represents the high-

est turnover rate seen since 2007.

IASB membership records indicate that 1,383 new members filled board seats in 2013, compared to a total of 5,932 positions. In 2011, 1,288 new board members were seat-

ed out of a total of 5,931 available positions.

Turnover rates among Illinois school board members over the previous 12 elections ranged from a low

See **TURNOVER** on page 7

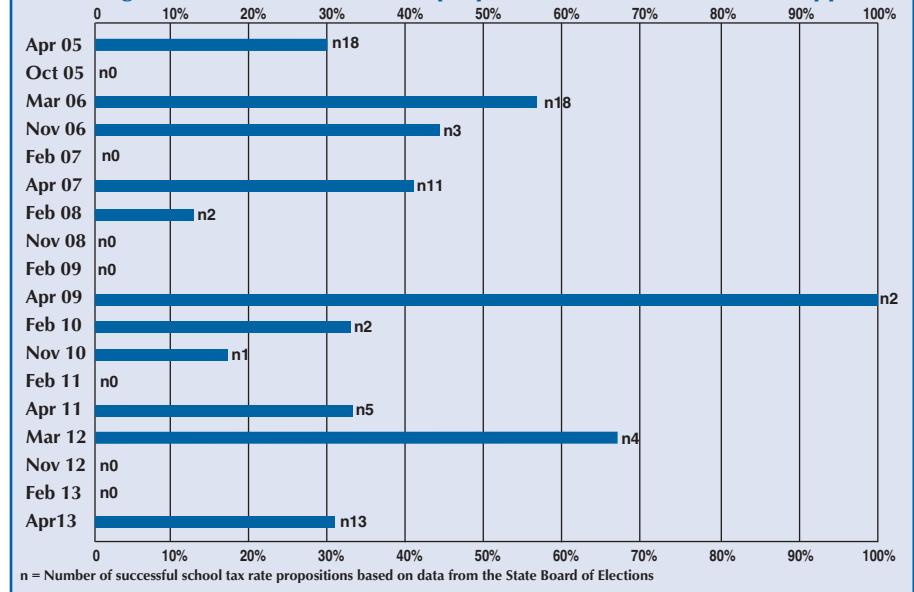
## Next available referendum option is November; decision due by August

While several districts have placed propositions on the March ballot, the next election to take action to place tax and bond referenda on the ballot is Nov. 4.

In addition, Aug. 15 is the last day for a school board to adopt a resolution putting such public policy questions on the ballot for November.

Aug. 28 is the last day for the board secretary to certify public policy questions to the election authority for referendum at the Nov. 4 General Election.

**Percentage of Illinois school tax rate propositions that received voter approval**



## SALES TAX *from page 1*

already subject to sales taxes.

Goods and services that are not subject to the additional tax include cars, trucks, ATVs, boats and RVs; mobile homes, unprepared food, drugs, farm equipment and parts.

For many school districts, the funding provided by the county school sales tax for school facilities may be the best and only way to raise funds for school construction, repair and maintenance.

Such a referendum qualifies for the ballot when school boards representing more than 50 percent of the resident student enrollment in the county adopt a resolution to certify the question.

But timing is important because it takes about a year for districts to receive any funds as the state revenue department only changes the tax rates for counties twice a year, on January

1 and July 1.

In addition, it takes about four months after the county tax goes into effect for funds to be distributed from the state through the regional office of education to local schools

A simple majority of votes cast in the county is needed to approve the referendum. Results of the March referenda will be reported in a subsequent issue of this newsletter.

# Hundreds of new school laws reviewed in new publication

More than 200 new laws officially took effect in Illinois on Jan. 1, 2014.

For example, **Senate Bill 923** establishes that school districts may elect to have cameras on their school buses to track drivers who pass stopped school buses that have their stop-sign arms extended. It requires the municipality and school district to post information regarding this use on their websites (Public Act 98-0556).

Other new laws that could impact schools include:

**HB 64** Makes it illegal for schools to ask for/demand a student's social networking password without cause; requires parental notification for elementary and secondary school students (Public Act 98-0129).

**HB 129** Permits school boards to designate the first Monday in October each year as "Bring Your Parents to School Day" to promote parental involvement (Public Act 98-0304).

**HB 160** Extends the time period school

districts (other than CPS) may transfer money between specified funds (Public Act 98-0131).

