

Illinois SCHOOL BOARD Newsbulletin

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EFAB proposes \$6,405 foundation level for schools

**Alternative idea:
Governor would expand
gambling to pay for
education fund boost**

The state's Education Funding Advisory Board (EFAB) submitted a report to the legislature on April 4 that includes an updated calculation, based on the Employment Cost Index (ECI), for an "adequate" foundation level of \$6,405 per pupil. That is an increase of \$1,441 per pupil, or 29 percent, over the current foundation level of \$4,964.

The foundation level is the sum of money the state guarantees to spend per pupil. The ECI is an index used to monitor inflation that measures the relative changes in wages, benefits, and bonuses for a specific group of occupations.

The board said it followed long-established guidelines to determine how much the state should spend on each student. The panel did not suggest how to pay for that increase, nor was it required to do so. But the same advisory board three years ago suggested hiking the state income tax rate combined with a reduction in local property taxes.

EFAB's latest recommendation

Also see *Funding bills
occupy House, Senate*, page 7

came just three days after the governor had released a new plan to expand Illinois riverboat casino gambling, primarily in order to boost state funding for public schools by \$300 million. But his proposal would only raise the foundation level by 5 percent, or \$5,204 per student for 2005-06.

"The governor is taking an important step, but it's not adequate," said EFAB member and former state Sen. Arthur Berman. The new panel's proposed spending level of \$6,405 "is an obligation that can only be met by

(substantially) increasing revenues. How it's done is up to the legislature and the governor," Berman said.

EFAB's proposal would cost \$2.3 billion.

"We have given the legislators and the governor the dollar figures necessary to provide an adequate education for every child in the public schools of Illinois. When I say adequate, I'm not talking about a Mer-

See **EFAB FUNDING** on page 6



Arthur Berman

Newsbulletin offered as PDF

The *Illinois School Board News Bulletin* is now available online as a graphics file in portable document format (pdf). Find the link at <http://www.iasb.com/files/nb0305.htm>. Although the graphics file will load slowly on some computers, readers can quickly access the text version instead, if they prefer.

IASB also offers archives of past

issues back to 1995 under the "School Board Newsbulletin" heading on the IASB Home Page. It can be found by scrolling down the page at: <http://www.iasb.com/>.



