

Illinois SCHOOL BOARD Newsbulletin

March 2014 / Issue No. 741

National campaign aims to highlight success of America's public schools

In partnership with IASB and other state associations, the National School Boards Association (NSBA) has launched an all-new national campaign, Stand Up for Public Schools, to highlight the success of public education.

The campaign, which features advertisements with celebrity advocates and public school graduates to tell their stories of public education, has already made a splash at Hollywood's Oscar Awards ceremonies. NSBA Board president David Pickler

See **STANDUP** on page 5

GREAT THINGS HAPPEN AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Who I am today began with public education.

Salman Khan
FOUNDER, KHAN ACADEMY
Khan Academy is on a mission to provide a free world-class education for anyone, anywhere.

Learn more at
www.standup4publicschools.org

nsba
National School Boards Association

March 18 primary includes 25 school fund referendums

A total of 25 school finance referendum questions are set to appear on March 18 primary election ballots, including 16 proposals to increase property taxes and nine proposed bond issues, according to state records. Dozens more school districts would also benefit from 16 countywide referenda on sales tax propositions earmarked for school facility purposes.

Districts placing property tax increase proposals before voters in March include:

- Berwyn South SD 100
- Breese Elementary District 12
- CUSD 201, Westmont
- Giant City CCSD 130, Carbondale
- Grant CCSD 110, Fairview Heights
- Hartsburg-Emden CUSD 21
- Kinnikinnick CCSD 131, Roscoe
- Lake Park CHSD 108, Roselle
- McClellan CCSD 12, Mt. Vernon
- Monmouth-Roseville CUSD 238
- Nauvoo-Colusa CUSD 325
- Odin District 722
- Prairieview-Ogden CCSD 197, Royal
- Spring Lake CCSD 606, Manito
- Staunton CUSD 6
- Unity Point CCSD 140, Carbondale

The largest of the tax increase propositions is in Berwyn, where an additional \$6 million in revenue could

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Over 3,000 board members receive mandatory board training from IASB

Since the April 2013 election, IASB has provided Professional Development Leadership Training to 3,097 school board members. "That number continues to grow each day," according to Dean Langdon, IASB's associate executive director who heads up board development and Targeting Achievement through Governance (TAG) programs

for the Association.

Legislation adopted in the spring of 2011, P.A. 97-08 (105 ILCS 5/10-16a), first required mandatory school board member training, known as Professional Development Leadership Training (PDLT). In 2012, IASB's Online Learning Center launched a new course to fulfill those mandatory training

See **PDLT** on page 12

ESEA waiver sought

ISBE recently resubmitted Illinois' request for a waiver from some requirements of the NCLB Act but has not received a response from USED. The waiver has not been approved in the past due to concern about the timeline for including student growth in teacher evaluations. The federal timeline requires districts to implement the new evaluation systems no later than the 2015-16 school year. Yet under state law, all districts need to be in compliance by 2016-17.

ISAT test window open

Due to the severe weather conditions across the state this winter, ISBE is offering the option for districts to test beyond the regular ISAT testing window that closed March 14. Districts also may test March 10-21. For information, contact ISBE at (866)317-6034. Questions about materials and shipping should be directed to MetriTech at (800)747-4868.

Excel-nomination packets

Nomination packets for the 2014-2015 Those Who Excel/Illinois Teacher of the Year program are now available. The program includes seven nomination categories, including school board member/community volunteer, but in recent years the number of nominees in this category has flagged. Districts may nominate one candidate per category. Nominations must be postmarked by June 9. The awards will be presented at the Those Who Excel banquet on Oct. 25, at the Marriott Bloomington-Normal Conference Center. The application may be printed from the website at http://www.isbe.net/those_who_excel.htm or districts can request a copy by phoning 217/782-4648.

Financial difficulties on rise for many school districts due to state's woes

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has released its annual financial profile of the state's public schools through Fiscal Year 2013, showing 67 more districts than two years ago are facing financial headaches.

While more districts are falling behind, the overwhelming majority are living within their means, even when state data is revised to take into account the fact that most districts have not received anywhere near their full state funding.

"The problem has been a slow state recovery from the recession and growing competing budget interests like Medicaid costs and pension liability," according to IASB Deputy Executive Director Ben Schwarm.

The State Board of Education announced in January that schools have endured more than \$800 million in cuts since 2009. "When adjusting the FY09 K-12 education budget for inflation, the ... [\$1.08 billion school funding increase supported by the State Board for FY 2015] amounts to a 1.5 percent decrease from the adjusted FY09 levels," said State Superintendent of Education Chris Koch.

The latest financial profile shows that 560, or 65 percent of the state's 862 public school districts, are doing a sound job of managing their finances. That compares to 72 percent achieving the same "Financial Recognition" status just five years earlier.

The latest financial profile is based on data from Fiscal Year 2013, which ended June 30, 2013. The data has been revised to eliminate the impact of payment delays for mandated categoricals such as pupil transportation, special education and other expenditures due to the state and national economic downturn. The school code was amended effective August 2009 to specifically ensure that districts are not designated as being in financial difficul-

ty solely due to delayed state payments.

The state profile is a "point in time" picture, meaning that it is likely the financial condition of districts has changed in the nearly eight months since the end of the last fiscal year. Illinois' backlog of unpaid bills will reach about \$5.6 billion by the end of the current fiscal year. That would be much less than the backlog at the height of the recession, which reached almost \$10 billion.

The 2014 report also shows that more districts are in distress; the number of districts on the "Financial Watch" list has increased from 17 districts or 2 percent in 2011 to 49 districts or 6 percent in 2013. That is the highest total since 2007, when 53 districts were on the state's financial watch list.

