

Illinois SCHOOL BOARD *Newsbulletin*

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Tech training School district secretaries learn about free online technology tools to raise their level of professional expertise at a March 25 workshop at IASB's Springfield office. The training was also provided in Glendale Heights and Mt. Vernon.

School boards reorganizing after elections

By law, school boards are required to hold an organizational meeting following the consolidated election held in odd-numbered years, including the election that was just held on April 5.

To help boards fulfill this duty, IASB offers a free guide (available online at: <http://www.iasb.com/pdf/OrganizingBoard.pdf>) that describes the legal requirements and provides a helpful process for conducting the organizational meeting.

The guide, "The School Board in Action: Seating New Board Members and Organizing the Board," is one tool the board may want to use. In addition, the board should have policy to address the organizational meeting and will want to make certain the processes used in the organizational meeting are aligned with that policy.

As a minimum, the board's organizational meeting must be held in open session, and the board must:

- seat new members,
- elect officers, and
- set a time and place for regular meetings

See **SEATING** on page 4

Change in procedures means Conference registration forms will be posted online

This year, IASB will post online the registration and housing forms needed for the 2011 Joint Annual Conference. That means that the forms will not be mailed in early June as they have been in previous years.

The change was made to more equitably provide conference registration and housing forms simultaneously to all local school districts.

The conference registration/housing forms will be posted online on June 6. To access the forms go to the IASB

website, <http://www.iasb.com>, click on the Annual Conference link and then on the conference housing/registration link.

It is important that districts carefully read the registration/housing information, download and print out the forms and fill them out completely. Complete credit card information or include a check to cover the \$360 registration fee for each registered board member or administrator and a \$200

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Private enrollment declining
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FOIA rulemaking

A set of amendments to rules pertaining to the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) have been recently adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education and are now in effect. These rules, which took effect on March 17, 2011, have been posted on the agency's website at <http://www.isbe.net/rules>. Please choose "Rules Currently in Effect" and scroll to 2 Ill. Adm. Code 5001.2. This portion covers Access to Information of the Illinois State Board of Education under the Freedom of Information Act. Updates to the rules are designed to conform with the provisions of P.A. 96-542, effective January 1, 2010. Affected sections of these state regulations include: 5001.110, 5001.200, 5001.210, 5001.300, 5001.400, and 5001.510.

Advanced Placements

A record number of Illinois students are taking and passing Advanced Placement exams, according to the seventh annual AP Report to the Nation. Illinois ranks in the upper half of the nation (18th) for the number of high school seniors who scored extremely well on an Advanced Placement exam. Improvement in AP results typically requires sustained effort. ISBE recently joined the College Board in recognizing 27 Illinois school districts with making the AP Achievement List. The AP Achievement List is based on examination of three years of AP data, 2008 through 2010, from all students who took AP Examinations in May of those years. See the list of Illinois districts honored in source report at: <http://apreport.collegeboard.org/>.

Most adults to get high quality degrees, credentials by 2025, state to transform education accountability

Following a year of study, the Illinois P-20 Council has set a goal to have 60 percent of working-age adults in the state attain "high quality degrees and credentials" by 2025.

The P-20 Council is a statewide coordinating body composed of government officials, business executives, university administrators, and other leaders in the education community. The group is charged with the responsibility of making recommendations at all levels of education in Illinois "to guide education policy and integrate education from Pre-Kindergarten through graduate school."

The council recently released its first report containing 10 recommendations to reach that goal. The recommendations cover four broad categories that seek to transform the state's education accountability system, to provide a clear path to careers, to develop and support effective teachers and leaders at all levels, and to engage families, youth and communities to increase opportunities and maximize attainment.

The recommendations are to:

- Align student learning standards and assessments to reflect the knowledge and skills students need for the 21st Century;
- Develop a system of assessment that will provide valid measure as well as guide teachers to improve instruction;
- Develop an accountability system that will allow everyone involved to easily access and evaluate data about student learning;
- Coordinate education data systems with workforce data systems to improve career counseling and preparation;
- Increase the pipeline of high-quality candidates into teacher and leadership positions;
- Improve research-based training and certification for teachers and

educational leaders;

- Improve research-based teacher evaluation and professional development;
- Improve educational attainment through attention to prevention, intervention and reengagement of families and students;
- Increase public engagement for all levels of education; and
- Track and report progress toward the goal.

The council, established by statute in 2009, is composed of members representing civic groups and leaders, local government, trade unions, nonprofits, business leaders, teachers, faculty, school boards, independent colleges, parents, and university, community college and school officials.

Michael D. Johnson, executive director emeritus, is IASB's representative on the council and serves on the group's finance and governance committee.


An executive summary of the council's report can be found online at: <http://www2.illinois.gov/p20council/Documents/Final%20P20%20Exec%20Sum.pdf>.

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**

Only 24 districts on financial watch list; it was 29 in 2010

Financial profiles find more districts soundly managing their finances

The state's annual financial profile of public schools shows that most districts across the state are doing a sound job managing their finances even during the current fiscal crisis.

The 2011 financial profile scores show that the number of districts in Financial Recognition increased from 550 to 571 this year, or nearly 66 percent that qualify for the highest of four levels of financial accountability. The number rose to 604 after the state accounted for revised 2010 data.