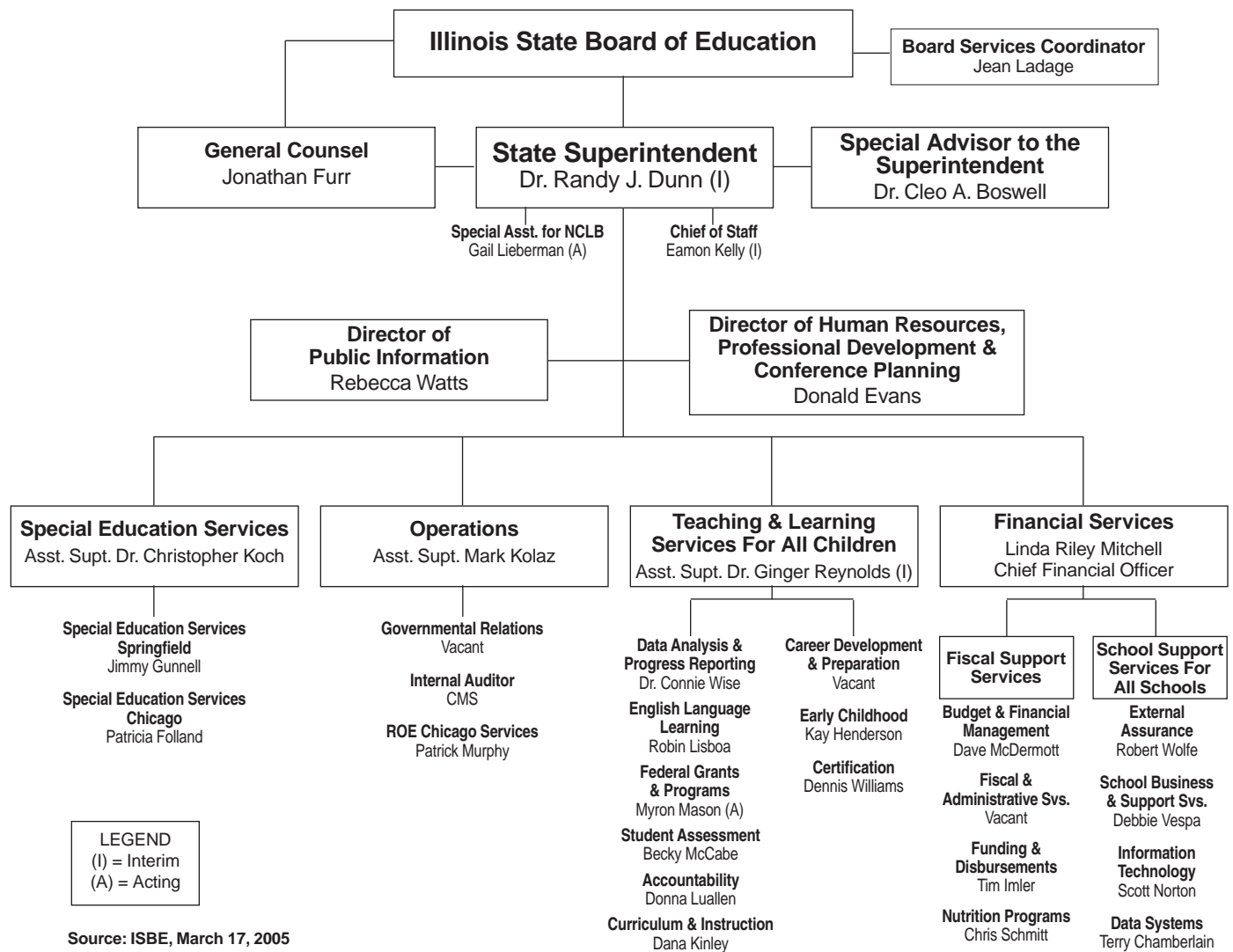
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ISBE Agency Organizational Chart



Source: ISBE, March 17, 2005

ISBE proceeds with ongoing agency reorganization, strategic planning

At its meeting in mid-March, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) voted to approve the agency organizational chart, following the agency reorganization required by Public Act 93-1036 (previously S.B. 3000). The reorganization, which began last year, was designed to streamline operations and refocus the agency on its core mission of helping schools, teachers and students.

More information about the new departments and divisions is available online at <http://www.isbe.net/divisions.htm>.

Also at its March meeting, the State Board adopted and forwarded

to key legislators and the governor a preliminary Comprehensive Strategic Plan for Elementary and Secondary Education. The plan is a starting point for a five-year strategic plan.

The preliminary plan focuses on three goals, to improve: 1) literacy, 2) educator quality, and 3) data-informed management and support practices. Each objective directly relates to topic areas required by Public Act 93-1036.


A final plan must be developed by September 2005. In the meantime, the agency plans to conduct hearings around the state about the plan. None had been scheduled as of press time.

Illinois
SCHOOL BOARD
Newsbulletin

**Illinois Association
of School Boards**

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**ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION
OF SCHOOL BOARDS**

Appellate court rules rollback taxes owed to Naperville school district

Providing good news for similarly positioned school districts, Naperville C.U. District 203 will benefit from an appellate court redistribution of revenue generated from an upscale housing and business development there.

The unanimous March 3 ruling effectively gave schools and other taxing bodies nearly \$325,000 in back taxes from 64.5 acres of the Warrenville Cantera development. Most of that money would go to District 203.

The revenue is derived from “rollback” taxes generated from previously vacant property at the Cantera Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district. The land’s original designation as “open space” guaranteed a discounted property tax assessment, but the decision to develop the property triggered a rollback clause in the tax code.

The property’s owner is required to pay the difference between the discounted assessment for the open land designation and the full assessment on 64.5 vacant acres for the three years prior to its development — 1998 to 2000 — plus an additional 5 percent.