**HB 490** Requires those seeking a Professional Educator License to pass a basic skills test after an educator preparation program. This requirement is instead of requiring the test before entering an educator preparation program (Public Act 98-0361).

**HB 2675** Any public school sex-education course offered to 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> graders must cover abstinence and contraception (Public Act 98-0441).

**HB 2768** Increases the interaction between a school's principal and law enforcement agencies involving gang activities (Public Act 98-0059).

**HB 3070** Extends teacher and counselor training to include signs of mental illness and suicidal behavior (Public Act 98-0471).

**HB 3190** Requires proof of meningitis vaccination before entering 6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade (Public Act 98-0480).

All of the new education-related

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

More targeted information for school leaders is now offered online in a new IASB publication, expected to be mailed by the end of the month, called *New School Laws*.

The purpose of the publication is to notify school leaders about any newly adopted law or change in existing law that is important to local districts. Laws are indexed by bill number, Public Act number and title.

Laws are also separated by subjects, such as boards of education, personnel, regional office of education, school finance, school safety and health, state board of education, students, and taxation.

This publication will be mailed to superintendents, business officials and principals, and to each school board's legislative liaison and president.

*New School Laws* also can be found on the IASB website at <http://www.iasb.com/govrel/newlaws.cfm>.

## TURNOVER *from page 6*

of 21.7 percent in 2011, to a high of 30.4 percent in 1989, when 1,852 new members were elected out of a total of 6,093 board members.

A significant source of board turnover typically comes from incumbents who decide not to run again. But the school board election last year saw more incumbents reelected, with 1,850 returned to office, more than at any similar election in over 20 years.

And the percentage of incumbents returned to office in 2013 (57.2 percent) remained higher than any time in the past 20 years, with the exception of the previous two elections, in 2009 (57.6 percent) and 2011 (58.3 percent).

"This seems to suggest that voters remain rather satisfied with the majority of incumbents in local school board races," said Ben Schwarm, IASB's deputy executive director.

The next school board elections will be held in April 2015. But unlike previous years, school districts will

no longer be responsible for handling local election duties. That includes distribution of materials, collecting petitions, etc.

A bill removing school districts from this function was signed into law (Public Act 98-0115, 10 ILCS 5/28-2 and 28-5) on July 29, 2013 and took effect immediately. The duties formerly performed by local election officials (most often school board secretaries) have been transferred to the county clerks.

Specifically, nominating petitions no longer must be filed with the board secretary, and board members no longer must hear objections to nominating petitions.

Nominating petitions will be filed with the county clerk or the county board of election commissioners for the county where the school district's principal office is located.

Likewise, county officials, instead of a group of current board members,

will now hear objections to nominating petitions.

Despite the effective date of last July 29, the next school board election is not scheduled until April 7, 2015, with petitions to be filed in December 2014.

"School districts need to become familiar with the changes in the law governing board elections," said Schwarm.

Prospective school board candidates will begin circulating nominating petitions for signatures in the fall, no earlier than 90 days prior to the last date of filing for candidates.

Candidates will have one week to file their paperwork in order to qualify for the 2015 school board elections, beginning no earlier than 78 days before the election and ending no later than 71 days before the election during normal office hours.

See information online at <http://www.iasb.com/elections/qualifications.cfm>.

# IASB will begin accepting exhibitor applications Feb. 10

IASB developed an online registration procedure last year for contracts and housing for all exhibitors in the Joint Annual Conference, and that same procedure will be used for the 2014 Conference.

A new policy for all exhibitors this year will mean that all contracts will be assigned on a first received basis and booths will no longer be held until a set date for exhibitors to retain the same space as last year.

Despite rising costs, the association has held the line this year against any cost increase for exhibitors.

New forms will be posted online Monday, Feb. 10. The forms and instruc-

tions will not be mailed out, however the completed forms still must be sent in to IASB. Credit card purchases may be emailed or faxed in.

Signed contracts and booth fees must be submitted as soon as possible for firms wishing to try to reserve the same exhibit space as in 2013.

But no space is guaranteed, and all booths will be assigned on a first-paid/first-received contract basis.

“We will do our best to assign the same booth space as last year or the closest space to the booth requested for those who get the contract signed early,” said IASB Meetings Management assistant director and exhibit

manager Sandy Boston.