Likewise, the number of school districts on the "Early Warning" list on the state's financial profile has increased from 37 in 2011 to 72 this year, the largest total since 2007.

The Financial Profile is created by using five indicators of financial performance:

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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**

High school grads exceed U.S. average on AP exams

Illinois high school graduates are slightly above the national average for Advanced Placement exam scores, according to a report released by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Among last year's graduates, 21 percent received an AP exam score high enough for college credit. The national average is 20 percent.

"The latest AP exam results are further proof that our efforts are on the right track," Christopher Koch, the state's superintendent of education, said in a statement.

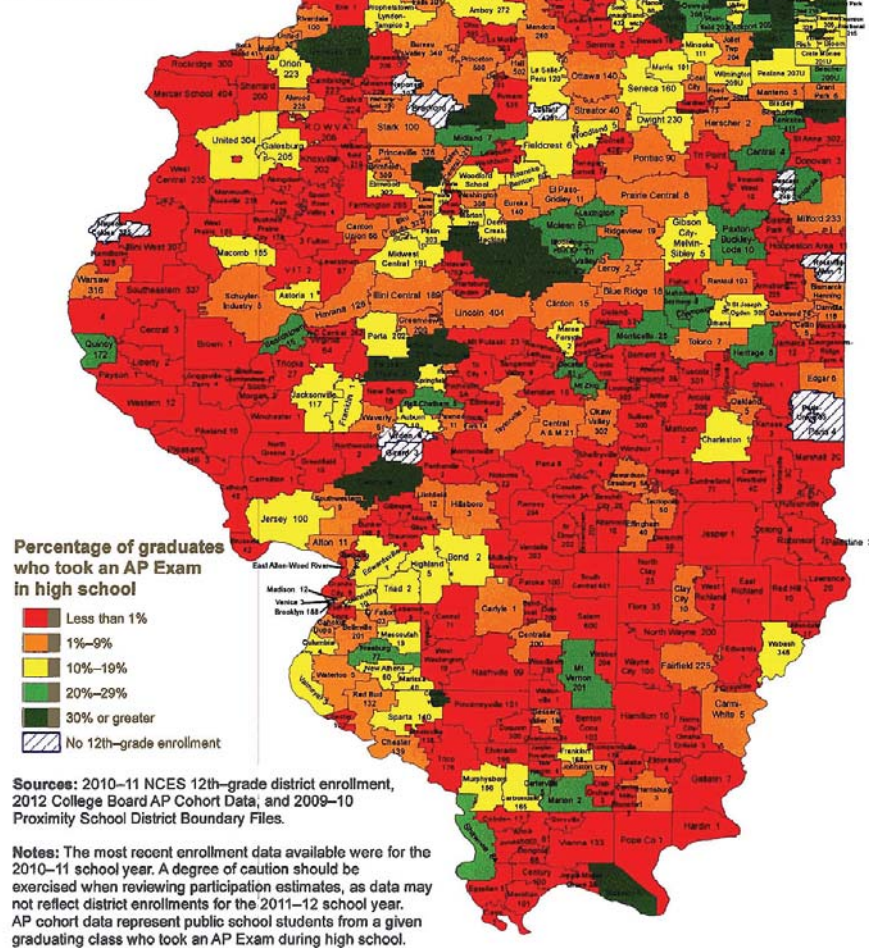
AP exams measure a student's content mastery of college-level studies in specific academic disciplines. Scores of three or more out of five are generally eligible for college credit.

While 47 percent of all high school graduates came from low-income households, just 29 percent of the graduates taking AP tests came from low-income families. About 16 percent of all graduating students are black, and represented 11 percent of all graduates taking AP exams. Meanwhile 18.4 percent of all graduating students are Hispanic, and represented 19.8 percent of all graduates taking AP exams.

The latest AP results for Illinois are reported by the state board at: <http://www.isbe.net/news/2014/feb11.htm>.

Illinois Public Schools

AP® Participation by District: Class of 2012



FINANCIAL, from page 2

- Fund Balance to Revenue Ratio
- Expenditures to Revenues Ratio
- Days Cash on Hand
- Percent of short-term borrowing available

- Percent of long-term debt remaining

The newly released 2014 Financial Profile for all districts in Illinois can be found online at: <http://www.isbe.net/sfms/P/profile.htm>.

2014 School District Financial Profile

| | School District Financial Profile (Original Calculation) | School District Financial Profile (Adjusted for Delayed Payments) |
|---------------|--|---|
| Recognition | 589 | 560 |
| Review | 163 | 181 |
| Early Warning | 74 | 72 |
| Watch | 36 | 49 |



"WITH TECHNOLOGY, I GOT THE KIDS TO TEACH ONE ANOTHER!"

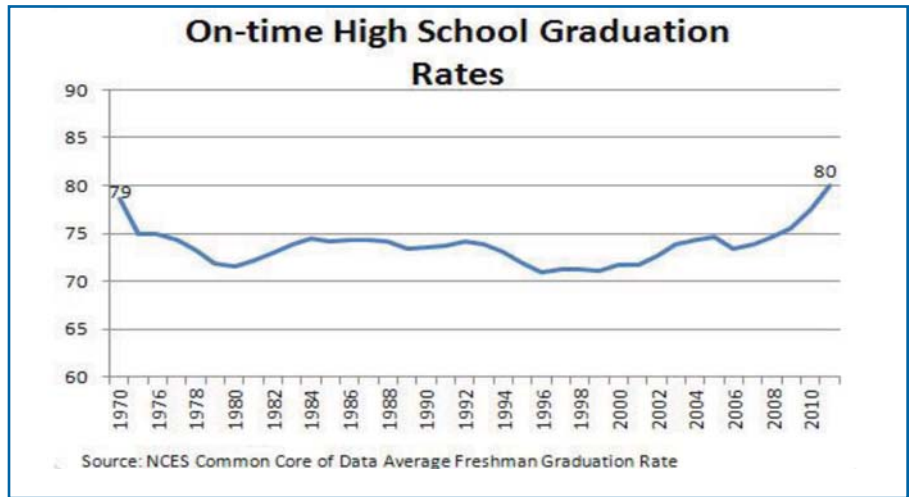
Rising graduation rate hits new high in public schools

Recent data released by the National Center for Education Statistics show the national on-time graduation rate for public high schools now stands at 80 percent — an all-time high. The most recent Illinois numbers were even higher, at 82 percent.