Warrenville had claimed it should



The Village Green at Cantera development is an upscale residential community with resort-class amenities located in Warrenville.

be paid that difference because the open space was developed within the pre-existing Cantera TIF district. The appeals court disagreed, although Warrenville city officials have filed to seek a re-hearing of the case.

The court also ruled that the frozen property value under the 1986 TIF agreement should be corrected to the full assessment of the vacant land prior to its development, instead of remaining at the discounted assessment level provided by its designation as open land.

As a result, the school district will get an additional \$100,000 to \$125,000 from property taxes annually until 2009, when local governments can fully tax the property and its improvements.

State financial watch list not yet released

The State Board announced that the Financial Watch List is late this year, but is expected to be released by late April. Last year, the list of 156 schools was published in March. The Financial Watch List is one of five categories compris-

ing the State Board's Financial Assurance and Accountability System (FAAS). The FAAS classifies all districts according to their financial condition and provides financial technical assistance to school districts experiencing financial difficulty.

Board secretaries plan regional meetings

The IASB Policy Department is helping school employees who serve as board secretary or recording secretary to organize regional planning committees. The committees will meet to form regional networks that are part of the Secretary to the Board of Education Network.

Mail contact information to IASB. Please include your name, title, school district name, and district address, along with your phone number, e-mail address, and the name of your IASB division, to: Anna Lovern, IASB, 2921 Baker Drive, Springfield, IL 62703.

ILLINOIS DISTRICTS

Two districts receive national Magna award

The American School Board Journal recently announced that the 2005 Magna Awards winners include two Illinois school districts: Sherrard CUSD 200, Orion; and Villa Park District 45. They were among 26 districts nationwide winning the annual awards.

Organized to advance student learning through board leadership, the Awards honor innovation and excellence in school governance. The Villa Park district was honored for its board-initiated Adopt-a-School project. Sherrard CUSD 200 was honored for fostering accountability. For more information visit the Magna Awards Web site: www.asbj.com/magna.

The Magna Awards will be presented at NSBA’s annual convention. Full coverage of the NSBA conference will appear in next month’s edition of the *Illinois School Board Newsbulletin*.

School guards issue citations to students

As of March 11, nearly 60 citations had been issued at Peoria Manual High School this year by school security guards, three times the number in the district’s other three high schools combined. One guard issued 44 of the citations.

School leaders say the numbers are worth looking into because equal enforcement is important. Deputy interim superintendent Ken Hinton noted: “if you have one person who has given out 44, we need to look into it and find out what is taking place.”

Peoria District 150 security personnel are Peoria police officers, who have the authority to hand out citations. The largest category of such citations is for disorderly conduct, which carries a \$100 fine.

Census data shows disparity in how schools are funded

Illinois ranks ninth in state ed support

The disparity between state and local funding for public schools is greater in Illinois than most other states, according to the latest U.S. Census data.

Public elementary and secondary education revenues from federal, state and local sources reached \$440.3 billion in the United States in 2003, up 4.9 percent from the previous year.

Illinois ranked fifth behind California, New York, Texas and Florida in total education revenues from federal, state and local sources. But the state dropped all the way to ninth in state revenue sources for elementary and secondary education.

California schools required \$57.9 billion from all sources, followed by New York (\$37.8 billion), Texas (\$35 billion), Florida (\$19.5 billion) and Illinois (\$19 billion).

Nearly the same order was followed for federal funding, with California leading (\$5.7 billion), followed by Texas (\$3.3 billion), New York (\$2.7 billion), Florida (\$1.9 billion), and Illinois (\$1.6 billion). Local funding for public schools was highest in California (\$18.5 billion), followed by Texas (\$17.9 billion), New York (\$17.7 billion), Illinois (\$10.6 billion), and Pennsylvania (\$10.5 billion).

State governments contributed the greatest share overall of public elementary and secondary school funding, at \$215.6 billion. Local sources followed at \$188.0 billion, and the federal government was the third largest contributor at \$36.8 billion.

Illinois schools, however, placed ninth overall in state revenues for public education at \$6.7 billion. The top five were California (\$33.6 billion), New York (\$17.5 billion), Texas (\$13.6 billion), Michigan (\$11.2 billion) and Florida (\$8.6 billion).