"Local school boards are grappling with decreased revenue and late payments from the state," said State Superintendent of Education Christopher Koch. "Many districts have had to make very difficult and painful deci-

sions during the past several years in order to try and balance budgets. While we expect continued lean economic times, the Board is advocating for increased education funding for the next fiscal year. Even in times of great financial stress, we must continue to invest in education for our students and our state's future."

Twenty-four districts, or 2.82 percent of the state's 868 districts, were designated on the Financial Watch list, which is the lowest of four financial indicators. Last year 29 districts were on that list.

Five indicators are used to determine a school district's financial performance rating:

- 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

Based on this formula, districts are designated in one of the following four categories (highest to lowest): Financial Recognition; Financial Review; Financial Early Warning; or Financial Watch.

The remaining districts were designated as Financial Review (188 districts or 21.6 percent) and Financial Early Warning (52 districts or 6.0 percent).

Koch noted that the improvement was remarkable, given that the state has a backlog of bills totaling nearly \$1 billion in payments owed to school districts. The backlog of state bills dates back more than three months.

To see the entire list, searchable by district name, county or designation, visit ISBE at <http://www.isbe.net/sfms/P/profile.htm>.

Deadline to obligate federal ARRA stimulus grant funds fast approaches

Funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) is running out and school leaders need to plan even more conservatively, according to ISBE. Districts are being asked to review the grants that they have received or are eligible to receive under ARRA. Several of the ARRA funds have obligation due dates of September 2011, which is only a few months away. The

box below summarizes ARRA grants, deadlines and unobligated balances.

Districts that have not submitted an amendment to fully obligate their ARRA funds should do so according to ISBE. Final amendments for grants with a Project End Date of June 30, 2011, must be received by ISBE no later than May 31, 2011.

Source: *Weekly Message*, State Superintendent Koch, March 21.

ISBE eyes state debt restructuring bill to keep State Aid flowing

State Superintendent Chris Koch has recommended that the Illinois State Board of Education support the governor's debt restructuring plan. One defeated bill to enact the plan, sponsored by Sen. John Cullerton (D-Chicago), proposed to issue bonds to pay down the state's debt and repay those bonds over a period of time with 0.5 percent of the income tax increase that was passed earlier this year. Under the plan, the state would not take on new debt, but instead would consolidate its current debt and pay off bills that are more than 60 days in arrears. The plan is not dead despite the defeat of Cullerton's bill, SB 3.

In recent years the state has consistently owed schools more than a billion dollars at any given time. The backlog is now about \$1.1 billion.

Source: *Weekly Message*, State Superintendent Koch, March 14.

ARRA Program Name	Grant Award	Obligated	Obligation Expiration
Title I Low Income, Part A Basic	\$420,263,561	\$278,728,410	9/30/2011
Title I School Improvement (1003g)	\$124,200,955	\$23,051,884	9/30/2013
Sp Ed IDEA Part B Preschool	\$18,311,491	\$18,299,420	9/30/2011
Sp Ed IDEA Part B Flow Through	\$506,479,753	\$506,149,690	9/30/2011
Title II D Technology Competitive	\$26,497,894	\$20,071,023	9/30/2011
McKinney Vento Homeless Education	\$2,581,569	\$2,426,761	9/30/2011
Education Jobs Fund Program	\$415,397,841	\$191,353,597	9/30/2012

New-member workshops coming on governance, law, finance, etc.

Helping new school board members “hit the ground running” is a major priority of IASB. The Association’s new board member workshops will be held from June to September, and all school leaders are asked to encourage their newly elected board members to attend.

The workshops cover a variety of topics essential to helping individuals to become part of high performing boards. The list of workshops and their descriptions are:

- Basics of School District Governance focuses on board and member roles and responsibilities
- Basics of Law on Board Meetings & Practices focuses on legal requirements of school boardsmanship
- Comprehensive Workshop for Board Presidents covers the spectrum of a board president’s duties and work
- Basics of School District Finance teaches new members how public school financing works in Illinois

The dates, times and locations of each workshop can be found online.

Registration can be done by mail, fax or online. Information and registration links are online at <http://iasb.com/calendar/calendar.jcfm>.

Tuition is required for each workshop and includes materials and meals. Boards of education typically reimburse members for the reasonable and necessary expenses in attending such training conference and workshops.

Fees range from \$125 to \$175, but a \$75 discount is offered to board members attending the three basics workshops. The three basics work-

shops are also offered in a two-and-a-half day setting and cost \$400. Discounted fees are also given to boards that bring their superintendent.

IASB also offers in-district workshops on team building and “Starting Right,” which can be helpful for boards adding new members (call your field services director).

For a more complete description of these events, see IASB’s online calendar at: <http://www.iasb.com/calendar/>. For more information about attending any workshop call IASB at ext. 1103.

New board member names, e-mail data sought

IASB is appealing to member school districts, via a March mailing, asking for help in updating membership records with names, addresses, phone and e-mail addresses. E-mails enable IASB to communicate in a fast, cost-effective way. New member names must be added to the database, and

former member names removed, to allow these newly elected individuals to get IASB’s packet of orientation materials, and future mailings. Mail information, including names, addresses, phone numbers, and especially e-mail addresses, and any change in officers to IASB’s Janice Kidd.

SEATING *from page 1*

According to law the board must seat new members within 28 days of the consolidated election. That means Tuesday, May 3, was the last day for boards to reorganize and seat new members elected on April 5.