Public school supporters hailed the number as “quite an accomplishment” after the rate hovered around 71 percent for much of the 1990s.

The 80 percent graduation rate represents only those students who earned a *standard* high school diploma within four years of entering high school, so it does not include students who earned a high school equivalency (ex GED) or certificates of completion. Nor does it include those students who took more than four years to earn a standard high school diploma.

“Including late high school graduates would likely add more than 5 percentage points to the national graduation rate,” according to Jim Hull,



of the Center for Public Education. “So the actual national graduation rate is quite likely closer to 90 than 80 percent.”

The overall graduation rate increased due in large part to the substantial gains made by minority students. The on-time graduation rate for Hispanic students increased from 64 percent in 2008 to 75 percent in 2011. During this same time period, the on-time graduation rate for black students improved from 61 percent to 67 percent. The graduation rate

also continued to climb for white students during this same time period (81 to 84 percent).

“While these are numbers are worth celebrating they also show there is much more work to be done. The attainment gap between minority and white students needs to be closed. While they have narrowed in recent years, the narrowing needs to accelerate so minority students who are just entering school now will have the same chance to graduate as their white classmates,” Hull said.

Board members, others face May 1 economic statement deadline

State law requires school board members, certificated administrators and some non-administrative school district employees to file annual economic interest statements by May 1 with the clerk of the county where they reside. Such statements should be filed by May 1 unless the individuals required to file have already done so this calendar year (Governmental Ethics Act, 5 ILCS

420/4A-101 et seq.).

Anyone required to file the statement of economic interests may obtain a 30-day extension, however, by filing with the county clerk a declaration of intent to defer the filing.

Local school district superintendents are generally required to file, as well as school business officials and certificated administrators. Others required to file include: department

heads responsible for large contracts (\$1,000 or more), those who have authority to issue or promulgate school district rules, and employees who have supervisory authority for 20 or more employees.

Individuals who have not received economic interest forms by mail should contact their county clerk to obtain the forms or additional information.

Applications due soon for reading awards book grants to schools

The endowment fund of the Illinois School Library Media Association/Library Book Selection Service (ISLMA/LBSS) will issue its fourth set of grants in 2015, with applications due soon. Public and private school libraries, as well as public libraries registered in any of the

children’s choice reading awards programs, are eligible to apply.

Information about the grant and an application is available at the ISLMA/LBSS Endowment Fund website at <http://www.lbssfund.org>. Applicants need to register for one of the four 2015 Readers’ Choice awards

after March 15, and then apply for a grant before April 30. For information, email ISLMAexsec@gmail.com or call 309/341-1099.

Schools with larger populations and low book budgets may be eligible for an extra set of books for the 2015 awards.

STANDUP from page 1

gave film director Steve McQueen a campaign wristband he was shown wearing there.

The red wristband was visible as McQueen and actor Brad Pitt celebrated onstage after receipt of the Best Picture Oscar for their film “12 Years a Slave.”

“NSBA’s campaign intends to counter the aggressive, well-funded attacks on public education with national and local outreach that supports local school board governance and honors the achievements of America’s public schools,” said NSBA Executive Director Thomas J. Gentzel.

NSBA also is partnering with New Regency, Penguin Books, and filmmakers to distribute “12 Years a Slave” to public high schools. The initiative is coordinated by former talk show host Montel Williams, who is a celebrity spokesperson for the “Stand Up 4 Public Schools” campaign.

NSBA will assist in distributing an edited version of the film, book, and study guide to “12 Years a Slave” nationwide in September 2014. This version will be appropriate for high school classrooms and each school district can decide whether and how to utilize the resources, according to NSBA.

Sal Khan, founder of the not-for-profit Khan Academy, was the campaign’s first celebrity advocate. Other household names have joined upcoming

phases of the campaign. State school boards associations will be highlighting local celebrities in their campaigns as well, and more celebrities will be joining the national campaign over the next year.

“Great public schools reflect the will of local communities and the strong governance of local school boards dedicated to advancing student achievement,” said Gentzel.

“This is an excellent vehicle for NSBA and our state associations to connect to share the great things happening in America’s public schools,” he added.

The campaign operates against a simple premise: “Who I am today began with public education,” paired with the rejoinder, “Today’s public schools are better than ever.”

In one of the advertisements featuring Khan, he notes that “People talk about college and career readiness, but both are just a means to an end. What we really need to talk about is life readiness.”

The campaign website, www.standup4publicschools.org, includes some early details on the new campaign and how individuals can get involved and take action to support public schools.

Wristbands like the one worn at the Oscars can be purchased now at the website: <http://standup4publicschools.com/purchase-wristbands>.



NSBA president David Pickler (at right above) gave film director Steve McQueen a campaign wristband the director wore on stage at this year’s Oscar Awards and McQueen and actor Brad Pitt celebrated receipt of the Best Picture award (below). Getty Images/Kevin Winter



State offers free Ed Leaders Network tool to administrators

The Illinois State Board of Education has announced it is partnering with the Illinois Principals Association to provide high-quality, online professional development for all Illinois public school administrators.