But the real disparity shows up in the percentage of local funds required to operate Illinois schools.

In fact, Illinois led all five states with 55 percent of its funding coming from local revenues. That compares to Texas (51 percent), New York (47 percent), Florida (46 percent) and California (32 percent).

Illinois ranked 17th among states in per pupil expenditure, at \$8,409. The national average was \$8,019.

The most recent census data shows that Illinois' population has the fourth-highest number of elementary school-age children, at 1.6 million. Nationally, enrollment stands at 36.4 million. Illinois has the fifth-highest total number of high school-age children, at 728,000. The figures are derived from the U.S. Census Bureau's July 2004 state population estimates.

The entire report can be accessed at <http://www.census.gov/govs/www/school.html>.

Achievement scores rising in 36 states, but report on NCLB asks: at what cost?

Thirty-six states report rising achievement scores, but most agree that the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) will fail to reach most at-risk students unless the U.S. government spends more and reduces NCLB demands.

So says a report by the Center on Education Policy (CEP), an independent, non-partisan national advocate for public education and for more effective public schools. The report released on March 23 is the most comprehensive analysis of the NCLB law.

CEP found nearly half of surveyed school districts report having cut instructional time in science, social

studies, music, art and other subjects to meet NCLB demands in reading and math.

"No Child Left Behind has shined a spotlight on the areas that need the most attention, but the success of this effort will depend on whether education officials can fix problems, not just know where they are," CEP Director Patricia Sullivan said.

Forty-five of the 49 responding states said limited staff size is a serious problem and 80 percent of states reported that NCLB funding does not cover the costs of implementation.

The full report can be viewed at www.ctredpol.org.

10th annual IASB Job Fair



The 10th annual IASB Job Fair was held March 19 at Saint Xavier University in Chicago. This year, 43 recruiters attended the event and 938 candidates for teaching and administrative positions.

Welcome new board members: workshops abound!

IASB is urging school leaders to encourage new board members to attend the special workshops designed especially for them, *The Basics of School District Governance* and *The Basics of School Law and Finance*, in May and June. These workshops will be offered at several locations around the state.

There will also be special workshops for board presidents attached to each of the governance sessions. This is a great opportunity for board presidents to better get to know their new board members and acquire information and tools that will help them

more effectively fulfill their responsibilities.

Mark your calendars now and watch your mail for more information:

The Basics of School District Governance:

May 6-7, Indian Lakes Resort, Bloomingdale
May 13-14, Holiday Inn, Urbana
May 13-14, Seasons at Rend Lake

Board Presidents' Workshop:

Same locations on Saturday, May 7 and 14

The Basics of School Law and Finance:

May 21, Prairie Inn-Best Western, Galesburg

May 21, Gateway Center, Collinsville
June 18, Radisson, Alsip

All three workshops will be available at these locations:

Holiday Inn, City Center, Chicago:

June 2-3, The Basics of School District Governance
June 3, Board Presidents' Workshop
June 4, The Basics of School Law and Finance

Crowne Plaza, Springfield:

June 9-10, The Basics of School District Governance
June 10, Board Presidents' Workshop
June 11, The Basics of School Law and Finance

2005 Joint Annual Conference planning well underway

June 10 is the target mailing deadline for the registration packet for the 2005 Joint Annual Conference, to be held Nov. 18-20 in Chicago. Questions concerning registration procedures for the conference should be directed to IASB Meetings Management, at ext. 1115 or 1102.

June 22 is the deadline to submit resolutions from member districts. Submission forms for IASB resolutions were sent out on April 1. Consideration of these resolutions is a key component of the Delegate Assembly.

Resolutions adopted by the Delegate Assembly will

become official policy of IASB and will help govern the Association in the coming year.

Finally, all "Share the Success" panel sessions for the 2005 Joint Annual Conference have been evaluated, and 26 winning proposals have been chosen. Director of Board Development Angie Peifer said 73 panels were submitted.