If a regular board meeting date falls within the 28-day time frame, the board may choose to seat its new members at its regular meeting. If no regular meeting falls in that time frame, a special meeting must be called.

Protocol for administering the oath varies by district; however, it has been required since 2006 by Public Act 94-0881. The free guide reviews the procedures and contains suggested text for the oath that can be used.

The guide also contains a sample script that can be used for nominating and electing board officers. The law does not establish a method for

electing officers. Each board must establish its own policies regarding the organizational meeting, including terms of office (two years or one year), selection of officers, and nominating and voting processes.

Orienting new board members

Once the new board is seated, officers are elected and regular meeting times established, school boards may also want to consider an orientation. Whenever new members join the governance team – including the hiring of a new superintendent – it is valuable to go “back to the basics,” in order to help orient the newcomers with board governance processes.

To assist boards with this orientation, IASB has another free publication, “Orienting New School Board Members on the way to Becoming a

High-Performing Board Team.” It outlines the “nuts and bolts” work of boards in a process to facilitate conversations about a district’s identity, purpose and board processes available to fulfill that purpose.

The publication includes three sample agendas that can be used to help guide 90-minute meetings designed to: introduce the board to the school district; review why the board exists; and review how the board conducts its business.

All require compliance with Open Meetings Act provisions.

While the orientation is designed to be self-directed, outside facilitators may also be used.

More information about this process and the sample agendas are available at: <http://iasb.com/train/orienting.cfm>.

Mandatory consolidation plan drawing little support so far

Grassroots opponents include 'PTA moms'

There appears to be little enthusiasm among local school leaders for a proposed new law that would impose mandatory consolidation of school districts across Illinois.

Gov. Pat Quinn proposed a plan that would consolidate the state's 868 school districts into 300 districts, each with populations of 30,000 to 35,000 people. The plan also proposes realigning district boundaries based on the 2010 census. The purpose, the governor says, is to save money.

The school board of **Mannheim SD 83**, Franklin Park, passed a resolution against a bill to enact the plan at its March 10 meeting. So did the **Leyden District 212** School Board at its meeting the same night. That same week, the **Lansing Elementary District 158** Board of Education also approved a resolution objecting to the bill.

A week later, the **Streator Elementary District 44** Board of Education also approved a joint resolution formally opposing any legislative proposals for mandatory school district consolidation. That resolution further stated that the district believes any consolidation efforts should be made with local input.

Grassroots opponents of the governor's idea said they doubt that forced consolidation would save money.

When districts are consolidated, the higher tax rate and the higher contracted salaries usually go into effect in setting new property tax rates and teacher salaries. In other words, when two districts consolidate in Illinois, teachers in the lower-paying district are allowed to switch to the higher pay offered by the other district.

An Illinois statute does require the state to make up the salary difference between merging school districts, admits Quinn budget

spokeswoman Kelly Kraft. She said the governor wants a commission to determine how to accomplish that.

At a March 14 town hall meeting on forced consolidation that was sponsored by **Community Consolidated School District 146**, Tinley Park, for example, a man who said he is part of a group called Southland Advocates and Voices for Education echoed the common theme of the night's event that decisions on consolidation should be local.

District 146 Board President Dean Casper said the idea for that town hall meeting came from an article he read about consolidation two weeks earlier.

"I read the bill and I really didn't believe what I was reading," Casper said.

He showed the article to the "PTA moms," who then went online. "By the end of the week, there were 1,200 people who joined the Facebook group (they) started," Casper said. The Facebook group was apparently launched for the purpose of challenging the proposed legislation to mandate consolidation.

State Rep. Roger Eddy, a Hutsonville Republican and a school superintendent, said the state agreed years ago to cover salary differences as an incentive for districts to consolidate. He questions whether Gov. Quinn has calculated how much the state would need to spend on those incentives and whether they outweigh the governor's estimated savings.

Eddy said studies show the primary targets of consolidation – smaller schools where less funds are spent per pupil – typically have higher standardized test scores, with smaller class sizes and more parental involvement.

"It's hard to make the argument that we're doing this for education purposes and to save money because the data doesn't show that," noted Eddy, who has served on several consolidation study panels in the past twenty years.

He also said geography plays a major role and efficiency has to be balanced against how long pupils have to spend on buses getting to school, a particularly sensitive issue because Quinn also recommended cutting state funding for transporting pupils to school.

Illinois could stop the salary increase, of course, by changing teachers' collective bargaining rights. But some say that would ignite the kind of firestorm that hit Wisconsin when the governor of that state pushed to remove collective bargaining powers from most public employees.

Ben Schwarm, IASB's associate executive director for advocacy and governmental relations, said any debate about consolidating school districts must take higher teacher salaries into account.

"That will generally eclipse administrative savings," Schwarm said.

Schwarm said legislators and education advocates see little chance of Quinn's proposal being approved. They say Quinn sprang it on them without any preparation and has done little since then to build support or even share basic information.

"I have two lines in his budget address," Schwarm said of his own knowledge about Quinn's plan, which has never emerged in bill form.

In a late-breaking development, House Speaker Michael Madigan, D-Chicago, said on March 30 that he does not plan legislative action on the governor's consolidation proposal, but he declined to say why.