This includes: superintendents, principals and assistant principals, appropriate central office staff (assistant superintendents and curriculum

directors), etc.

Through this partnership with IPA, administrators are being provided a subscription to the Ed Leaders Network (ELN) and are invited to find out more about this tool by visiting the ELN website at <http://www.edleadersnetwork.org> or by exploring the infographic created to highlight the features of this professional development tool: [\[put/1166587-el_n_2-copy-isbe\]\(https://magic.piktochart.com/out-put/1166587-el_n_2-copy-isbe\).](https://magic.piktochart.com/out-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Administrators all should have received an email, Feb. 17-21, from admin@edleadersnetwork.org that contained ELN login information and credentials (checking e-mail spam and junk mail folders is suggested). Over the course of the next couple months, administrators will have several opportunities to learn more about how ELN will enhance educational leadership.

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be obtained if the proposal is approved. The measure asks voters the following question:

“Shall the limiting rate under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law for South Berwyn School District Number 100, Cook County, Illinois, be increased by an additional amount equal to 1.400% above the limiting rate for any purpose of said School District for levy year 2012 and be equal to 4.306% of the equalized assessed value of the taxable property therein for levy year 2014?”

The South Berwyn tax proposal also includes three explanatory notes: “(1) The approximate amount of taxes extendable at the most recently extended limiting rate is \$12,767,649, and the approximate amount of taxes extendable if the proposition is approved is \$18,923,179. (2) For the 2014 levy year the approximate amount of the additional tax extendable against property containing a single family residence and having a fair market value at the time of the referendum of \$100,000 is estimated to be \$393. (3) If the proposition is approved, the aggregate extension for 2014 will be determined by the limiting rate set forth in the proposition, rather than the otherwise applicable limiting rate calculated under the provisions of the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (commonly known as the Property Tax Cap Law).”

The smallest tax increase proposition appears to be in Breese, where the tax rate would inch up from .92% to 1.07%, a rise in the property tax rate of just 15 cents per \$100 of equalized assessed valuation.

The other tax proposals being put to a vote include the following referendum questions:

Shall the limiting rate under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law for Giant City Community Consolidated School District Number 130, Jackson and Williamson Counties, Illinois, be increased by an additional amount equal to 0.75% above the limiting rate in Jackson County, Illi-

nois for the levy year 2012 and be an additional amount equal to 0.81298% above the limiting rate for levy year 2012 in Williamson County, Illinois, for any purpose of said School District and be equal to 3.37363% of the equalized assessed value of the taxable property therein for levy year 2013?

Shall the maximum tax rate for the tax which Grant Community Consolidated School District No. 110, St. Clair County, Illinois, levies for educational purposes, be increased by 0.85 percent, from the currently authorized rate of 1.42 percent to a rate not to exceed 2.27 percent upon the value of taxable property within the District as equalized or assessed by the Department of Revenue, as authorized by Article 17 of the School Code?

Shall the debt service extension base under the Property Tax Extension Law for Hartsburg-Emden Community Unit School District Number 21, Logan and Tazewell Counties, Illinois, for payment of principal and interest on limited bonds be established at \$500,000 for the 2014 levy year and all subsequent levy years, such debt service extension base to be increased each year by the lesser of 5% or the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index during the 12-month calendar year preceding the levy year?

Shall the extension limitation under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law for Kinnikinnick Community Consolidated School District No. 131, Winnebago and Boone Counties, Illinois, be increased from the lesser of 5% or the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index over the prior levy year to 12.5% per year for 2014 and 2015?

Shall the extension limitation under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law for Lake Park Community High School District Number 108, DuPage County, Illinois, be increased from the lesser of 5% or the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index

over the prior levy year to 2.6% for the 2014 levy year?

Shall the limiting rate under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law for McClellan Community Consolidated School District Number 12, Jefferson County, Illinois, be increased by an additional amount equal to 0.99% above the limiting rate for any purpose of said School District for levy year 2012 and be equal to 3.24280% of the equalized assessed value of the taxable property therein for levy year 2013?

Shall the maximum annual tax rate for educational purposes of Monmouth-Roseville Community Unit School District No. 238, Warren County, Illinois, be increased and established at 3.00 percent upon all the taxable property of said School District at the value, as equalized or assessed by the Department of Revenue, instead of 2.25 percent, the present maximum rate otherwise applicable to the next taxes to be extended for said purpose?

Shall the maximum annual tax rate for Educational purposes of Nauvoo-Colusa Community Unit School District No. 325, County of Hancock, State of Illinois, be increased and established at 2.55 percent upon all the taxable property of said School District at the value, as equalized or assessed by the Department of Revenue, instead of 2.00 percent, the present maximum rate otherwise applicable to the next taxes to be extended for said purposes?

Shall the debt service extension base under the Property Tax Extension Law for Odin Public School District Number 722, Marion County, Illinois, for payment of principal and interest on limited bonds be established at \$25,000 for the 2014 levy year and all subsequent levy years, such debt service extension base to be increased each year by the lesser of 5% or the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index during

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the 12-month calendar year preceding the levy year?

Shall the maximum annual tax rate for educational purposes of Prairieview-Ogden Community Consolidated School District No. 197, Champaign and Vermilion Counties, Illinois, be increased and established at 2.32 percent upon all the taxable property of said School District at the value, as equalized or assessed by the Department of Revenue, instead of 1.92 percent, the present maximum rate otherwise applicable to the next taxes to be extended for said purpose?