"The panel evaluators just did an unbelievable job of carefully examining each proposal and meticulously choosing the best ones," said Peifer, who oversaw the conference panel evaluations.



Howard Phillips and Helen Kuhn (front), and Tom Robertson (in back of room) were among 19 board members who volunteered their time on March 4 to read and evaluate more than 70 Share the Success conference panel proposals.

Districts requested to submit new member information to IASB

IASB is appealing to school districts to update Association membership records in order to ensure that new members will be added to the database, allowing new members to receive IASB publications and mailings. IASB will send a packet of intro-

ductory material to every new board member as soon as the requested information is received from local districts.

A letter was recently sent to all superintendents listing what information is needed. Anyone with questions should call Janice Kidd at ext. 1142.

Web site offers help to newest members

IASB now has a page on its Web site to help school boards orient newly elected members, including a link to workshops and other tools. The information can be accessed by linking to: www.iasb.com/files/nbm_menu_05.htm.

EFAB FUNDING *from page 1*

cedes-Benz, I'm talking about a Chevrolet. Every child is entitled to a Chevrolet," he added.

The governor's original FY 2006 budget proposed a \$140 million increase for elementary and secondary education.

EFAB was created by law, under Public Act 90-548, in December 1997 [105 ILCS 5/18 - 8.05 (m)] to make recommendations to the General Assembly for the foundation level for all districts and supplemental General State Aid (GSA) grant level for districts with high concentrations of poverty.

The original EFAB members' terms expired last year, but Gov. Rod Blagojevich did not appoint the board members until February.

The original EFAB panel in late 2002 proposed the tax swap and recommended that the state spend \$5,665 per student annually, with updates for inflation costs. The tax swap called for the state to significantly increase the income tax in tandem with a reduction in property taxes, with the aim of mending the funding system for elementary and secondary schools.

That EFAB report also encouraged more unit districts and minimum high school enrollments of 250 students as a way to reduce costs and improve efficiencies.

By law, EFAB's recommended

foundation level is to be determined every other year, based upon the education expenditures of low-spending schools that produce high academic performance. EFAB reports to the General Assembly in January of each odd-numbered year.

The foundation level excludes federal funds and local property taxes that together primarily fund schools. It also excludes state grants earmarked for special programs.

In other action, EFAB also:

- Adopted a methodology for calculating the supplemental general state aid poverty grant, based on updated information and using the ECI;
- Adopted the recommendation of a supplemental general state aid poverty grant of \$467.40 for 2006; and
- Adopted the recommendation for legislating a continuing appropriation for both the foundation level and supplemental general state aid poverty grant, retracting current prorating language.

The EFAB meeting of April 4 included no discussion of these final recommendations of the panel or of any actions taken at the meeting. Other members of the EFAB board are chairman Steven Demitro, and members Anne Davis, Ramon Cepeda, Jr., and Jim Dougherty.

Here is what governor proposes for schools

The governor's latest spending plan for schools would add \$300 million to the \$140 million proposed in his budget address for funding elementary and secondary education for Fiscal Year 2006.

Specifically, the governor wants to use \$379 million to increase the per pupil foundation level in the school funding formula by more than \$240. He also wants to use \$30 million for early childhood education, \$10 million for career and technical education, and \$8.6 million for additional Advanced Placement classes for high school students.

The governor's plan also contains a provision to increase high school graduation requirements. The proposal would raise the number of credits required to graduate from high school from 16 to 18 and would require high school students to take more math, science, and writing-intensive courses.

In summary, the governor's plan would:

- Require at least two years of science
- Require at least three years of math, including algebra and geometry
- Require at least two writing-intensive courses, one being an English course
- Require English every year of high school
- Help schools offer more foreign languages, arts and music
- Provide more training opportunities for vocational students
- Help schools offer more Advanced Placement classes
- Give more high school students access to community college courses

No bill has been drafted yet, but legislation is required.

Major inter-fund transfers to end

When Springfield District 186 needed \$3 million recently to pay for more modern textbooks, new equipment and supplies, and smaller classes, the district transferred \$3 million in surplus funds from the transportation fund to the education and operations and maintenance funds, thanks to a new state law.