Note: Parts of this article have been reprinted from independent news sources, including:

- Blog By Paul Dailing, March 14, 2011, <http://oakforest.patch.com/articles/community-sounds-off-on-school-district-consolidation-town-hall-live-blog>
- *The Associated Press*, "Mergers could boost Ill. teacher pay," March 11, 2011.

Panel idea winners urged to 'Share the Success' at Conference

The 2011 Joint Annual Conference panel ideas proposed by school districts have been evaluated by a panel of IASB board members. More than 30 proposals have been chosen from over 100 topics submitted.

The selected school districts have been invited by mail to present 90-minute "Share the Success" panel sessions at the IASB/IASA/IASBO conference, to be held Nov. 18-20 in Chicago.

These panel sessions – presented by the board members, administrators and other school or community members who were involved in the particular programs showcased – are based on actual school system experiences.

Proposals were evaluated on five key points:

- interest or relevance



IASB board members judge school district proposals for 2011 Joint Annual Conference panel presentations.

- clarity and conciseness of the proposal
- clarity of objectives and whether they are realistic
- evidence of whether the presentation will address the appropriate school board role on the chosen

topic

- evidence of creativity and an innovative approach

Those districts whose proposals were not selected may yet be offered an alternative opportunity to present during the conference. IASB will again be featuring many such sessions in a Carousel of Panels event on Saturday afternoon, Nov. 19.

The carousel gives districts and organizations a chance to make three, one-half-hour presentations on their topic in just under a two-hour period, allowing attendees an opportunity to obtain a wide variety of information in minimal time.

The IASB board development staff will be working in the next few months to assign time slots and locations for the panels. Those details will be announced in early September when the Conference Preview is published.

Member resolutions for Delegate Assembly due by June 22; help set policy course

Local school boards are invited to submit resolutions for the 2011 Delegate Assembly. Information and resolution forms were mailed to district superintendents and board presidents on April 1.

IASB's annual Delegate Assembly serves as the major policy-setting mechanism of the Association. Each year's assembly consists of delegates chosen by IASB member boards to represent them, with each board entitled to send one delegate. Delegates gather at the Conference to vote on resolutions submitted by member districts to establish policy for IASB.

Proposals from active member boards may be submitted for: new IASB resolutions, amendments to existing position statements, reaffirmations of existing position statements, or belief statements.

The deadline to submit resolutions is June 22.

Once IASB has received all the

resolutions, a committee consisting of one elected member from each of the 21 IASB divisions will meet to review resolution proposals. The committee is empowered to recommend the approval or disapproval of proposed resolutions, and to determine which ones are presented.

Appeals to resolutions committee decisions are allowed when submitted in writing at least eight days before the Delegate Assembly, which will be held on Saturday, Nov. 19.

For information about this process, contact division representatives to the Resolutions Committee listed in the April 1 mailing, or phone IASB at ext. 1132. This year's 22-member committee is chaired by IASB Vice President Carolynne Brooks.

Resolution forms are also available by calling the Association at ext. 1132. It will soon be possible to download the form online via a link on the website at: <http://www.iasb.com>.

Healthier U.S. School grants now in works to help fight child obesity

New training grants are being made available to Illinois and other states in an effort to ramp up the battle against childhood obesity.

Speaking in a joint phone conference March 2 with school leaders from across the country, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack announced that \$350,000 will be available to states in competitive grants and another \$500,000 in non-competitive grants to help schools with the technical assistance and training necessary to reach First Lady Michelle Obama's goal of doubling the number of schools involved in the Healthier U.S. School Challenge.

The announcement follows the first anniversary of Mrs. Obama's *Let's Move* initiative.

More about the grants will be available on the Team Nutrition website at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/TN/>.

Policy consultant Kennedy steps down from staff post after 16 years of service

Sharon Studinger Kennedy retired on March 31 from her position as an IASB policy consultant after 16 years of service. Kennedy worked with school boards, superintendents and other district staff to develop and update board policy and administrative procedures manuals.

She also moderated panels, greeted conference attendees each year and more recently worked with the board secretaries program at the Joint Annual Conference.

Before joining IASB in 1995, Kennedy was an English teacher, counselor and the academically gifted program coordinator at Morton High School.

"Anyone who worked with Sharon, staff and members alike, know her to be a special person," said Cathy Talbert, associate executive director of field services/policy services.



Sharon Studinger Kennedy

"She is competent, thorough, and responsible. She is also warm, kind and thoughtful. We will miss her on our work team, but know she will continue as our friend," Talbert added.

The department honored Kennedy at their March staff meeting.

REGISTRATION *from page 1*

room deposit for each requested hotel room must also accompany the forms.

To be registered for conference, districts must submit two copies of the completed registration form and four copies of the completed housing form, with appropriate fees. *Conference registration and housing cannot be completed online. You must print out the forms, complete them manually and mail to:* IASB Conference Registration/Housing, 2921 Baker Drive, Springfield, Illinois 62703.

Faxed copies will *not* be accepted, however, districts may personally deliver them to the Springfield office if they choose.

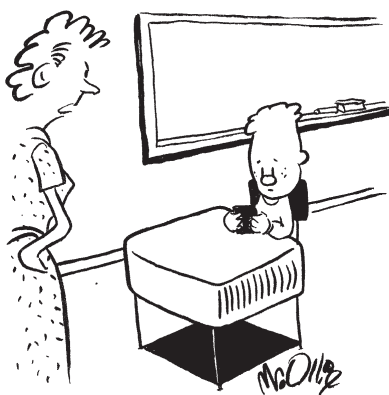
Hotel rooms will be assigned daily on a first-received, first-assigned basis. A copy of both the submitted registration and housing form, indicating the hotel assignment will be mailed to the superintendent.