Shall the limiting rate under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law for Spring Lake CCSD 606, County of Tazewell, State of Illinois, be increased by an additional amount equal to .70505 above the limiting rate for levy year 2012 and be equal to 3.7000% of the equalized assessed value of the taxable property therein for levy years 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016?

Shall the limiting rate under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law for Staunton Community Unit School District Number 6, Macoupin and Madison Counties, Illinois, be increased by an additional amount equal to 1.000000% above the limiting rate for school purposes for levy year 2012 and be equal to 3.802780% of the equalized assessed value of the taxable property therein for levy year 2014?

Shall the limiting rate under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law for Unity Point Community Consolidated School District 140, Jackson County, Illinois, be increased by an additional amount equal to 0.50% above the limit levy year for 2012 and be equal to 2.40265% of the equalized assessed value of the taxable property therein for levy year 2013?

Shall the debt service extension base under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law for Westmont Community Unit School District Number 201, DuPage County, Illinois, for

payment of principal and interest on limited bonds be increased from \$1,254,351.55 to \$3,000,000 for the 2014 levy year and all subsequent levy years, such debt service extension base to be increased each year by the lesser of 5% or the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index during the 12-month calendar year preceding the levy year?

Nine bond issues

The nine bond issues on the March ballot are all building bond propositions. Proposals are aimed at providing funds for school building construction or repairs in:

- **Berwyn South District 100**
- **Chaney-Monge District 88**, Crest Hill
- **El Paso-Gridley CUSD 11**
- **Glenbard THSD 87**, Glen Ellyn
- **Johnsburg CUSD 12**
- **Lake Park CHSD 108**, Roselle
- **Princeville CUSD 326**
- **Rockridge CUSD 300**, Taylor Ridge
- **Round Lake CUSD 116**

These bond issues range in size from \$3 million in the Crest Hill district to \$51.5 million in Berwyn South. The Berwyn proposal, however, is not the only bond issue of significant size on the March ballot. The Glen Ellyn district's referendum seeks \$35 million in bonding authority, while the Round Lake referendum seeks \$29 million, and the El Paso referendum calls for an additional \$18.3 million in bonding authority.

Beyond the 25 school district proposals, countywide sales tax propositions for schools are scheduled in the following 16 counties: Carroll, Coles, DeWitt, Effingham, Fulton, Galatin, Hamilton, Mason, McLean, Peoria, Pike, Randolph, Rock Island, Shelby, Stephenson, and Whiteside. A sales tax of up to 1 percent earmarked for school facilities is sought under the authorizing state law that took effect in January 2008; to date 18 counties have adopted such a sales tax to benefit schools.

Revenue from countywide sales taxes for school facilities benefits all school districts in a county where such questions win voter approval.

Such a sales tax, when adopted, does not impose any tax on goods or services that are not 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.

Other proposals

In addition to the list of finance referendum questions on the primary election ballot, a number of miscellaneous questions directly impacting school districts are also to go before local voters.

At least four district reorganization proposals are on March 18 ballots, including three school district consolidations and one elementary school deactivation.

August 15 last day to adopt referenda resolutions for 2014

The next election for which school boards can place tax and bond referenda on the ballot is the Nov. 4 general election. Aug. 15 is the last day for a school board to adopt a resolution putting such public policy questions on that ballot (10 ILCS 5/28-2).

Likewise, Aug. 28 is the last day for the board secretary to certify public policy questions to the election authority for referendum at that Nov. 4 election (10 ILCS 5/28-5).

After the election, Nov. 25 is the last day for the appropriate canvassing board to canvass results of referenda submitted to the voters at the Nov. 4 election (10 ILCS 5/22-17).

A list of remaining dates and deadlines for the November election is available online at: http://www.iasb.com/pdf/cal_1314.pdf.

At 78, superintendent turnovers hit five-year low

The number of superintendent changes in Illinois this year dropped 38 percent from 2013 and is following a five-year trend that began in 2009.

The IASB executive searches department notes there were 78 superintendent said changes so far in 2014, compared to 126 in 2013. The five-year turnover rate averages 129 per year.

The highest number of superintendent changes over this period occurred in 2012, when 165 superintendent openings were reported.

Of the 78 positions that changed this year, 56 involved superintendent search services, according to Donna Johnson, director of executive searches at IASB. The Association accounted for 21 of those searches, with the

remaining 35 split up among six private firms. The other 22 positions were filled by local school districts, without professional assistance.

Doug Blair, a consultant with IASB, said the Association has been tracking superintendent turnover for the past 38 years, and “the use of professional search consultants has increased tremendously,” he said.

Those searches have expanded to include other quality administrators, added IASB consultant David Love. Such positions include assistant superintendents, chief school business officials, curriculum directors, and building principals. In the past year, he noted, IASB staff have assisted districts with four principal searches.

As for the dramatic decline in the Illinois superintendent turnover rate, IASB consultant Thomas Leahy suggested several factors may be in play.

“The number of vacancies and candidates available and/or willing to fill the vacancies (turnovers) may be affected by three factors. One is that Illinois has experienced a higher than usual number of superintendent change for the past three years.

“Another is that in this environment, candidates may be hesitant to make a change with unknowns. I also think that the pension changes, reform legislation and resulting lawsuits have altered the terrain enough to stall vacancies available and the applicant pool willing to make a move,” Leahy said.