A change in state law in July 2003 (105 ILCS 5/17-2A) authorized districts to make such inter-fund transfers between several major school

funds. Such transfers are not just designed to meet one-time, non-recurring expenses, and transfers can go to more than one fund, not just to the fund most in need.

However, the authority to make such transfers expires June 30 because lawmakers wanted to provide only temporary flexibility to financially strapped school districts. The aim is to allow districts with untouchable surplus monies in a particular fund to bail themselves out of shortfalls in other fund categories.

Education funding bills occupy Illinois House, Senate committees

Discussion of education funding reform and education spending for next year were taking place on several fronts during the first week of April. Both the Illinois House and Senate appropriations committees met to discuss the Fiscal Year 2006 budget, the Education Funding Advisory Board (EFAB) met to recommend the new foundation level for the school funding formula, and the Senate Select Committee on Education Funding Reform met to take testimony on several funding reform bills.

"It is too soon to predict what will come of this push for funding reform, but at least we appear to be making progress on the funding level for the fiscal year ahead," said Ben Schwarm, IASB Associate Executive Director of Governmental Relations.

The House Appropriations – Elementary and Secondary Education Committee met to take testimony from education advocates who had yet to testify on the FY '06 budget. The State Board of Education was not present at the hearing, as Interim Superintendent of Schools Randy Dunn had testified before the panel several times this spring already.

This was the first time, however, that Dunn had been invited to present the ISBE budget in the Senate. The Senate Appropriations III Committee met on April 7 to hear from the education agency. Since the time ISBE presented its budget in the House,

Governor Blagojevich had announced a new initiative for school funding – calling for increased gaming positions on riverboat casinos to bring in an additional \$300 million.

The testimony before the Senate appropriations committee, therefore, was different than previous testimony in the House. Priorities in line items had changed too: touted increases in mandated categorical programs and ADA Block Grants had disappeared. The new proposed allocations by the Governor/ISBE would be:

Foundation level –
\$379 million increase

Early Childhood Education –
\$30 million increase

Advanced Placement Classes –
\$8.6 million increase

Career & Technical Education –
\$10 million increase

Arts & Foreign Language –
\$5 million increase

Bilingual Education –
\$2 million increase

Mandated Categorical Grants –
\$0 increase – held to last year's level

School Safety & Educational Improvement Block Grant (ADA) – \$0 increase – held to last year's funding level [These are funds earmarked to improve the quality of education and safety of students and pay for criminal background checks, and costs associated with issuing school report cards.]

For more information, visit the General Assembly's Web Site at: www.ilga.gov.

NEWS HEADLINES

The Winnebago County Board gives schools the authority to charge impact fees on new homes in unincorporated areas (*Rockford Register Star*, March 11) ... North Boone CUSD 200 seeks authority to add up-front transition fees to help pay for teachers, books and supplies (*Rockford Register Star*, March 2) ... State Treasurer Judy Baar Topinka says she will stop transferring money from special state funds into the state's checkbook account until courts sign off, but administration officials say the move could jeopardize state aid to schools (*State Journal-Register*, Springfield, March 11) ... Woodstock District 200 invites local officials and board candidates to a budget workshop after a city government report paints an unrealistically rosy picture of district finances (*Northwest Herald*, March 10) ... Warren THSD 121 officials are criticized for scheduling the senior prom on the first night of Passover (*Arlington Heights Daily Herald*, March 3) ... Twelve citizens accuse Bloomington District 87 officials of racial discrimination over a move last year to eliminate an administrative position held by a black female (March 10, *The Pantagraph*, Bloomington) ... Three Latino families file charges against District U-46, Elgin, charging racial discrimination over the adoption of a new boundary map for the district (*Arlington Heights Daily Herald*, March 1) ... The Antioch-Lake Villa High School District 117 board votes to change drug testing procedures for student-athletes and test a strand of hair rather than urine (*Arlington Heights Daily Herald*, March 22) ... A Grayslake District 46 resident claims the superintendent acted improperly in promoting a tax rate increase referendum, and experts say the complaint could test the district's ethics policy (*Arlington Heights Daily Herald*, March 9).