Housing requests not accompanied with a completed, official registration form and required deposits/fees will be held and not processed until all forms/fees are received in the IASB Springfield office.

The hotels available for this year's

conference include the Hyatt Regency Chicago, Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers, Doubletree, Embassy Suites, Fairmont Hotel, Intercontinental Hotel, Palmer House, Marriott Chicago Downtown, Swissotel, and Westin Chicago River North. *Note, the Hyatt Regency Chicago and the Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers no longer require a two-night, Friday-Saturday stay.*

For questions regarding any phase of this process, contact IASB, ext. 1115, and speak directly with an IASB meetings management staff person.



"I'm standing right here. You don't need to text message me!"

NEWS FROM IASB

Journal focus: resizing

Boards in high-growth districts are facing a new reality: little or no growth in student numbers. The May-June 2011 issue of *The Illinois School Board Journal* will take a look at how these districts, and everyone facing economic uncertainties, can cope and explain what's happening to their constituents. Also featured are articles on explaining property taxes and dealing with the grief and disillusionment caused by teacher/staff layoffs.

DVDs of student talent

The Joint Annual Conference is looking for high schools and middle schools that want to showcase their talented fine arts students, whether in music, art, drama or a compilation of programs. Selection will be based on the performance and production quality of a DVD, to run no longer than 15 minutes. Submissions must be postmarked by June 6. For more information, go to the IASB website, http://iasb.com/jac11/dvd_criteria.cfm.

Executive searches online

Recruiting and selecting a superintendent or other key administrator? Or looking for your next administrative position? While candidates cannot apply online, announcements of openings regarding searches being conducted by IASB are now being posted online, including salary information, closing date of search, and more. The search and selection process involved in collecting candidate information can be aided by visiting <http://iasb.com/executive/current.cfm>. Or to download a brochure explaining IASB's entire Executive Search services, visit <http://iasb.com/executive/suptsearch.pdf>. For more information, contact Donna Johnson, director of executive searches, at ext. 1233.

Poor economy, enrollment challenges alter classroom picture

Private schools hard hit by common trend

Private school leaders across the state and nation are increasingly wondering where their students have gone. In some areas the answer is that more students have switched to public schools from tuition-based private schools.

The reason? The economy has caught up to many parents who no longer can afford private school tuition and fees.

That is particularly true in the Bloomington-Normal area, according to a three-part series appearing recently in *The Pantagraph*, The Twin Cities' daily newspaper.

The number of students enrolled in private and parochial schools has declined by 300 students in the three-county region around Bloomington since 2008, according to Mark Jontry, regional superintendent of education for DeWitt, Livingston and McLean counties. Jontry said enrollment trends usually are caused by more than one factor, but the economy may be one of them.

Bloomington-Normal is not the only place where economic factors have negatively influenced private school enrollment.

Since the 2000-01 school year, when 9,504 students were enrolled at the 19 largest private schools in Boone and Winnebago counties near Rockford, enrollment has declined every year. And since the recession began three years ago, the rate of decline has accelerated.

Private school enrollment in those two counties dropped from 8,330 students in 2007-08 to 8,040 in 2008-2009 and to 7,570 in 2009-10. That represents a 9 percent enrollment decline in three years.

"The overwhelming factor in declining enrollment is the economy," Michael Kagan, superintendent of Catholic schools for the Diocese of Rockford, told the *Register-Star* recently.

Enrollment in U.S. elementary and secondary schools, by control and level of institution: Selected years, fall 1970 through fall 2018

[In thousands]

Year	Total	Public			Private ¹		
		Total	Grades PreK-8	Grades 9-12	Total	Grades PreK-8	Grades 9-12
1970	51,257	45,894	32,558	13,336	5,363	4,052	1,311
1980	46,208	40,877	27,647	13,231	5,331	3,992	1,339
1985	44,979	39,422	27,034	12,388	5,557	4,195	1,362
1990	46,864	41,217	29,876	11,341	5,648 ²	4,512 ²	1,136 ²
1995	50,759	44,840	32,338	12,502	5,918	4,756	1,163
2000	53,373	47,204	33,686	13,517	6,169 ²	4,906 ²	1,264 ²
2001	53,992	47,672	33,936	13,736	6,320	5,023	1,296
2002	54,403	48,183	34,114	14,069	6,220 ²	4,915 ²	1,306 ²
2003	54,639	48,540	34,201	14,339	6,099	4,788	1,311
2004	54,882	48,795	34,178	14,618	6,087 ²	4,756 ²	1,331 ²
2005	55,187	49,113	34,204	14,909	6,073	4,724	1,349
2006	55,307	49,316	34,235	15,081	5,991 ²	4,631 ²	1,360 ²
2007	55,203	49,293	34,205	15,087	5,910	4,546	1,364
2008 ³	55,500	49,623	34,667	14,955	5,878	4,512	1,366
2009 ³	55,632	49,788	34,973	14,815	5,845	4,484	1,361
2010 ³	55,850	50,034	35,335	14,698	5,817	4,464	1,353
2015 ³	58,137	52,346	37,160	15,186	5,791	4,545	1,246
2016 ³	58,706	52,892	37,496	15,396	5,814	4,586	1,228
2017 ³	59,270	53,426	37,838	15,588	5,843	4,626	1,217
2018 ³	59,813	53,933	38,179	15,754	5,879	4,666	1,214

¹ Beginning in fall 1980, data include estimates for an expanded universe of private schools. Therefore, direct comparisons with earlier years should be avoided.