IASB’s spring division meetings benefit from sponsors’ aid

This year’s round of Illinois Association of School Boards’ spring division dinner meetings is sponsored by:

- NextEra Energy Services – Premier Level Sponsor
- Comcast – Legacy Level Sponsor
- Forecast5 Analytics, Inc./PMA Financial Network, Inc. – Legacy Level
- Honeywell Building Solutions – Legacy Level Sponsor

- NaviGate Prepared – Legacy Level
- WCSIT*ISDA – Legacy Level
- First Midstate, Inc. – Century Level
- Kings Financial Consulting Inc. – Decade Level
- Wight & Company – Division Meeting Sponsor

The sponsorship program provides opportunities for individuals and organizations to provide financial sponsorship to support and enhance all of the

division meetings program purposes: board member professional development, networking, peer recognition, association governance and learning about resources available from IASB.

For more information about division meeting sponsorship opportunities, please contact Cathy Talbert, associate executive director, field services and policy services, at 217/528-9688 or 630-629-3776, ext. 1234 or email ctalbert@iasb.com.

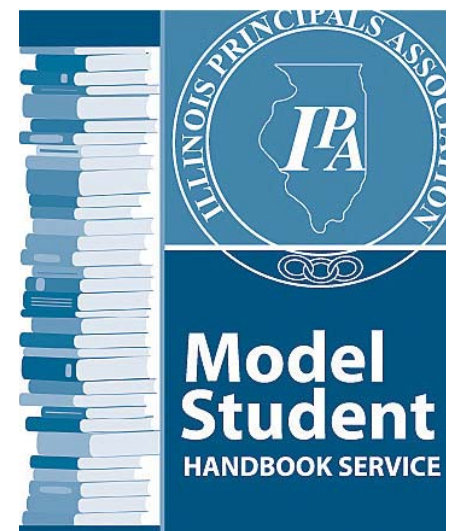
IPA model student handbook in PRESS

It’s that time of year again when school administrators begin to think about the following school year’s student handbooks! Fortunately, guidance on that topic is contained in PRESS Issue 84, where policy item 7:190-E2, Student Handbook Checklist, has been updated. It now includes reference to the student handbook subscription service maintained by the Illinois Principal’s Association (IPA).

IPA dubs it the **Online Model Student Handbook (MSH)**. The Model

Student Handbook is fully aligned to PRESS and contains all of the required and suggested handbook updates for the 2014-15 school year.

For subscription information, please see www.ilprincipals.org/resources/model-student-handbook. IASB PRESS editors and IPA MSH editors will continue collaboration between these subscription services to help their members more easily provide information to parents and students throughout Illinois.



Directors examine broad questions for association, contract, reports

Two questions were posed to the IASB Board of Directors at their quarterly meeting, held Feb. 21-22 in Chicago:

“Why does IASB exist?”

“What will our members have, do or be because IASB exists and performs well?”

These broad questions were part of an informal work session that enabled additional discussion of the board’s governing policies and their corresponding operational expectations, interpretations and indicators for the Association. The board has been engaged in this process for the past two years and has already made or approved a variety of changes to the documents that govern their processes.

This latest conversation led to several proposed changes that will be drafted and reviewed at the next board meeting, to be held May 2-3 in Springfield. One of the areas discussed was the IASB mission statement. After a lengthy discussion, President Karen Fisher appointed an ad hoc committee to review and draft potential changes

to that language as well.

The board also reviewed and voted to extend the contract of Executive Director Roger Eddy through June 30, 2017.

The board later heard several reports on a variety of subjects, including: legislation, finance, IASB Service Associates, joint annual conference, national advocacy, and the IASB Centennial.

In his report on IHSA rules, Mark Harms informed the board that the IHSA is making a proposal to member schools to change the way that non-boundary schools are classified for state tournament purposes. He also reported that IHSA is continuing to look at contact issues related to high school football and that some changes to summer practices regarding contact are also being recommended by the IHSA. Finally, he reminded the board that issues related to competition for disabled students still is a concern. Several recent lawsuits related to inclusion of disabled students in scholastic competition continue to be heard.

March-April Journal issue examines major effects of poverty on student achievement

The March/April issue of *The Illinois School Board Journal* looks at the effects of poverty on student achievement and offers suggestions

for districts as they look for ways to help students and families. In addition, an article about homelessness offers questions for districts to ponder regarding the related financial problems that are incurred by accepting students displaced because of poverty.



Two other articles examine ways building personnel can help students in poverty learn resilience in addition to their academic lessons, and how collaboration can help students in all situations.

This issue’s “Practical PR” offers tips for reaching families in poverty with district messages.

The magazine also appears online at: <http://issuu.com/iasbeditor/docs/issu> . Clicking on this “digital version” will open a page-turning version of the magazine that is fully searchable and accessible by computer, tablet or smart phone.

NEWS FROM IASB

Conference exhibits

Application forms and instructions are now online for contracts and housing of exhibitors at the 2014 Conference. Booths are assigned on first-paid/first-received contract basis, although meetings staff members have pledged to make efforts to accommodate requests for specific space. Materials are online at <http://www.iasb.com/jac14/exhibitor.cfm> . Questions on exhibitions, forms or procedures should go to IASB Meetings Management at 217/528-9688, ext. 1115.

Mandate waiver report

A total of 85 mandate waiver requests have been filed so far this year through a statutory process IASB was instrumental in creating. Before starting the process, districts must review the requirements at “Overview for Waiver Process” at <http://www.isbe.net/isbe-waivers/html/overview.htm>.

LeaderShop Academy news

Registration brochures for the biennial School Board LeaderShop Academy Symposium will be mailed to Academy members and their superintendents in mid-March. The program title is “The Talk, the Truth, the Crucial Conversations about America’s Schools.” The presenter will be John Draper, National Consultant for the National School Public Relations Association. The event is June 21st at the Westin Chicago Northwest in Itasca. Tuition is \$200 per person, which includes materials, continental breakfast and lunch. Invitation is limited to current LeaderShop Academy members and their superintendents. To learn more, visit the IASB website at http://www.iasb.com/training/leadershop_info.cfm.