Instructions and forms will be posted online at: <http://www.iasb.com/jac14/exhibitor.cfm>.

An email reminder will be sent to previous exhibitors, plus an online reminder is to be posted on the Association’s website later this month.

Potential exhibitors are being asked to ensure that IASB has received the correct email address for the person they wish to receive a reminder about these new procedures.

Questions about exhibitions, forms or procedures, should be directed to IASB Meetings Management at 217/528-9688, ext. 1115.

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## PROPOSALS *from page 1*

sessions, including proposed panel titles.

The chosen panels are presented by the board members, administrators and other school or community members who were involved in the particular programs showcased, based upon 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. And they provide tips on how school boards can achieve such successes in their own school districts.

IASB seeks specific panel suggestion in any of the following eight tracks; presenters are asked to select ONE primary track and ONE secondary track, if applicable:

### 1. Governance/Leadership

- Creating a school governance team for increased student leadership.
- Making sure your superintendent evaluation process does the job it should.
- The pitfalls of micro-management.

### 2. Finance and Funding

- Stretching resources and making taxpayers happy through inter-

governmental cooperation.

### 3. Current Issues

- How to stem the rising tide of violence in America’s schools.
- Multi-culturalism—real balance or political correctness?

### 4. Community Relations and Communications

- Convening the community around governance issues.

### 5. School Law

- Termination of underachieving teachers.
- Peer-to-peer and teacher-student sexual harassment.

### 6. Facilities/Transportation/Technology

- School maintenance.
- Life safety and building accessibility codes.
- Technology in the rural school district.

### 7. Best Practices

- Block scheduling worked for us.
- We adopted a don’t pass, don’t play policy.

### 8. Governmental Relations

- Effective lobbying—the players, the process, the problems.

Proposals can be made electronically or by mail or FAX. The form

to fill out and submit electronically can be found at: <http://www.iasb.com/jac14/rfp2014.cfm>.

Those who prefer to fill out a paper form can download a PDF version to submit by mail or FAX at: <http://www.iasb.com/jac14/rfp2014.pdf>.

A committee of Association members will evaluate all proposals received in the IASB Springfield office by Feb. 14. Invitations will be issued to the districts and organizations recommended by those evaluators.

Acceptance of an invitation to present a Share the Success panel represents a joint commitment to create a valuable educational experience for conference attendees.

Districts and organizations that are not selected to make their presentations during a 90-minute panel session may be offered a different opportunity to present at the conference. IASB will once again be featuring a “Carousel of Panels” session on Saturday afternoon, Nov. 22.

The Carousel is designed to allow districts and organizations a chance to make three, one-half-hour presentations on their topic in just under a two-hour period, allowing attendees

See **PROPOSALS** on page 9



## Thousands access conference handouts

Eighty-three panel session handouts (PDF Word documents or PowerPoint presentations) from a majority of panels presented at the 2013 Joint Annual Conference are now available at the IASB Members-Only website.

Panels with online links to their materials are listed by the panel title and hotel/room name. The panels appear in chronological order of the conference; by day and the time slot they were presented.

The only exception to this order is the board secretaries' panels. Available materials are listed at the end of the other panels.

Note: Panels are only listed if materials have been submitted. Additional panels and their online materials

will be posted as they are received.

The links to these panel materials will be posted until September 2014. All materials may be downloaded as PDF files (Adobe Acrobat Reader Required). To download, just click on the desired document.

So far, a total of 3,253 downloads have been made from the website. That count includes materials downloaded through November and December.

Access to the Members-Only website is limited to board members, superintendents and secretaries who have a member ID number that is contained within the IASB database of member districts. Access is free; however, users must set up an account with their member I.D. number.

## Conference photo gallery available for free viewing

Photos from the 2013 Joint Annual Conference are now posted online.

More than 1,000 photos – from Friday morning's pre-conference workshops to the final general session on Sunday – are posted on a secured website. There is no fee for this member service; however, visitors will need to use a password to log into the site.

The website address is <http://rhlphoto.exposuremanager.com/g/2013-iasb1>. A valid email address and password (2013iasb) are required to log on to the site.

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 will also be able to order their own prints. They are ideal for use in school board or district newsletters, websites or for personal keepsakes.

Photo reprints can be ordered in a variety of sizes, from wallets to 11 by 14 inches. All major credit cards can be used for payment.