² Estimated.

³ Projected.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Education

The average annual unemployment rate in the Rockford metropolitan area, which had been 6.4 percent in 2007, rose to 8.8 percent in 2008, but jumped to 14.9 percent in 2009 and peaked at 15.3 percent in 2010.

Similar spikes have occurred around the state, where private school enrollment has also coincided with local economic conditions.

For more information on demographic changes, including U.S. Census trends for the past decade, visit the IDES site: <http://lmi.ides.state.il.us/laus/lausmenu.htm>. Many charts and maps are available at that site, including a state map of population changes by county (see p. 10), at: http://lmi.ides.state.il.us/download/February%202011_LAUS.pdf.

State unemployment figures from February 2010 showed the highest rates in Boone (19.6) and Winnebago (17.5) counties. In total, there were

16 counties with unemployment rates at 15.0 percent or higher a year ago.

The two hardest-hit counties with regard to unemployment rates have seen private school enrollment taking a hit, as mentioned earlier.

The most populous areas of the state have seen similar declines. The Archdiocese of Chicago, which encompasses 256 schools throughout Cook and Lake counties, recently told the *Chicago Tribune* about declining enrollment in those schools. In 2009-10, 87,759 students were enrolled in the Catholic school system there, a 1.5 percent decline from the previous year.

Forecasts by the U.S. Department of Education show an expected 26,000-student decline in total private school enrollment from 2010 to 2015 (see table on p. 8).

See **ENROLLMENT** on page 9

Nationwide trend

The decline in private school enrollment is not just a state issue. The downward trend in Illinois mirrors a national trend, both in terms of total enrollment and percentage of enrollment.

“There’s no doubt that the shrinking middle class leaves fewer families with the ability to pay for private schools,” Joel Cowen, a demographer for the University of Illinois College of Medicine, recently told the *Rockford Register-Star*.

“Tuition of \$3,000 to \$6,000 a year is certainly a major investment, and there is a movement in the socioeconomic patterns where the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. It’s kind of emptying the middle.”

With more middle class families falling into the lower end of that bracket, public high school programs that offer college placement and credits, vocational job skill courses and certificates could capture a number of students previously enrolled in private grade schools. That was one finding by reporter Phyllis Coulter in a Dec. 5, 2010 story called “Poor Economy Shifts Classroom Landscape,” published in *The Pantagraph*, Bloomington.

Families leaving, changing

But not all of the students leaving private schools are showing up in public schools. In fact, according to the Illinois State Board of Education, public school enrollment is also declining.

In the past five years, elementary and secondary enrollment has dropped from 2,033,629 students in 2005-06 to 2,003,606 in 2010-11. That’s a loss of 30,023 students, or 1.5 percent, according to ISBE data.

Some of the decline could be attributed to home schooling. It is unknown how many former students of private schools have opted for home schooling. Accurate records are not kept by any agency, although some estimates of Illinois home-schooled students

ILLINOIS PUBLIC AND NONPUBLIC STUDENT ENROLLMENT 2009-2010

School Type	PreK-8	9-12	Total	Percentage
Public*	1,474,922	640,461	2,115,383	89.7
Nonpublic**	184,614	57,385	241,999	10.3
Total	1,659,536	697,846	2,357,382	100.0

* Includes bilingual and special education students; includes public school districts, public regional programs, Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice, and early childhood attendance sites receiving State funds

** Voluntarily registered with ISBE; does not include ungraded students; includes special education students

Source: ISBE

range from 50,000 to 100,000.

But the cost of education is typically not cited as a reason for home-schooling.

A larger part of the decline in public school enrollment may be attributed to population shifts.

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the state’s population was 12,830,632. It grew by just 3.3 percent, or 411,339 people, since 2000. But exactly half – or 61 – of the state’s 102 counties lost population in the past 10 years (see accompanying map).

The change also shows up in the percentage of school-aged children.

In Illinois, persons under age five totaled 7.1 percent and under age 18 made up 29.1 percent of the state’s 12.4 million people in 2000. By 2009, the under-age-five population declined to 6.9 percent and those under age 18 dropped to 24.6 percent, according to the general demographic characteristics from the U.S. Census Bureau.

When a smaller, rural district loses school-age population, experts say, it shows up quickly in enrollment and attendance. That is also true for inner city schools with rapid population decline, but they generally operate at a larger scale and have more options for reconfiguring classrooms and faculty assignments to deal with enrollment loss.

“But when you only have one English teacher in a small district, you cannot lay that teacher off when you have a 20 percent decline because that teacher still has to serve the other 80 percent of the kids,” according to Marty Strange, policy director

for the Rural School and Community Trust, a national organization that calls itself the leading national nonprofit addressing the relationship between good schools and thriving rural communities.