National event draws school leaders, IASB staff members, officers

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) held its annual conference Feb. 13-15 in Nashville, Tennessee. Participants could choose from scores of panel presentations. According to AASA, more than 15 Illinois districts attended the conference.

One Illinois presenter at this year's conference was Sarah Jerome, the superintendent of **Arlington Heights District 25**.

Jerome asserted that an effective health system has "many facets and faces," spanning from students to educators to parents.

The AASA topical session on school health identified what district superintendents described as a logistical concern: good health among students.

In addition, Jerome and other panelists encouraged the administrators in the audience to empower their students to lead the reform for good health. While each of the speakers had his or her own approach to reforming student health, the cadre collectively shared this viewpoint: To have an effective health system, school administrators first must analyze the issue, then use the power of student influence. Finally, they agreed, schools must include the community in the movement.

IASB Executive Director Roger Eddy presented a panel on school executive job searches titled, "Increasing Your Chances of Getting the Job You Want." Joining Eddy were IASB Director of Executive Searches Donna Johnson and veteran Association search consultant Tom Leahy. They discussed the fundamentals of interviewing for a school administrator job.

Johnson and Leahy also appeared at AASA's annual job fair called Job Central, where they talked at length



Jose Torres



IASB staff members talked at length with candidates for school administrator jobs at AASA's Job Central.

with numerous candidates from various states for potential school administrator jobs.

"AASA's superintendent job fair provides both candidates and search consultants, from across the nation, an opportunity to meet in one convenient location," Johnson said. "Candidates look forward to getting answers to questions regarding search processes, learning about specific vacancies, as well as, having a face to face meeting with search consultants."

AASA's governing board adopted a series of beliefs and position statements on student accountability, preparations for life in a global society, high school completion, school and district accountability, communicating with the public and commercial affiliations in school districts. The governing board also ratified its legislative priorities to provide guidance to the AASA public policy staff when working to influence federal education policies, such as reauthorizing ESEA, fully funding IDEA, the Perkins Career and Technical Education program and the federal E-Rate program that helps fund school technology.

The AASA national conference saw the selection of Alberto Carvalho, superintendent of the Miami-Dade Public Schools in Miami, Fla., as the 2014 AASA National Superintendent of the Year.

The Dr. Effie H. Jones Humanitarian Award was later presented at the conference to three educators, including Jose Torres, superintendent of **School District U-46**, Elgin. Prior to accepting



An AASA 'think tank' on vital issues was led by superintendents from Illinois and around the nation.

this position, he served as a regional superintendent in the Chicago Public Schools and he has previously served school districts from San Jose, California to Baltimore, Maryland.

Next year's event, the AASA National Conference's 150th anniversary, will be held Feb. 26-28 in San Diego.

30 panel ideas chosen for 2014

IASB received a total of 91 submissions to the "Share the Success" program for the 2014 Joint Annual Conference.

"The success of the Joint Annual Conference is due to our members across the state sharing their ideas for programs and services to students," said Executive Director Roger Eddy.

From this group, 30 panels were selected to present at the conference in November. Two groups of school board members reviewed all the panel proposals in early March. Applicants that were not selected may be offered the opportunity to participate in the alternative Carousel of Panels.

Share the Success panels will be part of the 100-plus breakout sessions featured at this year's conference. A list of all the panels will be announced soon, followed by a description of all panels, workshops and other conference events, which will be posted in early September.

NEWS HEADLINES

Carpentersville (Feb. 25, *The Daily Herald*) CUSD 300 has announced plans for moving its central office from Carpentersville to Algonquin. By a unanimous vote Feb. 24 the school board approved erecting a new administration building to cost between \$5 million and \$5.5 million on property it owns. Construction is expected to begin in April.

Chicago (Feb. 26, *Chicago Tribune*) Chicago District 299 released statistics on Feb. 25 showing Chicago charter schools expel students at a vastly higher rate than the rest of the district. The numbers indicate that during the last school year, 307 students were kicked out of charter schools, which have a total enrollment of about 50,000. In district-run schools, there were 182 kids expelled out of a student body of more than 353,000. That means charters expelled 61 of every 10,000 students while the district-run schools expelled just 5 of every 10,000 students.

Chicago (Feb. 28, *Education Week*) Parents of Chicago public school students have formed a coalition to promote a state test boycott against taking the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT). The move was said to illustrate a growing frustration among parents with standardized testing. The coalition announced that 500 children at 29 schools won't take the ISAT. But the state later declared that districts and schools are required under both federal and state law to administer the ISAT, and any that do not comply face possible local and state disciplinary action and run the risk of reduced state and federal funds.

LaSalle (Feb. 20, *News Tribune*) LaSalle-Peru Township High School approved a revised grade-point average scoring model on Feb. 5 at its school board meeting. The new model, to take effect in the 2014-2015 school year, will result in one com-

mon GPA score that does not rely on any hand calculations. A system of plus and minus grades will be implemented. Elective courses, including study hall, soon may be taken with a waiver and not counted in the GPA calculation, except for band, choir, driver's education and physical education (in ninth grade only), which will count in the GPA calculation.

Mendon (Feb. 22, *Herald-Whig*) The Mendon School District has finally received a \$1.3 million reimbursement from the state for work the district undertook seven years ago. The state initially promised the money in 2003 as part of a matching grant program for school construction. Mendon completed the work in 2007 and 2008, adding two classrooms, and upgrading the heating, ventilating and air-conditioning system on the Unity High School campus. But the reimbursement money never arrived. The state's ongoing financial crunch was blamed, and the district was forced to put off some basic repairs as a result.