### PROPOSALS *from page 8*

an opportunity to obtain a wide variety of information in minimal time.

Participants of the 2013 Carousel of Panels – both presenters and attendees – commented very favorably on the carousel experience and said they look forward to its return at the 2014 Conference.

The 2014 Joint Annual Conference is set for Nov. 21-23 in Chicago.

Updated information about the 2014 conference will be posted online as it is received. Instructions and forms for registration and housing will all be posted on the IASB website at <http://www.iasb.com>.

## NEWS FROM IASB

### 2013 indexes online

IASB recently made online indexes available for two Association periodicals issued through 2013: *The Illinois School Board Journal* and the *Illinois School Board Newsbulletin*.

The *Journal* can be searched via either of two indexes: one by subject and one index by author. Indices for both the *Journal* and *Newsbulletin* are available for 2008 through 2013, and both can be accessed from the Publications page on the IASB website at <http://www.iasb.com/publications.cfm>.

### Centennial video

IASB staff members have recently begun thanking everyone who contributed to and participated in the Association's centennial activities and events.

For those who missed them, the communications and production services departments have prepared a video that captures the essence of the centennial in an audio-visual tribute. To see the video, visit: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K13K\\_hySDeM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K13K_hySDeM).

### IASB Constitution mailing

On Jan. 15 the Association mailed out the newly updated 2014 IASB Constitution and Position Statements booklet to all member district board members and superintendents.

Both the IASB Constitution and the Association's official position statements are products of the IASB Delegate Assembly, which meets annually at the Joint Annual Conference. IASB operates within the framework of its Constitution, and lobbies on behalf of its position statements, which reflect the beliefs, aspirations and aims of the association as established by its member school boards.

# Spring division dinner meetings set to begin Feb. 25

Programming for IASB winter/spring division dinner meetings promises to provide professional development on a number of timely topics of interest to school board members. Topics include School Safety and Security, the Affordable Care Act, the Board's Role in PERA (the Performance Evaluation Review Act,) School Funding, Common Core Standards (aka the New Illinois Learning Standards,) PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness of College and Careers) Assessments and more.

Some IASB division meetings this spring will also offer an opportunity to learn more about legislative issues, with sessions presented by IASB governmental relations staff. The discussions will cover the latest information from the Capitol on school funding and other key education issues.

Division dinner meetings begin Feb. 25 and conclude April 30 (see list online at site listed below). For

dates and locations in a particular division, it is easy to visit [www.iasb.com](http://www.iasb.com) and click on the Events Calendar, then View Upcoming Events.

Attendance at division meetings earns five credits in IASB's Master Board Member program. Reservations can be made by mail, phone, fax or online.

For more information on these upcoming division meetings, and others planned for the spring, visit online at: <https://www.iasb.com/calendar/calendar.cfm>.

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## Four directors elected to executive committee

The IASB Board of Directors at their organizational meeting in November, voted to elect four current directors to the executive committee for the coming year. Elected were: Jackie Mickley, **Geneseo CUSD 228**; Mark Harms, **Flanagan-Cornell Unit SD 74**, Flanagan; Joanne Osmond, **Lake Villa CCSD 41**; and Sue McCance, **CUSD 3 Fulton Co., Cuba**.

These four members are in addition to IASB officers who automatically serve as executive committee members,



Mark Harms



Jackie Mickley



Eric Leys

including President Karen Fisher, **Ottawa THSD 140**; Vice President Phil Pritzker, **Wheeling CCSD 21**; Immediate Past President Carolyne Brooks, **West Richland CUSD 2**, Noble; and Treasurer Dale Hansen **Grant Park CUSD 6**, Kankakee.

Meanwhile the larger board welcomed two new members: Mike Vallosio, the new Service Associates representative, and Eric Leys, of **Maine THSD 207**, representing the North Cook Division. Leys replaces Phil Pritzker as director of the North Cook Division after Pritzker's election as Vice President.

The next meeting of the IASB Board of Directors will be Feb. 21-22 in Chicago.



Sue McCance



Joanne Osmond

## Awards for service, honorary members available to districts

IASB Honorary Memberships for Exceptional Service are awarded annually for rendering distinguished service to IASB or to public education in general. The contributions may extend district wide or regionally.

Up to three Honorary Memberships statewide may be awarded each year. The awards are presented at regional meetings.