Because the state aid formula in Illinois is largely based on per-pupil levels according to enrollment numbers, Strange says, an enrollment decline quickly translates into a loss of state funding, which obviously can lead to major concerns. Because many costs, such as teachers’ salaries, transportation, and facilities maintenance, can’t be cut back on a per-pupil basis, schools are stuck meeting many of the same costs with fewer dollars, he says. What is worse, declining enrollment often reflects a declining local tax base, which lowers a school or district’s ability to replace lost state funding.

Public vs. private funding

The fight for students also translates into a fight for dollars.

There have been numerous attempts over the years to create school voucher programs and other proposals to allow for public funding of private schools. That debate, however, has heated up in recent months.

One bill, **HB 2984** (Murphy, R-Palatine), aims to create a tuition voucher program in Chicago. The bill is opposed by the Illinois Statewide School Management Alliance, including IASB, according to Ben Schwarm, associate executive director for the Illinois Association of School Boards.

See **ENROLLMENT** on page 10

Finance referenda decided by voters in April 5 school elections

Illinois school districts placed at least 31 school finance referendum questions on the April 5 general election ballot, including 14 tax increase propositions and 17 building bond issues. In addition, there were five district consolidation proposals and seven counties with sales tax proposals on the ballot for school facility use.

Four school districts also placed other miscellaneous questions on the ballot.

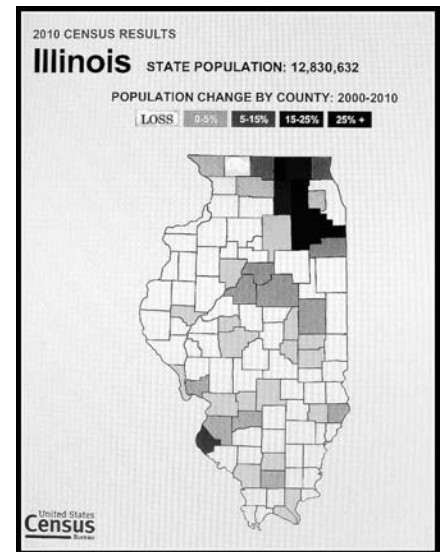
School districts placing tax increase proposals before voters were: **Arbor Park School District Number 145**, Oak Forest; **Atwood-Hammond CUSD 39**; **Earlville CUSD 9**; **Grant CC District 110**; **Mokena School District 159**; **North Pekin-Marquette Heights District 102**, Marquette Heights; **Oak Park Elementary District 97**; **Orangeville CUSD 203**; **Peotone CUSD 207-U**; **Prospect Heights District 23**; **Riverside-Brookfield THSD 208**; **Villa Grove CUSD 302**; **West Northfield District**

31, Northbrook; and **Wilmette District 39**.

Most were education fund increases, although details are not yet available in some cases.

The known building bond issues on the April ballot were: **Pontiac THSD 90**; **Cahokia CUSD 187**; **Gardner-South Wilmington Township High School District 73**; **Homewood District 153**; **Lemont-Bromberek Combined School District 113A**; **Lockport Township High School District 205**; **McHenry CHSD 156**; **Medinah Elementary District 11**; **Morton CUSD 709**; **Mt. Vernon THSD 201**; **North Mac CUSD 34**, Girard; **Paris CUSD 4** and **Paris Union District 95** (asking voters in both districts to jointly share in the costs of building a cooperative high school); **Rochelle CUSD 231**; **South Pekin District 137**; **Township High School District 113**, Palatine; **Winthrop Harbor School District 1**.

Source: Illinois State Board of Elections.



Half of the state's counties lost population from 2000-2010, a factor in the decline in school enrollment

ENROLLMENT *from page 9*

"IASB adamantly opposes this and other bills that would fund private schools with public money, either directly or indirectly," said Schwarm.

The push for public funding of private schools likely won't go away soon, however, particularly with private school enrollment on the decline. After all, the percentage of students in private elementary and secondary schools declined from 11.4 percent in 1997 to 10.7 percent in 2007, and to 9.4 percent in 2010. With total private school enrollment projected to keep falling through 2015, public schools just might be enrolling more of the students departing those tuition-based schools.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2010). *Digest of Education Statistics*, 2009 (Nces 2010-013), [Table 3](#).

Note: Parts of this article have been reprinted from independent news sources, including:

The Pantagraph, Bloomington, "Improved attendance helps offset enrollment decline," and related stories, Dec. 5, 2010;

The Pantagraph, Bloomington, "Poor economy shifts classroom landscape," Dec. 5, 2010;

The Pantagraph, Bloomington, "Schools forced to grapple with enrollment surprises," Dec. 5, 2010



Lieutenant Governor visits: Sheila Simon was the special guest at a March 1 meeting of the Starved Rock Division. She was introduced by Susan Hilton, right, IASB assistant director of governmental relations.

Entries in 'EEE' school design contest sought by July 22

Is your district particularly proud of a new building or renovation? Then why not help the architect or other design professional responsible for it earn recognition and awards in the 2011 Exhibition of Educational Environments (EEE) program?

The annual EEE awards program is sponsored by IASB Service Associates, a special arm of the Association comprised of private firms that have demonstrated an exemplary record of providing quality products and services to schools.

Entries are being sought from firms engaged in any aspect of designing public school facilities. The facilities may be intended for instructional, recreational, administrative or other use. Construction must be completed in time for occupancy with the start of school in the fall of 2011.

Entries are due in IASB offices by July 22, and must be made by — or with the written permission of — the author/owner of the project design documents. Each entrant is limited to no more than two project entries per year, and no project may be entered more than once. There is a \$250 fee

for each entry (maximum of two entries).