Morris (Feb. 18, *Shaw Media*) A 13-year lawsuit between an electric power plant and two Morris school districts and other taxing bodies is coming to an end with a favorable, board-approved settlement. The tentative settlement stipulates that the taxing bodies and the power plant will drop any previous charges and walk away from the lawsuit. With the settlement, the taxing bodies would be free from paying back millions. In 2000, the company disputed the equalized assessed property value of its power station, claiming the assessed value of the property was too high. The taxing bodies that received funds based on that EAV appealed that claim to avoid repaying nearly \$25 million in tax dollars to the company.

Mundelein (Feb. 26, *The Daily Herald*) Students and teachers in Dia-

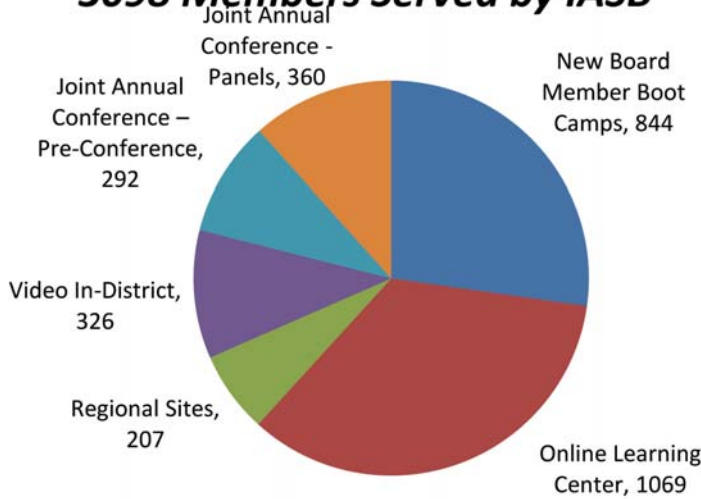
mond Lake Elementary District 76 will face steeper learning curves as part of a restructuring plan to improve achievement. Mandated by state findings last summer of an AYP shortfall, the restructuring plan is intended for the long term. The restructuring results from an intense effort by the district that began in December as officials — with input from parents, teachers and others — determined the best option to meet federal standards under the No Child Left Behind Act. Because district schools failed to meet the standards for five years, it was classified as restructuring by the state.

Princeton (Feb. 27, *LaSalle News Tribune*) Several projects, including electrical upgrades and painting and lighting improvements, must be completed for Princeton elementary schools, as some buildings will have different uses next year. Beginning in fall 2014, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students will go to Douglas Early Childhood Center. First and second grades will go to one school, third and fourth grades will go to another, fifth through eighth grades will attend a junior high school and Tiskilwa preschool students will go to a middle school building. Continuous upgrades will be made in each high school building to prepare for next year, as well as for the state's new standardized "PARCC Assessment" tests, which are to be conducted online next spring rather than on paper.

Washington (Feb. 24, *Peoria Journal Star*) The Washington District 308 board has approved four high school renovation projects to total \$2.8 million. Some board members expressed concern about dipping into district reserves for such projects when it isn't known how the district's finances will be affected by property tax losses caused by the Nov. 17 tornado.

Professional Development Leadership Training

3098 Members Served by IASB



requirements.

The Association has since actively tried to offer the training in a variety of ways (see chart), including post-election workshops, the joint annual conference, in-district and online venues.

Board members elected or re-elected in April 2013 must complete the four-hour training within one year of taking the oath of office, according to statute. That means most board members elected in April 2013 have until a date in April or May of this year to complete their mandatory training. And from now until the April 2015 elections, PDLT training will be available online and at a pre-conference

workshop to be held at the 2014 Joint Annual Conference next November.

The online course has been very popular, with over 1,000 registrations since inception. More information about this course is available at: <http://www.iasb.com/training/online-learning.cfm>.

Meanwhile, IASB expects to continue offering such training in future years. For those board members who will be elected in April 2015, for example, tentative plans are to offer PDLT training in workshops starting in the spring and summer of 2015, and at the Online Learning Center, and at an annual conference workshop.

IASB bidding farewell to staffers Cohn, DiPrima, looks to replace in Field Services

IASB Field Services Director Jeff Cohn left the Association at the end of February to pursue an opportunity in the private sector. Cohn, who worked for seven years serving districts in the South Cook, West Cook and Three Rivers divisions, has joined Energy Systems Group.

Cohn is also a former school board member at **Rich Township High School District 227**.

In addition, Field Services Director Laurel DiPrima will be retiring at the end of May. She has worked for IASB since 2005, first in policy and since as a field services director representing Kishwaukee, Northwest and Starved Rock divisions. She is also a former board member who served in **Mt. Prospect SD 57**.

Both openings were posted on the IASB website on March 1.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 19 – North Cook Division Spring Dinner Meeting, Arlington Heights

March 25 – Western Division Spring Dinner Meeting, Knoxville

April 10 – Kishwaukee Division Spring Dinner Meeting, Hinckley

April 29 – West Cook Spring Division Meeting, Elmwood Park

April 29 – Wabash Valley Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, Casey

April 30 – South Cook Spring Division Meeting, Alsip

May 1 – Kaskaskia Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, tbd

May 1 – Blackhawk Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, Geneseo

May 1 – Illini Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, Urbana

May 2-3 – IASB Board of Directors' Meeting, Springfield

May 6 – Egyptian Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, Mt. Vernon

May 6 – Western Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, Macomb

May 6 – Abe Lincoln Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, Springfield

May 7 – Central Illinois Valley Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, Peoria

May 8 – Shawnee Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, Marion

May 8 – Corn Belt Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, Fairbury

For more current information, see www.iasb.com/calendar/