In addition, honors are given through the IASB Service Award for 25 years of service (not necessarily continuous) producing a positive impact through a close affiliation with and direct service to schools, either as an employee or volunteer.

Current board members and IASB staff are not eligible recipients. Service Awards are issued to as many people as meet requirements to receive them; they are presented at regional meetings. There is no deadline by which these names must be submitted.

Submit nominations to: IASB Awards Committee Liaison, 2921 Baker Drive, Springfield, IL 62703-5929, or phone Kara Kienzler at IASB, or fax 217/753-2485.

# NEWS HEADLINES

**Aurora** (Dec. 12, *Beacon-News*) Starting in 2014 it will be more difficult for English-language learners in Illinois to test out of bilingual services, thanks to higher proficiency score requirements.

Students now must obtain a composite proficiency score of 5.0 and reading and writing proficiencies of 4.2 on the ACCESS test to be considered proficient in English. That's up from a composite score of 4.8 in previous years.

**Champaign** (Dec. 26, *News-Gazette*) Computer science in schools got a lot of press in early December, as schools all over the country participated in a program called Hour of Code.

It encouraged students to try computer-code writing for an hour. But at Champaign's Kenwood Elementary, it should be called hours of code, said Principal Lisa Geren, given that students there have been focusing on computer programming since the first day of school.

Much of the staff trained last summer with partners at the University of Illinois. "If they can program, they have a solid career path," said Maya Israel, an assistant professor of special education at the UI's College of Education. Israel said a computer-programming focus throughout an entire school is unusual, especially one with such a high poverty rate.

About 75 percent of Kenwood students qualify for free or reduced-price lunches.

**Chicago** (Dec. 19, *Chicago Sun-Times*) The performance gap between Chicago's black and white students — and between the poorest students and their wealthier classmates — continues to widen, according to results from the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress. And students who qualify for free school lunches — traditionally a measure

of poverty — also fell behind in three of the four tests of grade- and middle-school kids' ability in reading and math.

"To close the achievement gap, CPS will continue to invest our efforts in identifying and supporting students of all backgrounds who have fallen behind their peers, ensuring that every child in every community in Chicago is prepared for college, career and life," according to CPS CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett.

**Danville** (Jan. 12, *News-Gazette*) Area ministers are asking the Danville school board to implement a districtwide uniform for students starting in the fall of 2014. The school board is willing to hear them out, said its president, Bill Dobbles.

**Sidell** (Dec. 12, *News-Gazette*) A committee of ten made up of five school board members from each district is meeting to begin crafting a petition and planning for consolidation of the Catlin and Jamaica school districts.

"I think time is of the essence with the declining assessed valuation of property and state aid," Catlin school board President Jeff Fauver said of the need for a merger, which the two districts have studied and discussed off and on for nearly two decades. The panel is charged with developing the plan that lays out key elements of the new district, including the location of students, transportation plan, curriculum, general staffing and property tax levy.

**Springfield** (Jan. 8, *The State Journal-Register*) With less and less money available in reserves, Springfield District 186 has had to increasingly rely on borrowed money to meet payroll. On Jan. 6, board members approved a \$22 million line of credit at an interest rate of 1.63 percent with Bank of Springfield.

The \$22 million line of credit is

more than double what the district asked for two school years ago and \$7 million more than last school year, records show. Joe Bascio, the district's interim budget director, said there is a direct correlation between the higher level of borrowing and the district's reserve fund being depleted over the past three years.

**Statewide** (Dec. 19, *The Associated Press*) Stable state funding over the last two years has meant key state pension funds did not have to sell assets to meet payments in 2013, a state audit report notes.

The Teachers Retirement System has routinely sold more than \$1 billion a year since 2005, officials said, topping out at \$2.8 billion in 2011 because of short state funding and reverberations of the 2008 economic downturn.

Adding to the brighter landscape for TRS of late is an improved economy and market. Thus the TRS portfolio has reached nearly \$41 billion. That is up 44 percent from the recent low of \$28.5 billion in 2009.

**Statewide** (Jan. 3, *The Associated Press*) The U.S. Agriculture Department (USDA) announced Jan. 3 it is making permanent rules that allow schools to serve larger portions of lean meat and whole grains in school lunches and other meals.