Eighteen projects were chosen for the competition last year and were placed on display during the Joint Annual Conference. A list of the 2010 winners can be viewed at: <https://www.iasb.com/jac10/eee.cfm>.

Plans call for preliminary materials to be submitted by Sep. 12 and evaluated on Sep. 15. The judging will be done in Springfield on a blind basis by a jury of three school board members or administrators and three architects, all appointed by IASB and experienced in school facilities or design.

Since the first Exhibition of Educational Environments was held in 1994, 419 school design projects have been displayed at the Joint Annual Conference. And nearly all of the projects have been captured in a database in the IASB Resource Center for use by member school districts.

This School Design Data File is easily searchable to identify school designs that meet specified criteria, including type, size and cost as well as numerous other educational and design features. Access to the data-

base is available to both school officials and their architects.

For more information about the School Design Data File, call IASB at ext. 1105, or email jnelson@iasb.com.

Criteria for EEE award submissions include suitability for stated program requirements, functional relationships, aesthetics, grade level or departmental organization, flexibility, expansibility, compatibility with external environment, uses of new technology, barrier free accessibility, energy efficiency, environmental controls, site adaptation, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, activity area groupings, security and building orientation.

All awards will be announced at the conference, with awards of distinction to be featured and presented at the first general session. All entries chosen by the jury will be displayed all three days of the conference, Nov. 18-20, next to the conference bookstore.

Entry flyers for the competition will be mailed in June. For more information, contact IASB's Dana Heckrodt, ext. 1131.

Directors review Association's 2011 Conference plans, committee membership

The IASB Board of Directors met on Feb. 12 in Chicago and reviewed preliminary plans for the 2011 Joint Annual Conference.

The board set the conference registration fee at \$360 per person, a 2.9 percent increase from last year's level of \$350. It was agreed that after Oct. 15 all registration will have to be completed onsite at the conference registration desk and the fee is \$385 per person.

Last year, more than 10,000 members, exhibitors, guests and others attended the event.

The board reviewed the Association's membership status and learned

that 2011 IASB membership currently stands at 866 districts and includes all but 14 Illinois school districts. The total represents a record-low number of non-member districts.

The board unanimously approved committee appointments and reappointments to the Audit Committee and the Nominating Committee, as follows:

- **Audit Committee:** Chair, Treasurer Dane Tippet, and members Tim



Karen Carney

Blair, John Metzger, Felton Jose, Jr., Karen Carney, Tom Cunningham and Tariq Butt.

- **Nominating Committee:** Chair, Mark C. Metzger; members Roger Edgcombe, Michelle Skinlo, Roger Pfister and Sue McCance; and alternates Phil Pritzker and David Barton.

On behalf of the IASB Board of Directors, President Joseph Alesandrini thanked retiring Kishwaukee Director Karen Carney for her service. Carney had earlier announced she was not seeking reelection to her local board in the spring election. Her place on the board had not been filled at newsletter press time.

Postmark entry forms by June 3 to nominate board members for Those Who Excel Awards

Districts will soon receive nomination forms and instructions for the 37th annual Those Who Excel Awards program. The Illinois State Board of Education program annually honors people who have made outstanding contributions to public and nonpublic elementary and secondary education.

There are six nomination categories:

- school board member/community volunteer
- school administrator/principal
- classroom teacher
- student support personnel (certificated)
- educational service personnel (non-certificated)
- team

Three types of awards are given: excellence, meritorious and special recognition. A selection committee of representatives of statewide education organizations is convened in early summer to evaluate and score the nominations. Nominees and their administrators will be notified by mail in late summer about their application results. The 2010-12 awards will be presented at a banquet on Oct. 22 in Normal.

Nominations must be postmarked by June 3. Forms are also available online at: http://www.isbe.net/pdf/those_who_excel.pdf

Questions about the program can be directed to the ISBE's Public Information office at 217/782-4648.

Unusual volume of laws adopted in veto session causes delay in Illinois School Code supplement distribution

The 2011 Supplement to the *Illinois School Code* will be later than usual this year. Publisher LexisNexis says the delay is due to the numerous new laws passed during the General Assembly's veto sessions.

People who purchased the 2010-2011 *Illinois School Code Service* published by the Illinois Association of

School Boards will receive their copies of the Supplement about six weeks later than expected.

IASB's Publications Department deeply regrets any difficulties that might be caused by the delay and promises to speed delivery of the Supplements once they are received from the publisher.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 12 – Corn Belt Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, Indian Creek Country Club, Fairbury

May 14 – IASB Board of Directors' Meeting, Crowne Plaza, Springfield

May 26 – Southwestern Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, National Shrine, Belleville

June 2 – Two Rivers Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, Red Dome Inn, Pittsfield

June 4 – Basics of Governance Workshop, SIU Touch of Nature, Makanda

June 15 – South Cook Governing Board Meeting, Kirby SD 140, Tinley Park

June 16-18 – Boot Camp 1 - Basics of Governance, Law & Finance, Double Tree, Oak Brook

June 18 – Basics of Governance Workshop, Marriott, Bloomington/Normal

June 18 – Comprehensive Workshop for Board Presidents, Marriott, Bloomington/Normal

June 18 – Comprehensive Workshop for Board Presidents, Double Tree, Oak Brook

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