Schoolboardnet

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It's easy to use! Just go to <http://il.schoolboard.net>.

For technical assistance, contact either IASB office and ask for Susan Farrell, ext. 1226 or Janice Kidd, ext. 1142.

Searching for a New Superintendent?

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Contact your Director of Field Services for more information about our Superintendent Search Service at 630/629-3776 or 217/528-9688.

Less than one third of all school tax issues are approved

April was the cruelest month for school finance referendums, as tax and bond propositions met with sub-par success rates in the April 5 consolidated election.

Although results are not yet official, it appears voters approved just 18 of 61 school tax increase referendums. That represents a 30 percent success rate, far below the average 36 percent success rate for tax propositions in recent years (November 1989 through February 2005). It is also the lowest success rate for tax referenda from any April election since 1997, when the success rate was 26 percent.

Voters approved just 10 of 25 bond issues on the April 5 ballot, a 42 percent success rate, compared to an average success rate in recent years of 59 percent. Forty-one percent is the lowest success rate for bond issues in any April election since 1991, when only 15 percent were approved.

Among successful bond issues this time, two of the four working cash proposals on the ballot won voter approval. Eight of the successful bond issues involved the issuance of building bonds. One – in Matteson District 162 – was for the purpose of paying claims against the school district.

Seventeen of the 18 successful tax propositions involved education fund

increases. Just one of four operations and maintenance fund referendums won voter approval, and no transportation fund proposals were approved.

In addition, one school district consolidation plan was adopted. That consolidation plan will unite Crescent City CCSD 275 and Crescent-Iroquois HSD 252 on July 1.

For a look at the success rate of recent tax and bond referendums, visit the IASB Web site link at <http://www.iasb.com/files/finance.htm>. And for more information visit the Illinois State Board of Elections' referendum search page on their Web site at: <http://www.elections.state.il.us/RPS/pages/ReferendaSCrit.asp>.

IASB leadership changes

A total of 28 IASB leaders are departing from their local boards of education in the wake of the April elections, including the Association's Treasurer, Thomas Hannigan, and three division directors who chose not to run again. The three Directors who are retiring are: Donna Cech, River Forest SD 90; Fred Clatfelter, Hutsonville CUSD 1; and Kent Kistler, Brownstown CUSD 201.

Overall, 37 IASB leaders won their election; 20 chose not to run; and eight lost their bid.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 4 – Central IL Valley Division Summer Governing Meeting, 6:30 pm, The Chateau on the Lake, N. Pekin

May 5 – Shawnee Division Summer Governing Meeting, 6:30 pm, Bennie's Italian Foods, Marion

May 5 – Blackhawk Division Summer Governing Meeting, 6:30 pm, The Cellar, Geneseo

May 6-7 – Basics of School District Governance, 1 pm – 5 pm 5/6/05; 8:30 am – 3:30 pm 5/7/05, Indian Lakes, Bloomington

May 7 – Comprehensive Workshop for Board Presidents, 8:30 am – 3:30 pm, Indian Lakes, Bloomington

May 10 – Abe Lincoln Division Summer Governing Meeting, 6:30 pm, Marcia's Waterfront, Decatur

May 13-14 – IASB Board of Directors Meeting, Springfield

May 13-14 – Basics of School District Governance, 1 pm – 5 pm 5/13/05; 8:30 am – 3:30 pm 5/14/05, Holiday Inn, Urbana

May 13-14 – Basics of School District Governance, 1 pm – 5 pm 5/13/05; 8:30 am – 3:30 pm 5/14/05, Seasons at Rend Lake

May 14 – Comprehensive Workshop for Board Presidents, 8:30 am – 3:30 pm, Holiday Inn, Urbana

May 14 – Comprehensive Workshop for Board Presidents, 8:30 am – 3:30 pm, Seasons at Rend Lake

June 2 – Illini Division Summer Governing Meeting, 6:30 pm, The Historic Lincoln Lodge, Urbana

For more information about coming events, see the IASB Web site at www.iasb.com/calendar/



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