Guidelines restricting portion size were intended to combat childhood obesity, but parents complained their kids were not getting enough to eat. Some say the rules establishing maximums on such foods are too limiting and make it hard to plan daily meals.

The department eliminated limits on meats and grains on a temporary basis more than a year ago. On Jan. 2, officials made that change permanent, saying the USDA has delivered on its promise to give schools more flexibility in meal planning.

## LAWSUITS *from page 1*

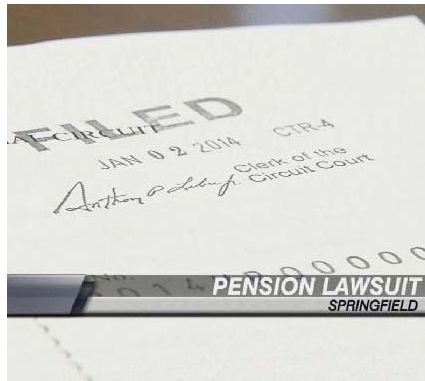
sionable salary cap for Tier I employees (those hired before January 1, 2011) equal to that of Tier II employees (hired after January 1, 2011).

Members of the Illinois Retired Teachers Association and the Illinois Association of School Administrators were the first to file lawsuits on Dec. 27.

The retired teachers reportedly requested class action for members of TRS who are specifically not members in either the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) or the Illinois Education Association (IEA). Their suit was filed in Cook County.

IASB will not be filing a lawsuit in the matter because the association is not directly impacted by the new law, association leaders have said.

Experts say the first lawsuits filed all make common diminishment claims against the constitutionality of the provision of the new law covering an AAI (cost of living adjustment) calculation change, an age change, and a pensionable salary cap.



The state employees' lawsuit was filed on Jan. 2.

The retired teachers' lawsuit reportedly maintains that the Illinois Constitution Pension Clause overrides everything else and it then cites the relevant history and case law. It also reportedly asks for class action status only for non-bargaining group / non-represented retirees. The lawsuit's requested relief is for the court to declare PA 98-0599 unconstitutional.

Gov. Pat Quinn and other supporters of the pension law say they are confident it will be upheld.

## College options, conference highlighted in latest Journal

The January-February issue of *The Illinois School Board Journal* features a four-page center section with pictures from the 2013 Joint Annual Conference.

The issue's cover story examines how districts can help students envision all the options open to them after high school so that not everyone feels compelled to obtain a four-year col-

lege degree.

Such a degree, after all, may not be a good fit for all students academically and may not always equate to the dream of a million-dollar earnings potential, the story says.



## Board members can get tax deductions

School board members are allowed a deduction on their federal income tax returns for non-reimbursed expenses arising out of board service.

The cost of driving to and from board meetings is one such deduction.

Board members must itemize deductions and file Form 1040 to qual-

ify. For further information contact the IRS or see IRS Publication 526, "Charitable Contributions," containing guidelines pertinent to board member deductions.

Free copies of that publication are available from the IRS and may be obtained via fax or mail by calling 1-800/829-3676.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**February 1 – South Cook Winter Division Meeting**, Lemont

**February 1 – Professional Development Leadership Training & Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PDLT & PERA)**, East Peoria

**February 6 – The Critical Role of School Boards in a Democracy**, Morton

**February 8 – Professional Development Leadership Training & Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PDLT & PERA)**, Naperville

**February 15 – Professional Development Leadership Training & Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PDLT & PERA)**, Carbondale

**February 21-22 – IASB Board of Directors' Meeting**, Chicago

**February 22 – Professional Development Leadership Training & Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PDLT & PERA)**, Chicago Heights

**February 25 – Abe Lincoln Division Spring Dinner Meeting**, Springfield

**February 25 – Shawnee Division Spring Dinner Meeting**, Cairo

**February 26 – Southwestern Division Spring Dinner Meeting**, Alton

**February 27 – Illini Division Spring Dinner Meeting**, Champaign

**March 4 – Wabash Valley Division Spring Dinner Meeting**, Casey

**March 4 – Kaskaskia Division Spring Dinner Meeting**, Vandalia

**March 4 – Three Rivers Division Winter Governing Meeting**, Joliet

**March 4 – Northwest Division Spring Dinner Meeting**, Morrison

For more information about coming events, see the IASB website:  
[www.iasb.com/calendar](http://www.iasb.com/calendar)